

# Staff and Volunteer NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020

**THE  
FED**

Caring for our  
Community



## Fed Community Teams deliver Rosh Hashanah Sweetness to 450

In the week leading up to Rosh Hashanah - Jewish New Year - intense operations were underway involving a dozen members of staff from our Volunteer Services Department and Community Advice and Support Team (CAST), assembling 450 Fed Rosh Hashanah gift bags for clients living in and around Greater Manchester.

These were distributed by a team of almost 50 enthusiastic volunteers who were delighted to have been called on for the task.

*'That was one fantastic job you have done. I just wish you could have seen the smiles and wonderful reactions when I delivered the parcels. All your hard work was so appreciated. This has truly been an*

*amazing project, there were tears in my eyes as I got back in the car more than once.'*

These small gestures clearly demonstrated to our community clients that, far from forgetting about them, The Fed remains by their side. The gifts were received with grateful emotion by many, one saying:

*'I am so overwhelmed by the Rosh Hashanah gift I could cry . . . I don't know where I would be without The Fed.'*

For an uplifting look at behind-the-scenes conveyor belt preparations and volunteer pick-ups check out page 4.



# Message from Mark

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

How did we get to October and our final Staff and Volunteer newsletter of 2020? Whilst I can't believe it's already Autumn, like a lot of you, this genuinely feels like the longest year of my life. We're all battling one way or another - early doors in the pubs, cancelled holidays, and wondering what Christmas and Chanukah will look like - they've put turkeys on diets, so they don't grow too big. (Will it be illegal to buy a turkey for more than six people?)

But walking around Heathlands Village or talking to our community teams, I'm greeted by upbeat banter and a stream of new ideas to get around our challenges - because we won't be beaten!

As I write there are the joyous sounds of kids' voices in the children's centre for the first time in six months. It's really emotional. Groups of three children with additional needs, at a time, are being looked after by our Project Smile staff playing with their friends, while their parents have a much-needed break.

And plans are underway to resume family visiting at Heathlands Village, with the creation of 'pods' around our buildings where residents and tenants can safely spend time with their loved ones - subject to getting the 'OK' from the public health authorities.

To improve communication across our workforce we have invested in

@Workplace - a networking platform, similar to Facebook, to share important information, celebrations, achievements via phones, tablets and home computers. As at mid-October we've had a 55% take-up - growing daily. If you haven't signed up yet and fear's getting in the way, speak to Robert in our Marketing and Communications Department - he's holding regular clinics to show you what to do.

The Volunteer Services Department and CAST Team undertook a massive project - distributing hundreds of Rosh Hashanah (New Year) gift bags to community service users. Never has it been more important to let people know they are not forgotten. At such a key family time of year, the isolation people can feel is heart-rending.

About 50 volunteers helped out - many couldn't come fast enough when we called for help! We've lost count of how often they told us how much they're missing volunteering - it's a huge void in their lives, but many have been providing regular phone support to isolated people - one lady calls 11 or 12 people every week!

Our Fundraising Department had a brilliant response to its Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge. 58 trekkers raised more than £49,000! Our Rosh Hashanah Appeal is likely to exceed results for the last 8 years, with over 100 extra donors and people on average giving £12 more than last year. If one positive thing can be said of this

pandemic, it seems to have opened people's hearts more to the plight of others.

Despite the positives our financial situation is deeply troubling and requires careful management in the face of a 20% downturn in occupancy since January. Reducing our costs, safeguarding jobs and protecting our long-term sustainability, sadly means closing some care households, relocating residents and moving our general nursing department back into our main building at Heathlands.

We hate causing this kind of disruption, especially when families are unable to come and support residents with a move. But it's a question of survival. What I do know is that when we've gone through large scale changes in the past, our staff have been fantastic; rising to the challenge; working together and, importantly, keeping any impact on residents to an absolute minimum. And I'm confident we'll do it again.

As I sign off, I want to thank each and every one of you - paid staff and volunteers - for everything you continue to do to make us such a great organisation. Let's battle on!

Best wishes,

Mark



## LUCY'S UPDATE



Our Trusts, Foundations and Bids Fundraiser, Lucy Edwards, shares some recent successes:

**The Booth Charities** have again agreed to fund support for people who would normally come to our Wednesday pm Purple Room Community Café and have been unable to do so, due to the pandemic.

The grant of **£3,000** towards

help alleviate isolation.

**Bury VCFA (Voluntary, Community And Faith Alliance)** have been very supportive with two recent grants - **£1,953** towards the salaries of our CAST Team and to help fund the running of our advice line - and **£4,534** from the 'Standing Together' fund towards supporting women experiencing domestic violence.

the cost of sessional workers to run the group, is being used to offer phone support to its members, to

Lastly, **Trafford Council** have awarded us **£3,225** to help fund our Volunteer Services in Trafford. Avital is supporting 45 people in this area, coordinating volunteers who have been ringing vulnerable people on a weekly basis, as well as dropping off parcels of support for Yom Tov.



South Manchester Coffee Stop, 2019



# You'll never walk alone!

A new community group, born out of the restrictions on socialising, is proving highly popular with our community clients.

With the global pandemic limiting our social activities, some segments of the population have found isolation especially challenging. For those with mental health problems and individuals who rely on our volunteers to help them navigate through life, Covid-19 has proved especially difficult.

The Fed's Community Advice and Support Team's (CAST) Senior Practitioner, Shelley Lewis, explains:

'We have kept in regular contact with many of our clients throughout lockdown, and the common feedback we received was how much they missed the regular community groups we run at The Fed, and how they wanted to see their old friends.

'For some, the groups can be their sole interaction with other people; it is impossible to put a price on the importance of these regular get togethers.

'We thought that a safe and healthy way to meet up was to hold "Walk 'n' Talk" sessions in a local park and when we suggested this to clients, they were delighted.

'Luckily, the morning of our first session dawned hot and sunny and we had a wonderful walk round Heaton Park with clients able to socialise at a safe distance.'

Walk 'n' Talk groups head out every Wednesday morning and afternoon, staffed by members of The Fed's community services team. Every participant receives a bottle of hand sanitiser and refreshments for the journey.

'The feedback we have had has been brilliant,' Shelley continued. 'Clients are excited to be getting together again. One gentleman said how lovely it was to meet up and see some friendly faces - precisely what we wanted to achieve!'

**More information about Walk 'n' Talk sessions can be obtained from CAST by calling 0161 772 4800 or via [advice@thefed.org.uk](mailto:advice@thefed.org.uk)**

# The Fed is #HereToCare!

Throughout the summer, the National Care Forum (NCF) promoted it's **#heretocare** campaign, as a way of saluting the incredible contribution of the UK care workforce over the preceding six months.

Choosing weekly themes that represented the best of what our social care workers do, and the care industry as a whole, the NCF asked care providers to post pictures and snapshots highlighting various subjects including **#reunions**, **#confidence** and **#innovating**.

Of course, we got involved! We had no shortage of photos to share depicting everything from facilitating over 900 safe family visits (while it was still allowed!) to virtual Nordoff Robbins music therapy sessions. We were proud to show that our staff are some of the best around! Below are a few of our favourite shots:



# CAST INCREASES CAPACITY FOR SUPPORT

**The Fed's Community Advice and Support Team (CAST) has increased its capacity with the recruitment of a Community Advisor, Sharon Tobias, who joined the team in August.**

For Sharon – a born and bred Mancunian - her new employment at The Fed marks the completion of a circle that began more than two decades ago.

'My late parents both spent the final years of their lives at Heathlands Village,' she said, 'and throughout their time there I built up relationships with many members of staff, and an admiration for the organisation as a whole.

'During their time at the Village – my mother from 2005 to 2007, and my father from 2009 to 2013, I saw first-hand the services that The Fed provides, and I now want to be of comfort and support to those in need of the same services.'

Sharon's role is to respond to all of the daily Advice Line Enquiries that come in to CAST, accepting referrals to CAST and the Volunteers Services Department. She will also provide wellbeing calls for existing clients and ensure that their needs are being met. This will include putting in place practical support to help people remain independent in their own homes, such as meals on wheels, a personal pendant safety alarm or a referral to the Local Authority.

After a varied career, Sharon feels very much at home in her new role: 'I worked for many years as a theatrical agent, before moving on to the BBC,' she said. 'I was involved with the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002, as well as working as a BBC radio researcher and news presenter. I've been involved in different aspects of community work for many years – in fact I wanted to be a Fed volunteer years ago but work simply left no time for it.

'I wanted to give something back to my community, and when I saw the position advertised earlier in the year, I knew it was for me!'



Sharon Tobias, Community Advisor

## BEHIND THE SCENES - COMMUNITY TEAMS' ROSH HASHANAH BAG-PACKING CONVEYOR BELT!

450 Rosh Hashanah gift packages don't just appear out of thin air.

For a week, a dozen members of staff worked doggedly, opening packets, filling bags, writing messages and packing cars and vans, ready for deliveries by a team of volunteers. Here's a peek behind the scenes:



## FROM THE FRONTLINE TO THE TOUCHLINE...

**We were very sorry to see Mark Lillis – a Porter and Driver at The Fed for some nine months - recently leave us, but we wish him the very best for the future... and Up the Iron!**

Returning in August to

Scunthorpe United as Assistant Manager – the club where he was player-coach in the 80s and 90s he told us, 'I loved being part of such a great team. I told people that coming into work was like getting a hug. The Fed will never be out of my mind.'



Ian Johnson, RMN, is the Manager of Oakwood, a 12-bedded household where we provide dementia nursing care. He penned his recollections of life at the height of the pandemic and what was probably the most difficult period of his entire nursing career. Here he expresses some personal views which we did not wish to edit.

# When COVID spread its cloak on Oakwood



Covid-19 has not exactly been hibernating but has perhaps been taking forty winks, before its current desire to visit pubs after 10pm. This led me to reflect upon the time when the pandemic was at its height on Oakwood.

When symptoms were as black and white as humbug, and swabs were as rare as an honest politician, we were hit. Oakwood went from a unit of 15 residents to a unit of 10 within days.

In the ambiguous world of new infectious diseases, it's not clear how many of our residents actually died of Covid; nonetheless, as staff, we were shaken, frightened and very sad. Also, thoughts crept in from our unconscious which we just didn't know what to do with. The two residents who swabbed positive and lived, had to suffice as our Prozac for the week.

Despite this, the majority of us

came doggedly in to work every day. On the rare occasion we were short of staff, some staff understandably refused to work on our unit. Normal deliveries of food, laundry, and stores were just left at the front door and the bell was rung. We began to feel like lepers.

Recently, many of the Oakwood staff had their blood tested for virus antibodies. The majority had contracted Covid-19. I don't think I am being over dramatic when I say we risked our lives for the residents.

The reason we did this was simple: if we didn't come in to work for the residents, then who would? But please don't let this simple answer translate as a platitude. Remember that in certain nursing homes around the world affected by Covid-19, the care staff just didn't turn up!

I'd also like to say that throughout this pandemic I have been aware

of an apartheid in the care system. How, when it came to government and national plaudits, we and other nursing homes were forced to sit at the back of the bus. But you know what, the NHS can have its loud clapping. We'll settle for the silent smile of the residents who trust us.

Oakwood staff, I love you and I am so very proud of you. We fought Covid together.

Ian.

# Compliments from Alison

At a time when we have faced some of the toughest challenges in our organisation's history and difficult days have taken a toll on morale, it's been heart-warming to receive some outstanding compliments from our residents, their relatives and our community service-users.

Across our entire workforce, praise has flooded in for how we have supported those who need us, and kept people constantly informed in the most transparent way. Here is a tiny sample of the record number of positive comments we've received:

## CAST

'I am so overwhelmed by the Rosh Hashanah gift I could cry. Oonagh was so nice and kind, what a lovely person. I don't know where I would be without The Fed. I just want a massive orange T-shirt with The Fed logo on it because you are all so amazing.'

## First Floor Residential

'Words cannot express how grateful we are for your team's care of our dear Mum, from the day we were welcomed by Lorraine in December 2015, until last weekend ... when you also took care of me. Please pass on our thanks to all, including the night-time staff. I saw a lot of Joanne and her team, as before 'lock-down' I visited Mum most Friday nights. You are wonderful heroes and my mother loved you all.'

## Finance

'Thanks again for your support and consideration on this and your help over the past year which has never been less than very professional and courteous.'

## Marketing and Moorview

'What a wonderful newsletter! Some of us who have been unable to continue as volunteers over the last 3 months, and have missed visiting everyone in Heathlands, really appreciate all the news. My mother spent the last 3 years of her life in Moorview and →

## Compliments from Alison cont.

benefited enormously from the warmth, care and companionship provided by all the staff and tenants.'

### Wolfson

'I just wanted to say that Simon and I are so grateful to you for all the care, kindness and professionalism that you extended to both (resident) and ourselves in the year that he was with you but particularly in recent weeks.

'We know how hard you and your team are working in these desperate times and are grateful to each and every one of you for coming into work, day after day, despite the dangers to yourselves. We remain indebted to you for everything you did for (resident).'

### Volunteering

NG (client) said she is 'very grateful for all the coordinator has done for her. It has been a lifeline. Everyone that has supported her is amazing. She appreciates it all.'

We're so grateful to Amy Rapaport – daughter of our former Chief Exec Karen Phillips, and a familiar face at Heathlands Village – for her recent birthday fundraiser for The Fed which raised more than £140.



Amy (pictured right), who has often helped out at the Village, wrote the following on social media: 'I chose to go and work as a carer at Heathlands Village during the height of the crisis. It was a privilege to look after the grandmas, grandpas, aunties and uncles of our community. The staff go beyond the call; the volunteers are amazing.'

Thanks to Amy – and to everyone who donated on the occasion of her birthday!

## THE FED Staff Awards

The Fed Employee of the Month trophy was awarded to a standout member of staff every month over the Spring and Summer – but we recognise that in fact every single member of The Fed's team has gone 'over and above' in recent months, to protect our residents, our service-users, and each other. It has been a tribute to our teamwork and togetherness that the recipients of the awards were so hard to pick.

From January to August, the awards have been presented

to: (L-R) Mary Davies, D2A; Lucy Edwards, Fundraising; Enid Band, Finance; Dave Hesk, FMS; Lynda Parton, GFR; Carole O'Brien, SJNU; Natasha Sarak, Fundraising and Felicia Oedegro, Unit 2.

And we also want to celebrate these three loyal members of staff who've been with us for many years: Robert Ettey who works in our laundry marks 30 years; Chris Mort marks 20 years in catering and Ruth Silverman who works in Moorview, has been with us 20 years.

Congratulations all of you and here's to many more happy years of Fed employment!



## CELEBRATE WITH THE FED!

To celebrate staff birthdays at The Fed, our HR and Catering Teams have announced that all staff will receive a free cupcake and hot drink from The Central Cafe on their special day!

Fundraising Manager, Rochelle Broman, was one of the first to benefit from this great new idea. Make sure you claim yours too!



Say 'Ahh' please!

and help save lives!

Don't forget your weekly staff covid swab test!



### Karen Johnson

A big THANK YOU to our *Activities Team* who are doing a great job keeping up the spirits of all our residents in these restrictive times. Residents have been baking, cycling, and singing along on zoom musical therapy sessions plus doing lots of other activities like arts and crafts and outdoor games.

A big THANK YOU to all our *Clinical and Residential Teams* for doing our weekly staff swabbing. This is extra work for you and you have all been stars just getting on with it! Such an essential job keeping staff and residents as safe as we can.

A big THANK YOU to *Natalie Tracey* for being trained and swabbing her own team - a bit different to overseeing her usual catering and hospitality responsibilities!

A big THANK YOU to *Charlotte Johnson* for being trained to swab our staff, and then doing over 80 swabs in one day, as well as continuing to support the non-clinical teams with this every week.

A huge THANK YOU to our *Customer Services Team* for helping register our weekly swabs. You have been absolute stars supporting with this!

### Juliette Pearce

A big thank you to the *Volunteer Services Team* for pulling off the wonderfully successful delivery of 350 Rosh Hashanah packages to our own community clients, and almost 100 clients of the CAST team. The feedback has been impressive, and the team should be very proud.

### Tammi Wise

A special BIG thank you to the 50 *volunteers*, North and South, who supported the Volunteer Services Team with the deliveries of Rosh Hashanah packages.

### Bernie Garner

Well done and thank you to *Lucy Edwards* for all her successes in funding bids for our CAST and Volunteer Team.

I want to thank both *CAST and the Volunteer Services Team* for all their hard work in the preparation of distributing the Rosh Hashanah gift bags that were delivered to 450 people.

Thank you to the *Marketing Team* for all their work on the Rosh Hashanah Appeal.

## OUR FED FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

We wish farewell and good luck for the future to two ladies who have given unbelievable service to The Fed – **Linda Winstanley**, from D2A, who retired earlier this year after 21 years of service, and **Sandra Davidson** who is retiring after an incredible 44 years in The Fed's Finance Department.

Congratulations to **Charlotte Johnson** on passing her Dance degree with a 2:1 Honours! After all her hard work, our residents get the benefits of some fantastic in-house performances!

## STARTING THEM YOUNG!

Special congratulations to **Niomi Krossoy**, one of our night-time social care workers, on the birth of her baby boy – seen here modelling the latest in Fed Fashion!



Congratulations also to **Kate Ryder** from our Activity Team, on the birth of baby Anthony James – known as 'AJ' – from Nick and the girls in the Activity Team!



## A Cut Above The Rest



During lockdown, Sophia and Amalia Weinberg – aged eight and six respectively - saw their hair length grow to “longer than our mummy would usually let us!”

Rather than simply have their hair cut, the sisters decided to donate their hair to Zichron Menachem, an Israeli charity which makes wigs for children who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment.

The community-minded youngsters also thought it would be an opportunity to raise money for The Fed which “does so much important work in the community.”

Before and after photos show that the girls have done their part – and their efforts raised more than £1,000 for The Fed.





# Triple Trekkers Go Over the Top for The Fed!

On 23 August, 58 intrepid adventurers set out to conquer the famous Yorkshire Three Peaks in aid of The Fed.

Taking the place of our planned second women's Israel **#trek4thefed** – cancelled due to the pandemic – our 2020 trek was a major success, raising £49,000 in vital voluntary income!

Director of Fundraising and Marketing, Raphi Bloom, said: 'Despite the horrendous wet conditions, our inspiring trekkers put in maximum effort and the money that they raised has absolutely blown us away.'

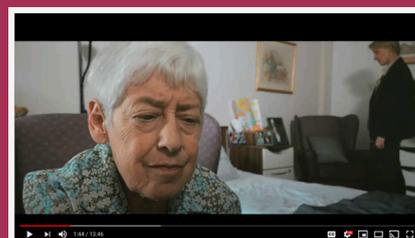


## Village venue for film raising Alzheimer's awareness

Last year (and what seems a lifetime ago) we welcomed Freshrb, a Manchester-based video production company, to Heathlands Village.

They needed a location for a film depicting the struggles and challenges faced by ordinary people when a loved one is living with dementia. As part of World Alzheimer's Day, (21 September) Freshrb released their touching, sensitive and educational film, *In Their Eyes*, a short story which gave our home a starring role!

The film can be watched on Silent Elephant Project's YouTube Channel.



In Their Eyes (2020) Short Film About Dementia