



Cheshire and Merseyside VCFSE News

January 2026

Welcome to our January update for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) colleagues across Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M).

Some of you will already receive updates directly from us, or through your local infrastructure organisation. This newsletter complements those channels and provides another way to share key news, opportunities and learning from across C&M.

We hope you find this edition useful and relevant, and we encourage you to share the full newsletter, or individual items, with your networks.

You can also find past and future editions online [here](#).

Updates

Help shape a snapshot of social prescribing across Cheshire and Merseyside

We're asking VCFSE organisations across Cheshire and Merseyside to complete a short survey to help us build a clearer picture of what social prescribing activity is already happening, who is delivering it and how it is funded. The survey takes around 10 minutes to complete and your input will directly support future conversations with commissioners and system partners.

Over recent years, social prescribing has expanded rapidly, with a wide range of roles and activities now sitting under the same heading. We want to better understand how this looks on the ground, from funded link worker roles to community based activities that people are being referred into.

We're particularly keen to understand what data is being collected, how impact is measured and whether this information is used to shape local needs assessments and commissioning decisions.

If you have any questions, contact jan.campbell@vsnw.org.uk.

Complete the survey

New inclusion health data and intelligence resource for England

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities has published a new interactive inclusion health resource for England. It brings together publicly available statistics, academic research, and published material to support organisations and local networks in informed decision-making for inclusion health populations.

The resource covers groups including people experiencing homelessness, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, sex workers, vulnerable migrants, people affected by modern slavery, those in contact with the justice system and people with drug or alcohol dependence.

Targeted at public health teams, NHS commissioners, local authorities and VCFSE partners, it highlights opportunities to embed inclusion health in practice. Accompanying tools, including self-assessments and guidance for local service improvement, will be released soon.

[View it here](#)



UK rejoining Erasmus – opportunities for VCFSE sector

The UK will rejoin the Erasmus+ programme from 2027, opening up new opportunities for the VCFSE sector. Erasmus+ supports international exchanges, placements and partnerships across education, youth work, adult learning and grassroots sport.

For VCFSE organisations, this means chances to build skills, strengthen networks and collaborate internationally. Organisations are encouraged to start preparing now by reviewing guidance and exploring potential partners ahead of the programme's launch.

[Read the full blog](#)



Turning strategy into action – what recent government plans mean for the VCFSE sector

Recent government announcements set out big ambitions on issues that matter deeply to our communities, including child poverty, homelessness, devolution, youth empowerment and tackling violence against women and girls. But what do these national plans really mean for the VCFSE sector and how might they play out locally?

In VSNW's latest blog from Research and Policy Manager Laura Tilston, we break down the key strategies, highlight where the sector fits in and explore the opportunities and challenges ahead. From increased emphasis on prevention and

community empowerment to the growing role of local systems and partnerships, the blog looks at what's changing and why it matters for organisations working on the ground.

Find out more

Events and Opportunities

£4,000 funding to support disabled people and carers to engage with research

VCFSE organisations in Cheshire and Merseyside are invited to apply for £4,000 pilot funding to help disabled people and carers engage with health and care research.



This opportunity is part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Research Engagement Network (REN) and delivered in partnership with the BRIDGE Research Network to test community-led approaches that build confidence, trust and access to research opportunities.

Successful pilots will design activities that help people understand research, feel safer and more confident participating and access supported routes into future research roles. Eligible applicants include disabled people's organisations, self advocacy and carers' groups based in Cheshire and Merseyside.

Applications are open until **23rd January 2026 at 12pm.**

Find out more

Healthier You programme partnership opportunity

Reed Wellbeing is inviting organisations across the VCFSE sector and health sectors to express interest in partnering on NHS England's Healthier You Services. This is an opportunity to work collaboratively to deliver preventative health interventions that tackle health inequalities and support Core20PLUS5 priority populations.

The programme will include delivery of the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme, Type 2 Diet Replacement Programme, behavioural support for obesity prescribing, and long term health condition prevention. Interventions will be delivered through a mix of face to face, remote and digital approaches, with a strong focus on engagement, retention and outcomes.

To get involved, complete the Expression of Interest by 23 January 2026 and help shape healthier futures in your communities.

Complete the Expression of Interest



Join Mencap's I'm In campaign and help change lives

Want to help make healthcare fairer for people with a learning disability?

You can join Mencap's I'm In campaign and be part of something that really makes a difference. The campaign raises awareness of the GP learning disability register, a simple but powerful way to improve access to tailored healthcare, free annual health checks and reasonable adjustments at GP surgeries for people with a learning disability. People with a learning disability die on average nearly 20 years younger than others, and many deaths are avoidable - getting on the register can help change that.

It's quick and easy to sign up, and when you do, you'll even receive a free I'm In badge to show your support and help spread the word. Sign up today and help ensure everyone gets the care they deserve.

Find out more

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 cmhcl@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 cmhcl@vsnw.org.uk



0161 276 9300

St. Thomas Centre Ardwick Green North, M12 6FZ

www.vsnw.org.uk

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