



Moving from crisis to recovery - case study

This case study may be of interest to any third sector organisation who is having to adapt and learn as they go in uncertain times.

In 2020 Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) supported eight projects affected by the COVID-19 crisis to evaluate and learn about their response to the crisis. The aim of this support was to strengthen their response and their recovery, by improving what they do or guiding future plans and strategies. This work was supported by the National Lottery Community Fund.

The Positive Steps project, at **The Moira Anderson Foundation**, provides a holistic range of support for adult clients affected by childhood sexual abuse, with long-term health problems, enabling them to cope better with their condition and access opportunities within the community. **Janine**, Positive Steps Co-ordinator, shares their learning.

Why did we get involved in this peer learning programme?

We took steps to run one-to-one and group support on Zoom but did not initially adapt

our self-management course for online delivery as this is a substantial task and we wanted to be sure it was the right decision.

We wanted to use this support to explore:

- What was working well for people about existing online activities (e.g. peer group sessions)?
- Should we deliver the self-management programme via Zoom as well?
- How can we do this in a way that ensure it is even more accessible for clients?

What are we learning about our work through this crisis?

a) Virtual delivery does work

We evaluated our existing online services to find out whether we should also run the self-management programme online. We started off by looking at what we were already doing online that was working well for people.

We ran a couple of **focus groups** to gather people's experiences; the feedback was very positive. People were benefiting from online group activities. Comments from clients regarding their experience included:

"Positive – without online contact would have lost support with Janine and the group. It was pretty seamless. It focussed our minds on learning about new technology".

"It worked, feel strong as going to a group; helped me with staying well".

We asked people in our peer group session who had already completed the course to get their views on how they thought the course would work online. We asked them about the barriers of accessing online workshops.

We **spoke to staff** also to get their views of delivering the course online and whether it work well for their clients.

We had **one to one conversations** with people on the waiting list to see if they would give it a go online. About 40 people said yes they would. Recently we ran information sessions on the self-management course and out of those 40 people 25 have signed up. The outcome of this overall consultation was that people were supportive of online delivery of our self-management programme.

b) When necessary we can adapt

We've adapted and been able to deliver quite a high level of service to individuals and groups. Through the Positive Steps Project, we have supported 16 people, with one to one phone or video support. We ran two groups: one peer support group and one group for people who had been participating in the Hands on Health group as we went into lockdown. A total of 12 people has participated in virtual groups.

How is this helpful to our project?

We are using the findings from our consultation to plan how we will deliver the self-management programme virtually. Virtual delivery of the programme started on 26th January, with 16 people are participating.

We also plan to seek additional funding to support this new type of delivery as we think there will be demand for it even once we return to face-to-face support.

Janine's tips for others

It's important to take the **time out to reflect**. It's hard when you are trying to adapt and deliver services in different ways. This has allowed me to take the time to sit back, evaluate: has it worked? Has it not worked?

This support has given me **focus** and help me to set out a **plan** for the virtual delivery. It also gave me the chance to see that I need **other people on board** with this piece of work (like doing focus groups and adapting the course).

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