

Both Parents Matter Cymru Newspoints October 2020

New Helpline Number

The helpline number is now 0333 050 6815. This is **free** to callers. We are looking for volunteers to ‘man’ (or woman!) the helpline, especially afternoons & early evenings to 7pm.

“All-Wales” Support Meetings by Video Conferencing

Since the last Newspoints in June these online support meetings have become a regular weekly event. They are open to all attendees, volunteers and service users, regardless of location and are held every Wednesday evening at 7pm to 9pm. To attend, book to attend by commenting on the post which appears weekly in the Facebook Buddy Group, or by direct email/Facebook message, or via [this Eventbrite link](#). You will need to be a registered service user of the charity OR complete a service user pack before booking if not. The meetings are held using Microsoft Teams, but you do not need to have the software. You will be sent an email with a link to join the meeting. You can join on your mobile or on a PC/laptop/tablet.

Monthly Location-Specific Support Meetings

With lockdowns of one sort or another continuing we cannot restart the monthly face-to-face support meetings as yet. However, we have done some thinking about how this could be done if meetings become possible again with social distancing rules still in force. Meanwhile, despite having had no face-to-face meetings for seven months there has been no reduction in new service users contacting BPM Cymru. This has continued via the helpline, website, emails, and referrals from solicitors.

The Buddy Scheme

June Newspoints stated that the charity’s top priority was to enhance the emotional support to our service users. The Buddy scheme was started to accomplish this. We are pleased to say this scheme is now making progress under the direction of Buddy Coordinator, Phil Davies. All new service users are invited to join the private Buddy Facebook group. Some service users are selected for closer one-on-one support from a dedicated volunteer Buddy. We have acquired eight new volunteer Buddies in the last few months. Buddies selected for one-on-one support are lent a charity mobile to talk to their allocated service users. We continue to look for more

Buddies, especially those confident to take on the more demanding one-on-one support role.

Unfortunately, no sooner had the Buddy scheme got properly underway than the lockdown started – which rather frustrated our principal intention of encouraging social events via the Buddy scheme. However, it remains our intention to make this happen as soon as conditions permit.

New Processes

The new helpline is just one aspect of a complete overhaul of the charity's ways of working. We have about 500 new service users registering with us every year. Moreover, the volume of demand could be two or three times as big if we advertised more widely. At present we do not do so because we are at the limit of the volume of cases we can address. However, we have ambitions to expand to meet the potential demand. The key to this must be taking on more committed volunteers or staff, and in order to do this we need to make our management process more streamlined. This will not be visible to service users. However, it includes adopting a triage system in which the helpline (or other routes by which service users first contact the charity) is the first step. The second step is completing the service user pack via an outbound call, and the third step is progressing the case itself in terms of advice and actions to assist.

We continue to seek volunteers to take on the second of these steps: making outbound calls to complete the service user pack with new clients.

New Web Site

After intending to do so for years, work has now started on building a new web site, hopefully for roll-out within the next week or two. The old site is now looking terribly dated. When available the new site will be <https://bpmuk.org>.

...and finally

We hope you have found these Newspoints informative. We intend to update you on a more regular basis from now on,

The Management Team, BPM