



## Supporting Recovery in Eastbourne & Hastings

May 2020

# Embracing a new reality



**In an effort to provide all of our clients with the opportunity to stay digitally connected, we have bought 20 touch-screen tablets. Clients who are currently digitally excluded, either through lack of resources and/or confidence, will have access to the kit, data, training and support needed to stay connected online.**

Our switch to an online service delivery quickly uncovered a very specific male demographic which has limited or no online access. This effectively excludes them from peer support, and from our regular online coffee mornings and recovery groups.

Helping people in recovery to be connected is one of the most important things that we do at ESRA. We are therefore especially grateful to Hastings Direct for funding this initiative which reiterates our commitment to inclusion and equality.

Potential candidates will be identified according to specific criteria and will be given the chance to use a tablet to improve their quality of life in lockdown.

# Our volunteers make all the difference

**At ESRA we rely on our volunteers. Every now and then, people will go above and beyond what anyone would expect of them, and now is the right time to recognise two of those people. They are Danielle Mitchell in Hastings, and Jason Carter in Eastbourne.**

## **Danielle (Dani) Mitchell**

Dani is arguably ESRA's most dedicated volunteer. We have distributed almost 100 art and activity packs to our clients, and Dani has hand delivered most of them.

She often picks up shopping and medication for people who can't safely leave the house, and she makes regular phone calls to check on vulnerable clients.

Before Covid-19, Dani would come into the office most days where she would help with everything. Finance is her 'thing' and she can often be found delving into the detail, and helping make sure that ESRA remains viable and accountable.

Dani is also the treasurer on the board of trustees. She actively participates in governance activities and decision-making to ensure that we operate correctly, efficiently, and in the interests of all of our clients and supporters.

## **Jason Carter**

Last year, Jason came and worked at Café North every day. He is enthusiastic and is always ready to help. One minute he might be cleaning the floor, and the next minute he could be making the very best English breakfast for everyone else at Café North.

Jason can always be relied in to warmly welcome everyone in the café and to offer useful information and guidance.

Jason has taken advantage of training opportunities at ESRA and he has been able to maintain his recovery during the lockdown. Jason is a survivor and an example to us all.

We are proud to know Dani and Jason, and we appreciate everything they do for ESRA

## **How our volunteers help**

We are grateful to have had the support of 15 active volunteers over the last year.

They are mostly in recovery themselves. They have all been trained and DBS checked, and they get regular support and supervision from the hub managers.

### **Mental Health Awareness Week**

This is the perfect time to honour our volunteers, because it's Mental Health Awareness week (May 16-24). The theme this year is 'kindness'.

ESRA volunteers show kindness to others every day. They are welcoming and compassionate, and they contribute in the following ways:

- Café assistance
- Cleaning
- Group facilitation
- Finance
- Peer support
- Life admin
- Support calls
- Reception

Many of our volunteers gain enough confidence and experience at ESRA to go onto paid employment.

We simply couldn't do what we do without our volunteers.