

Friends of Respond

If you like the work we do and would like to become a Friend of Respond then please feel free to email the Chief Executive, Dr Noelle Blackman. She would be more than happy to talk to you about how you can become a 'Friend' and support our on-going work. Email: noelle.blackman@respond.org.uk

Special thanks to:

- Chamber Choir (Hertfordshire) who've adopted us as their Charity of the Year
The family of Dr Richard Herbert who collected money for Respond at his funeral
Mrs Marlon Tancock who also collected money for Respond at her husband's funeral
Rachael Allen who has donated to Respond as part of her wedding
Fayaz Ahmed who supported us on his recent skydive

As a small charity Respond relies on donations. If you think the work we do is important and you would like to help you can either give a one off payment or sign up for a direct debit each month.

- I would like to make a one off payment to Respond
I would like to set up a direct debit for Respond

Amount of contribution £ .....

Name: Home address :
Sort Code : Account Number :

Bank society name and address: Signature :



Subscribe to our newsletter!

If you are interested in the work we do and would like to hear from us regularly you can subscribe to our regular newsletter.

Name
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Please email: admin@respond.org.uk
or write to: Respond, 3rd floor, 24-32 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD

CORRESPONDENT

Winterbourne View: support from Respond



Following the Panorama exposé of the abuse that happened at Winterbourne View, families and former patients are demanding that this type of abuse does not happen again. As a result, the Government plans a "dramatic reduction" in the number of people with learning disabilities in hospitals in the wake of the scandal. Although there has been significant response in terms of

campaigning, policy work and legal challenges, emotional support for those affected has been lacking. To help address this gap in services the Department of Health awarded Respond a grant to provide a helpline, family support sessions and individual assessments.

Respond CEO Noelle Blackman says "We are so pleased to be able to provide the support that Winterbourne survivors and their families deserve after experiencing such terrible trauma". The helpline is run by trained volunteers every Thursday from 10-4pm (0808 808 0700). Respond Action Group member, June Patterson, who has a learning disability, also encourages former patients to get in touch: "When you've been abused, it can really help to talk to someone you can trust, and the staff at Respond

are specially trained to work with people with learning disabilities".

Respond Family support days for family members and friends of former patients of Winterbourne View have started. These meetings, facilitated by Respond staff, give family members the opportunity to share and support each other and work out positive ways to move forward. Our first family support day was held on 8th June in the Quaker Meeting House in Salisbury. Noelle and Annette facilitated the meeting and it was attended by 12 people. These sessions run every other month. If you want to find out more contact Annette Crump on: 0207 380 8254 or annette.crump@respond.org.uk

Winterbourne View Helpline!

Thursdays
10am-4pm

0808 808 0700

News updates by Noelle Blackman, Chief Executive

It has been a long time since our last newsletter and in that time there have been many changes. We began 2012 with Richard Curen (who had been our CEO for many years) moving across to head up and develop our new forensic services. This follows

decision a at the end of 2011 to focus on developing our forensic work; there seems to be a big need currently for forensic services for people with learning disabilities so we have decided to develop this more formally. Meanwhile, I have

moved into the post of CEO and I'm thoroughly enjoying all the challenges that this new role brings. Respond has had many staff changes over the last couple of years with (Continues onto page 2)

## News updates by Noelle Blackman

(Continued ..) with long-term serving staff moving to exciting places all over the world. This has made way for some new additions to the team notably James Hawkins who has joined us to lead the Young People's Services as well as act as my Deputy. We are also very proud to announce that we now have the first learning disability dedicated Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) in the country. Annie Rose has been delivering training sessions across the country as well as supporting people across London for the last two years. Our campaigns and policy worker, Louise Wallis, along with our Respond

Action Group, continues to focus on challenging subjects currently: hate crime, mate crime and forced marriage. We have recently met with our local MP, Frank Dobson, who was very supportive. Following the shocking Panorama documentary which exposed the abuse at the private hospital, Winterbourne View, we were awarded a grant from the Department of Health to provide support to former patients and their families. We have also been funded to pilot the country's first Circles of Support and Accountability project (COSA) for

young people with learning disabilities with sexually harmful behaviour.

Although these are challenging times, they are also very exciting for us and I am delighted to be working with such a skilled and committed group of people.

Finally, a huge thanks to all service users, family members, carers, professionals, students, volunteers and of course, our trustees, for your support over the years in helping Respond to be the successful organisation that it is.

## Young People's Services by James Hawkins, Deputy CEO

Recently the Young People's Service has been focusing on consolidating the changes that we made as a consequence of new projects starting up, as well as the alterations we made in how we deliver the service. Our contact with schools has increased dramatically in the last year and we are delighted to report that from September 2013 we will have two new schools joining us (*Belvue High School in Northolt and St Augustine's in Westminster*). Our model of school based therapy is enabling us to work more intensively with young people and their networks and as a result we are seeing better outcomes for all.

We have said a fond farewell to Debbie Adamson (our Senior Young People's Co-ordinator) who helped establish such a good service over the last four years. We wish

her luck and happiness in her new life in France. In saying goodbye to Debbie we are delighted to welcome Voytek Rogowski who comes to Respond with a wealth of experience in setting up and delivering services to young people and adults.

Our Circles of Support and Accountability service (COSA) has recently celebrated its first birthday and it is now well and truly up and running. We have a large cohort of passionate and skilled volunteers who are currently delivering two circles, with a third one due to be underway soon. We are due to hold an official launch event in the autumn, which we will update you about nearer the time.

In the last six months we have been fortunate to have employed our new COSA and Volunteer Co-

ordinator, Kelly Minio-Paluello, whose work has been tireless, skilled and full of enthusiasm and as a consequence we now have the largest team of volunteers Respond has ever seen, all undertaking invaluable and important work.

On the back of our Violence Against Women and Girls service (VAWG) which ran for two years (2010-12) we have developed a safe and healthy relationship programme which is being led by Carly Binger.

It is a 12-week program designed to help young people with learning disabilities get a better sense of relationships, their own sexual identity and aid them in keeping safe as they become more independent. We are very excited about this program and if you are interested in it too you can contact Carly at:

[carly.binger@respond.org.uk](mailto:carly.binger@respond.org.uk)

## Meet a new member of the team

Voytek Rogowski has recently joined Respond as our Young People's Service Senior Co-coordinator. His key responsibility is managing the Young People's clinical services in schools and at our clinic in Euston. He realises the role is huge but is really excited by the challenge and is passionate about supporting service users and the staff he manages.

Voytek's background includes working closely with children and families with various different disabilities at the Polish Psychologists' Association. He has also worked with many mental health providers like Mind as well as

drug and alcohol charities.

Voytek believes Respond provides, high quality, creative therapeutic work to people with learning disabilities. Despite being expected to hit the ground running with a high volume of work he says that the "biggest asset of working at Respond



is about collaborating with a great bunch of talented and friendly people." He believes that it is this atmosphere that has earned Respond such a good reputation amongst other agencies.

He is passionate about maintaining and enhancing this reputation by continuing to develop a high quality service.

## 'Befriending a sex offender?' Meet a COSA volunteer

*"Volunteering is the best thing to do in your free time because you can use all your skills to help others around you" (Matteo Merla, COSA volunteer)*

Respond has recently launched an innovative new community-based



project for young people who have displayed sexually harmful behaviour – Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA). A COSA is a group of trained volunteers who meet regularly with the young person, forming a supportive relationship in which they are able to challenge them on potentially harmful behaviour.

Although COSAs have been operating in the UK for 10 years, this is the first project specifically focusing on young people with learning disabilities. The interests and diversity of our team of volunteers are broad and extremely encouraging, there seems to be a genuine concern and empathy towards young people who are often viewed as difficult to care for. Respond is extremely proud and grateful to the volunteers who have undertaken such challenging work.

Matteo Merla is one of the new COSA volunteers at Respond. He has been volunteering at different social services since the age of 20. Training to be an art therapist, he believes "art is a useful tool needed to help integrate and communicate with people to bring benefit to them." Matteo chose to

We'd like to thank the following trusts who are so generously funding our current projects:

Esmee Fairbairn  
Children in Need  
Comic Relief  
Lankelly Chase  
The Tudor Trust  
Lloyds TSB  
Trust for London  
Vodafone  
London Catalyst  
The Goldsmiths' Company

Without the continuing support of these generous funders we would be unable to do the difficult and crucial work that we undertake.



## Respond in action in Europe

### Correspondent



**Conference on ageing people with intellectual disabilities and their families.** The “Europe In Action” annual conference was held in the capital of Slovenia in Ljubljana on 1<sup>st</sup> June. The conference focused on the challenges faced by older people with learning disabilities and their families.

The conference invited speakers and representatives from across Europe to come together to learn about good practice in order to better address the support needs of seniors

with learning disabilities. Respond’s CEO, Noelle Blackman, was invited to present her work on bereavement and people with learning disabilities. Also presenting was Dalia Magril from Sheffield whose focus was related to supporting families as they grow older together. Prof. Carol Walker from the University of Lincoln gave the keynote speech entitled ‘Getting older in Europe: new roles, transition and turning points for people with intellectual

disability and their families’. The Inclusion Europe’s conference was organised in collaboration with Zveza Sozitje, the Slovenian National Association of People with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families which celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The conference was a huge success and was very well attended with great interest and enthusiasm.

### 2013-14 Specialist Training

*“The training was very valuable – stimulating debate, fascinating topic and well delivered. I gained valuable knowledge I will be using in the forthcoming months.” - past participant*

Since 1991 Respond has developed unique assessment and treatment services for adults and children with learning disabilities who have experienced abuse or trauma or those that have victimized others. We are pleased to be offering a year of specialist trainings for professionals, academics and interested practitioners. The trainings cover a wealth of topics including:

*Sex Offenders with Learning Disabilities – Risk Assessment Management & Treatment*

*Institutional Abuse – Lessons from the Past, Better Practice for the Future*

*Loss and Bereavement – Supporting People with Learning Disabilities affected by Loss*

*Sexually Harmful Behaviour in Young People and Adults – Balancing Risk and Human Rights*

For more information, including dates and cost, see Respond’s website: <http://www.respond.org.uk/what-we-do/training/> or email [Richard.Curen@respond.org.uk](mailto:Richard.Curen@respond.org.uk)

### Respond nurses and social workers training

In response to the abuse and violence at Winterbourne view, a new pilot scheme is being launched in January with the collaboration of Hertfordshire County Council.

This scheme looks to provide nurses and social workers with additional training. It aims to equip the professionals already in practice with extra expertise focusing on the effects of trauma on people with learning disabilities.

Local authorities believe this training would advance practices and strengthen networks to better support people with learning disabilities living in the community. This is an exciting project for Respond which is expected to make a huge difference for people with learning disabilities.

## Updates from the Respond Action Group

by Louise Wallis, Campaigns and Policy Officer

The **Respond Action Group (RAG)** has been busy campaigning against disability hate crime, and taking part in research. With Group Worker, Bria Crouch, they are currently creating short scenes to be filmed and featured on a new website about online safety called **Safer Net**. We have a fantastic logo for the new website, which we will launch in September. The Group were also ‘headhunted’ by the BBC to test their complaints service and how well it responds to the needs of people with learning disabilities. Two RAG members, June and Harry, were chosen to take part. First, they were asked to watch and listen to lots of BBC programmes and asked to ‘make a complaint’. Then, they came into Respond to make a ‘mystery shopping’ phone

call, with the support of Laura (from the company ICM Research), Louise and Bria. Both phone calls went well and the information from this work will help improve the BBC’s complaints department. On 2<sup>nd</sup> July, RAG also visited Respond’s local MP, Frank Dobson, at the House of Commons, accompanied by Louise and our CEO, Noelle (see picture below). We asked him if he would pose some Parliamentary Questions about Winterbourne View to the Minister of Care, Norman Lamb. Mr Dobson agreed to do this, and we got responses to our questions a week later. One of the things we found out was that of the 14 former Winterbourne View patients who are still in a hospital setting, 13 are in “out of area” placements, and still a

long way from home and their families. Clearly more needs to be done, and we will be monitoring developments over the coming months. Last but not least, Louise has just heard that the funding bid she submitted to the Forced Marriage Unit to redesign our easy-read booklet and website [www.forcedtomarry.com](http://www.forcedtomarry.com) has been successful. So watch this space to find out more!



### New low-cost counselling for women with learning disabilities

New for 2013 (and thanks to funding from London Catalyst) is our service for women with learning disabilities who’ve been abused and who need some support. We can now offer 12 counselling sessions either at very low-cost or free for any women with learning disabilities who have experienced sexual violence. Hopefully, by the start of 2014 there will also be an ongoing group available for any women who have taken up the counselling sessions.

If you would like to know more about this service, please get in touch with Annette Crump on: [annette.crump@respond.org.uk](mailto:annette.crump@respond.org.uk) or 020 7380 8254