



Cheshire and Merseyside VCFSE News

March 2025

Welcome to our new monthly newsletter for voluntary community faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) colleagues in Cheshire and Merseyside.

Some of you will already be receiving our news directly, or via your local infrastructure organisation. So, our new email complements that and is another way to share our updates with you.

We hope you find this bulletin useful and we encourage you to share it in full, or any of its content with your networks.

Updates

Reform and cuts ahead for the NHS

Last week's government announcement of the abolition of NHS England was accompanied by news of further significant cuts for integrated care boards (ICBs) and provider trusts.

ICBs have been ordered to cut their running costs by 50 per cent in the next six months with provider trusts also told to cut their corporate service budgets to pre-pandemic levels.

Given the scale of the changes, it's likely to be some time before we understand any implications for the VCFSE sector and what this means for our work as partners in our Cheshire and Merseyside integrated care system.

VSNW recognises the challenges this brings to our colleagues in the NHS and remain committed to supporting a collaborative and sustainable health and care system. Read our statement of support and reflections on what this means for our sector.

[Read more](#)

Welcoming Cathy Elliott as CM ICB Chief Executive



We are delighted to welcome Cathy Elliott as the new Chief Executive of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside. Cathy brings a wealth of experience in strategic leadership across health, social care, and the voluntary sector. She has been a long-time advocate for community-led approaches and is committed to ensuring that the VCFSE sector remains a key partner in shaping local healthcare priorities.

Cathy has already expressed her dedication to working collaboratively to improve health and wellbeing outcomes across the region. We look forward to strengthening these relationships and advancing shared priorities together.

[Read more](#)

New Cheshire and Warrington Volunteering Hub

A new website has been launched to support volunteering in Cheshire and Warrington, giving people easy access to a wide range of opportunities across the area, whilst providing a shared space for volunteer-involving organisations.

Cheshire West Voluntary Action, Community and Voluntary Services Cheshire East and Warrington Voluntary Action came together to launch the platform, as part of the Cheshire and Merseyside VCFSE Health and Care Transformation Programme, led by VSNW and coordinated through the Cheshire and Warrington Infrastructure Network (CWIP).

Now people in Cheshire and Warrington have a central place to start their volunteering search, showcasing almost 250 different opportunities in the region. It makes it easier for people to connect with causes that match their skills and interests, contributing to their wellbeing, skill development, and sense of community.

The three organisations will continue to support community organisations in accessing the platform and advertising their volunteering opportunities.

[Read more](#)

The platform works in a similar way to the existing **Liverpool City Region Volunteering Hub**, which you can find [here](#).

Supporting Mental Health with 'Kind to Your Mind'



Taking care of our mental health is just as important as looking after our physical wellbeing, and the '**Kind to Your Mind**' campaign is here to help. This Cheshire and Merseyside-wide initiative offers free resources, expert advice, and access to local mental health and wellbeing services to support individuals in managing stress, anxiety, and overall mental wellness.

We encourage our partners to explore the 'Kind to Your Mind' website and use the campaign toolkit to share these valuable resources across your networks and channels. By spreading the word, you can help more individuals and communities access practical tools for mindfulness, sleep support, and professional guidance—empowering them to stay well.

[Read more](#)

Opportunities and Resources

New VCFSE Barometer Survey Report

The latest quarterly report from the VCSE Observatory at Nottingham University on trends, challenges and changes to the sector is now available.

Questions in this survey related to the financial outlook of the sector and impact of the rise in National Living Wage and Employer National Insurance.

[Read more](#)

Health Economics Evaluation Support for VCFSE Organisations

There's still time to apply for **Health Economics Evaluation Support**, which offers bespoke evaluation support to four selected VCFSE organisations in Cheshire and Merseyside. Delivered in partnership with UCLan health economists, this initiative will provide practical guidance to help organisations assess their impact and strengthen their evidence base for funding and advocacy.

Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your organisation's evaluation capabilities.

[Learn more and apply](#)

BRIDGE Research Network - Join our Testing Phase!



VSNW is developing the **BRIDGE Research Network**, set to pilot in Cheshire and Merseyside. BRIDGE is a new platform designed to connect healthcare professionals, academic researchers, and community organisations to collaborate on meaningful, community-driven research.

This is your opportunity to explore the platform, connect with others, and contribute to shaping its development. Get involved and help us build a stronger research ecosystem together!

[Read more](#)

Applications Open for NHS England Population Health Fellowship

An exciting opportunity is available for professionals in **practice-based health and social care roles**, including voluntary sector professionals, to apply for the **NHS England Population Health Fellowship – Fifth Cohort**.

The Fellowship aims to develop a workforce skilled in **population health**—improving overall health outcomes while reducing inequalities. Successful applicants will embark on a **one-year part-time fellowship (two days a week)** alongside their existing roles. The programme includes a **taught learning pathway, a PgCert qualification at Level 7 from the University of Salford, and a workplace-based population health project**.

To support applicants, the University of Salford is hosting a series of webinars:

- **Wednesday, 12th March** | 12:00–1:00 PM
- **Tuesday, 18th March** | 2:00–3:00 PM
- **Wednesday, 26th March** | 6:00–7:00 PM

[Learn more and apply](#)

Cheshire and Merseyside say ‘Smoking Ends Here’

Champs Public Health Collaborative has launched a new initiative to create a smokefree future for the region.

As part of the campaign, a new website has been launched offering expert advice, access to free support and practical tools to help people quit smoking.

Please take a look and share the details with your groups and networks.

[Visit and share](#)

New Suicide Prevention Website for Professionals



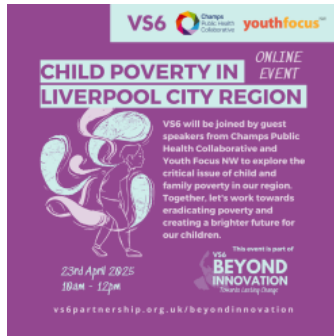
The Cheshire and Merseyside Suicide Prevention Partnership has launched a new website, designed for professionals to help them support those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts and/or self-harm.

There's a wealth of resources on the site, along with ready-to-use communications materials for partners to use across their networks to raise awareness of the new resource.

[Read more](#)

Events

VS6 Beyond Innovation Event: Tackling Child Poverty in Liverpool City Region



Join the VS6 partnership's next Beyond Innovation event: Tackling Child Poverty in Liverpool City Region

With 100,300 children in Cheshire and Merseyside living in poverty, many in working households, the need for change is critical.

Hear insights on key findings and recommendations from their latest report, and learn about the vital role of the VCFSE sector in tackling poverty from:

- **Eustace De Sousa**, Champs Public Health Collaborative
- **Ruth du Plessis**, Director of Public Health, St Helens Council
- **Stuart Dunne**, CEO, Youth Focus NW
- **Louise Vernon**, Population Health Programme Manager, Champs Public Health Collaborative

There will be an opportunity for interaction and sharing your insights into the future of child poverty strategy and services.

The event is part of the series of assemblies to develop our thinking on key LCR policy issues, linked to the VS6 [Beyond Innovation](#) work.

This event will be held online via Microsoft Teams and is open to anyone working in the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector in Liverpool City Region.

[Register here](#)

Invitation to Cheshire and Warrington Careers Hub Employer Conference

VCFSE colleagues are invited to attend the Cheshire and Warrington Careers Hub Employer Conference on Wednesday 14 May, 8.30am-4pm at [De Vere Cranage Estate](#).

The event is free to attend but spaces are limited, so please book your place as soon as possible via [Eventbrite](#), where you'll also find details of what will be covered during the session.

[Register here](#)

Subscribe and Feedback

If you didn't receive this newsletter directly from VSNW, you can [subscribe here](#) to ensure you don't miss future updates.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on this new update—what's useful, what could be improved, and how we can make it more relevant to you and your work. **Share**

your feedback with us at info@vsnw.org.uk

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. If you have any updates or opportunities you'd like us to share in future newsletters, please contact info@vsnw.org.uk



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