

# Advocacy Newsletter

Issue No 3, May 2021

## HOPE Project news

### A word from one of our team volunteers

'Just browsing through Facebook one evening I stumbled across a post describing a new advocacy project with Age Cymru - the HOPE Project. Having previously worked in a support role I thought this might be something I would be interested in doing.

Therefore, I contacted Age Cymru and so began my journey to become a HOPE Project volunteer.

It's a journey I have found enjoyable, challenging and stimulating in equal measure. For a start my efficiency with Zoom has had to increase exponentially! The joy of volunteering in a global pandemic!

I've never felt unsupported through my training and starting to support clients. Every client presents a different challenge, a different way of looking at what they need and how I can best support them to achieve their desired result.

Everyone has their own story, some very sad, some approached with humour and stoicism. This is what makes the volunteering experience always interesting and never boring.

I'm so glad I responded to that initial Facebook post. I've become involved with Age Cymru and the project in so many ways, not just direct support but helping to shape the future journey of new volunteers and meeting so many people, staff and other volunteer in committees and meetings.

I feel we are one big caring family - growing and learning together as we reach out to offer hope to those who need it.'

This piece was written for the newsletter by Caroline, one of our volunteers from Carmarthenshire.

She was one of the first people to respond to our publicity asking people to volunteer with the HOPE project at the end of 2020. We were then still a relatively new project so Caroline has been with us on the journey of establishing a new project.

Caroline attended the first induction training for HOPE volunteers and, along with the other new volunteers recruited and being trained, gave feedback on where and how it needed to be improved.

The feedback was incorporated into the sessions going forward. The induction training is held over two days and is a total of seven or eight hours covering a range of topics to initially equip our volunteers to begin their advocacy role.

All HOPE volunteer advocates receive regular support to help them be successful in the role.

Each region takes its own approach tailored to respond to the needs of the region and the volunteers.

In Dyfed Powys volunteers receive regular one to one meetings, attend volunteer network meetings several times a year with the opportunity for additional training, networking and peer support.

It's wonderful that we have had the level of interest in volunteering that we have had in Dyfed Powys, and that people are coming forward with different experiences and skills to make a difference to the lives of older people and their carers.

That is one of the many values of volunteers that we have such a breadth of expertise that we can call on and share as the Dyfed Powys team.

If you're reading this and would like to know more about volunteering then please contact:

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And if you wish to learn more about becoming a volunteer advocate elsewhere in Wales then please visit the Age Cymru website at

[www.agecymru.org.uk/advocacy](http://www.agecymru.org.uk/advocacy)  
or email  
[advocacy@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@agecymru.org.uk)

## Dementia Advocacy Project

Age Cymru's dementia advocacy project continues to go from strength to strength.

The project now has an almost complete staff team, with advocates working to cover all areas of Wales where staff are not in place. All of our advocates are continuing to deliver strong outcomes for people living with dementia even though working remotely.

Partnerships have been one of the key focuses of our first six months as a team. The relationships we have built both at strategic level and between frontline workers, have been instrumental in generating referrals into the project and have presented a range of partnerships that we are continuing to develop and build on.

Our community advocacy has played a vital part in securing appropriate hospital discharges, enriching the lives of people living with dementia and in safeguarding cases across Wales.

Ben Hodge, Project Manager  
[dementiaadvocacy@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:dementiaadvocacy@agecymru.org.uk)

## Advocacy Network Dates

A range of regional advocacy provider networks have been developed across Wales to complement the work of the National Network for Adults Advocacy in Wales.

The networks are an opportunity for services who currently provide advocacy, and those who would like to in the future, to get a better understanding of the current situation in the region, potential future commissioning opportunities and to have space to network and share information and ideas.

Below are the details of the next round of advocacy network meetings which will take place via Zoom or Teams:

North Wales 5 May 2021  
10.30am - 12.30pm

3 Counties in West Wales 18 May 2021  
10.00am - 12.00pm

Neath Port Talbot and Swansea 10 June 2021  
10.00am - 11.30am

Powys 10 June 2021  
10.00am - 11.30am

National Advocacy Network 17 June 2021  
10.00am - 12.00pm

Cwm Taf Morgannwg 8 July 2021  
10.00am - 11.30am

Gwent 15 July 2021  
10.00am - 11.30am

Cardiff and Vale - To be confirmed

For more information on any of the advocacy networks, please contact

Marc Forster on 07932 989656 or  
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## Age Cymru Advice

Age Cymru's advice line can provide free, impartial advice on a range of subjects.

Perhaps they may want advice about how much they should be paying for a loved ones care? Or perhaps they may want to know if they are eligible for Pension Credit and want help with claiming it?

Age Cymru Advice can help with all these issues, and more – call us today

**0300 303 44 98**

Contact us...

- **To subscribe to the e-bulletin or newsletter**
- **If you have any comments or questions about the articles**
- **If there's anything you would like to see in the next e-bulletin or newsletter**

Email: [sue.vaarkamp@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:sue.vaarkamp@agecymru.org.uk)

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