



# MONTHLY ROUND UP



## Putting lived experience and coproduction at the heart of substance use services in Cardiff and Vale



### WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

**“Since starting my Volunteer-ship with CAVDAS as a group, I have found a new bounce in my step, passion and achievement are now fuelling my new way of life.”**

**“VAC is certainly getting out there. We’re hearing much more about it, which is really reassuring.”**

**“I need structure and to know my next steps. Coming to recovery groups helps so much with that, and that’s what keeps me going.”**

### ACTIVITIES WE’VE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS MONTH

**CAU Sub-Groups**

**Huggard Outreach**

**Social Services Sessions**

**Alcohol Research Project**

**Suggestions Galore**

**Harm Reduction**

**New Naloxone Pebbles**

**Reaching Out to the Youth!**

### CAU SUB-GROUPS

Our team of lived experience VAC Reps have been getting the voices of Service Users heard at a variety of sub-group meetings for the CAU Improvement Project. Meetings for the Alcohol Group, Substance Misuse Liaison, Pine Ward and DATT have all benefited from having someone with lived experience and the collective knowledge of many Service Users, due to their extensive work on the ground.

The findings from each of these sub-groups will feed into the overall improvement project, creating a much improved service and experience for everyone.

## HUGGARD OUTREACH

A team of VAC Reps have been attending the Huggard Centre on a weekly basis, striking up and building relationships with the residents and finding out what their needs and wants are.

They have been getting some really valuable feedback, which has been used to form part of the quotes page for this month.

We are hoping that this partnership continues to thrive so that the people of the Huggard continue to have their voices heard.



## NEW VAC REP TRAINING

Training for new VAC Reps will be taking place soon. We have a cohort ready and waiting to become Reps and help shape the way that services are created, reviewed and managed. If you know anyone who would like to join the training, please email Dai on [david.parker@cavdas.com](mailto:david.parker@cavdas.com)

## ALCOHOL RESEARCH PROJECT

Kinbee Research asked our lived experience team to take part in a research session that focused on people's experiences of accessing primary care for alcohol addiction.

There was great discussion and lots of stories shared about accessing GPs, dentists, A&E and other primary care settings. Lots of suggestions were made based on people's experiences. This was a really successful event and we look forward to working with Kinbee again in the future.



## SOCIAL SERVICES COFFEE MORNING

We have started up a monthly Coffee Morning for people affected by or involved with Social Services. It is an opportunity to speak to like minded people who have experiences with Social Services. We have a VAC presence in order to ensure that we are listening to voices, opinions and suggestions and feeding back to the relevant parties.



# HARM REDUCTION MEETING

VAC Reps met at the church to review brand new prototype harm reduction equipment that is currently top secret. They were able to use their wealth of lived experience to discuss the pros and cons of using such equipment and make suggestions as to the suitability and appropriateness of the new equipment.

Saving lives and lowering the transmission of blood borne viruses was top of our priority and we are hoping that, when this new equipment hits the streets, they will be a much safer place.



# NEW OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Outreach continues in Barry at the CAVDAS building as well as the Huggard Centre and Adamscourt on a weekly basis. We have now spoken to The Salvation Army who have invited our Reps to visit on a fortnightly basis to share their stories and experiences with the young people who live there. We will also offer harm reduction sessions and signposting to local services.

This will also give us an excellent opportunity to speak to the young people about their experiences in accessing services, or barriers to accessing them.



# VAC REP IN SPOTLIGHT; VINNIE

I found vac by accident, I was in a violent abusive relationship, and we had lost two children, I was isolated from family and friends and had nothing, only my sobriety. At the time I was living in a hostel surrounded by chaos. When I found vac, I was nervous, scared of the unknown and broken.

I was shown compassion empathy and understanding and love. I have never done an exam in my life so far, but I found out my lived experience had value and we could use that experience to do tangible things to help others and effect change. Vac supported me through a tough time fleeing my ex-partner and built me up after it. Now I'm flying and still clean and sober and on the verge of things that I'm passionate about

#payitforward  
#VAC

