



Please note that we are not open for the Bank Holidays	
Volunteer Training Workshop	Thursday 27th June
Summer Social	Sunday 14th July TBC
Autumn Social So'ton	Tuesday 24th September
Volunteer Training Workshop	Saturday 28th September
Volunteer Induction Training	Saturday 12th October
World AIDS Day	Sunday 1st December

Embrace

A quarterly publication of news and information from Positive Action

FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON PA PLEASE VISIT WWW.POSITIVEACTION.ORG.UK

10 Years of Embrace

Embrace is now in its 10th year! The quarterly newsletter is filled with updates on Positive Action and information on some of the latest topics and issues that matter to you most. As the newsletter has been running for 10 years we are looking to change and update the information we send you. Ideally we'd like to move towards sending more newsletters via email to save on cost and wastage, however understand that many of you enjoy receiving it via post. If you are happy to receive the newsletter via email please inform us by emailing info@positiveaction.org.uk.

Additionally if there are any specific topics you would like us to cover or suggestions on the information we provide then please do let us know as your feedback is valuable to us. We hope you enjoy another 10 years of our Embrace!

Support in Jersey

Would you be willing to give some peer support to HIV positive straight individuals living in Jersey, who don't have the opportunity to come and access the drop-ins? Making contact via Skype or email could be of real benefit to these individuals who are not able to access the social support that PA drop-ins provide. If you are interested please get in touch with a member of the team for further information.

Feeling like Spring ?

It's been a long, very cold winter and many of us have struggled to cope with the challenging weather as well as all of what life seems to throw our way.

Do you feel stuck in a rut, de-motivated, lacking the confidence you once had or does life seem particularly difficult at the moment? If so then there's a lot that PA can do to help you get the most from life.

The Emotional Wellbeing service can support you to achieve what you want. Enclosed with this newsletter is an insert and exercise called a Life Balance Wheel

Assessment. It'll help you identify where you are right now, both physically and emotionally, by rating the areas in your life that are going well for you and those that aren't. Once you've completed this PA will be very happy to support you if there are areas you'd like to change. This could be through one-to-one sessions or perhaps joining in on a training workshop or group session.

Positive wellbeing support group sessions start on Thursday 25th April at Aldershot, facilitated by Judi (mcch). Speak to a member of the team for more information.

Welcome Steve

Steve Thompson has recently joined the team here at PA as a trustee and volunteer. We asked Steve to provide a few words to introduce himself... It was good to become part of the team at PA, my background is social work, residential care and business. Having set up and run my own company of residential care homes for adults with learning disabilities, (director of human resources) I am now a silent partner looking to put something back in to my community. I moved to Hampshire with my partner in 1997, developed my career in statutory services to include practice teaching in social work. I have worked with people from all walks of life, specialising in special needs, drug and alcohol abuse and addiction. I hope to be a useful member of the board as well as an active volunteer at the Southampton Centre.

OPENING HOURS

Aldershot

Mondays

By appointment
9.30am - 7pm
Drop-in 7pm-10pm

Tuesdays

By appointment
9.30am-5.30pm

Wednesdays

By appointment
9.30am - 1pm
Drop-in 1pm-6pm

Thursdays

By appointment
9.30am-5.30pm

Fridays

Drop-in 10am-4pm

Portsmouth

Tuesdays

(Weekly)

Drop-in 4pm-7pm
Appointments are available at other times.

Southampton

Mondays

By appointment
9.30am - 5pm

Tuesdays

By appointment
9.30am - 3pm
Drop-in 3pm - 9pm

Wednesdays

By appointment
9.30am - 5pm

Thursdays

By appointment
9.30am-11am
Drop-in 11am - 4pm

Fridays

By appointment
9.30am - 5pm

Thanks

We'd like to say a big 'thank you' to those who have supported us over the last few months.

Thank you especially to...

- Tropics, Portsmouth
- The Isobar, Southampton
- The London Hotel, Southampton
- Southampton University
- Those who have donated recyclable items
- Individual donors and members of PA

All of the donated and fundraised monies which are given to us are added to the Community Fund. This money pays for therapies and social events so it's incredibly valuable.

The final total raised around World AIDS Day 2012 was **£3000**. Thank you to all those who took part in helping raise awareness and much needed funds for PA around this time.

Positive Experiences

In 2013 HIV medications enter a new period of change. Many of the drugs that underpin our daily anti-retroviral therapy are coming out of patent. Cheaper non-branded alternatives will become available and there is likely to be a move for individuals to change to these new options. With that in mind, I have a more immediate consideration regarding my medication... I visit my HIV specialist on a 3-6 months basis and always come away with a supply of meds distributed by the pharmacy. Several times I have been asked to consider 'home delivery', ie having meds sent directly to my door. I've always dismissed it as I live in a house of multiple occupation. Last week though I paused to ask 'Why?' and only then, did I discover that home delivery saves the hospital about £2,000 per year; something to do with the VAT not being charged on home delivery.

I do live in a flat where the mail is delivered into a shared hallway, however there are other options – such as having my meds sent to a local pharmacy. And £2,000 is a lot of money. My thoughts are – 'I don't ever want to take these meds for granted' and 'it's no extra hassle to collect them as it's only 2 or 3 times a year?' I've made my decision: next time I see my specialist, 'it's home delivery for me!' **Peter H**

NEWS FROM...

ALDERSHOT

We want to say a big thank you to John Quirk who has been providing clinical nurse specialist services at the Aldershot Centre for a number of years. John, who has regularly attended PA for over ten years has now retired from the health service and is focussing on his teaching work at Surrey University. We want to thank John for his consistent support and specialist advice which has benefited so many of our service users.

We'd like to welcome Liz, a new volunteer, to the service. Liz is a trained reflexology therapist and will be providing voluntary reflexology sessions at the Aldershot Centre. If you are interested in accessing this service please speak to Simon.

PORTSMOUTH

We are pleased to announce that we have a new member of the team joining us. As you may well know Julie has been providing interim support at the Portsmouth service for the last 4 months whilst we recruit for the Portsmouth role. We thank Julie for her support as she will now focus her time on the north of the county whilst working more within the sexual health clinics.

Russell is the new member of the support team and will be supporting the Portsmouth service. Russell previously worked with PA a few years ago on a social work placement. He is looking forward to joining the team and meeting service users in Portsmouth.

SOUTHAMPTON

We have been fortunate for the last few years to have funded the therapies service from large grants and fundraised income, however despite some recent successful fundraising we are finding it harder to secure funds for such activities in this current climate. We are truly sorry to advise that this means the Southampton therapies service will be put on hold from April.

We would like to sincerely thank our therapists Hannah and Addam for all their support over the years, which will be sorely missed. As will they.

Furthermore in the future there may be a need to help fund core services with fundraised income due to a reduction in funds from local government.

SURE Information

KPS Trebullom in Cornwall was the venue for a four day adult respite break with accommodation and all meals included. Ten Service Users from Aldershot, Portsmouth and Southampton Centres attended at the beginning of March. Activities included workshops on disclosing your HIV status, careers advice, legislation and benefits and an additional practical workshop involved the making of silver jewellery. A great time was had by all.

SURE Fundraising: Our next fundraising event will be a stall at the Farnborough Donkey Derby on Monday 27 May 2013. We will be selling CDs, DVDs, Books, Children's Toys together with Bric-a-brac etc... We would be grateful for any small items that you would like to donate or to hear from you if you're willing to help us man the stall on the day.

Do contact any member of PA staff or your SURE representatives if you have any particular comments, views or feedback for PA or if you would like to be involved with SURE.

HIV in the News

Recently there has been much hype in the media about a baby being 'cured' of HIV. The case refers to when doctors diagnosed an expecting mother, late in pregnancy, as being HIV positive. Too late to use standard prevention methods to reduce the risk of the baby becoming infected, doctors used a method, similar to Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), using medication early in the baby's life to eradicate the virus; a method already used to avoid establishment of infection in adults. Whilst it would be wonderful to think that the baby has been cured of HIV there are many things to take into consideration. For example, do we know how established the infection was? It is possible that the doctors intervened with drugs just as the virus was trying to become established therefore having the effect of PEP, but research needs to be done before identifying it as a cure.

One of the positive effects of this case is the opportunity it provides to raise awareness about HIV in the media. It is also important to know that in the UK there is no reason for any baby to become infected, if the mother is tested and diagnosed early and if she and baby have access to treatment to prevent transmission.

Women's Group:



The Southampton meetings will be on
Wednesdays:
17th April
15th May
19th June
from 10am - 11.30am
and will be facilitated by
Groundswell.

Farewell and Thank You:

We want to say a big thank you to Rachel and Ann, who after years of being members of the Trustee Board are now standing down. Their support over the years has been hugely beneficial to Positive Action and we want to thank them for the countless hours they've donated to the organisation.

DON'T FORGET

The GUM Clinic in Guildford has moved from Farnham Road to Buryfields.

The Guildford GUM Clinic at Farnham Road has now closed. They are re-opening at the new Buryfields Clinic, 61 Lawn Road, Guildford GU2 4AX, on Monday 15th April. All telephone numbers and key staff will remain the same.

CAB Advice Column

Welfare benefits are changing from 1st April this year.

Some of the main changes include:

- The introduction of a new single benefit for working-age people, called **Universal Credit**. It will gradually replace means-tested benefits such as income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, tax credits and Housing Benefit.
- The introduction of a **cap** on the total amount of benefit you can get. To begin with, the cap may affect you only if you're getting Housing Benefit and could mean you will get less money towards your rent. But if you start getting Universal Credit, it could also affect you then.
- A cut to your **Housing Benefit** if you live in social housing, such as council or housing association accommodation. This will only apply if you're of working age and you have more bedrooms than you're

allowed after the new rules come in.

- The abolition of **Council Tax Benefit** which is due to be replaced by new schemes run by your local authority called **Council Tax Reduction**. Schemes are likely to be different, depending on where you live. It's unlikely that people under the age for getting Pension Credit will still be able to get a full rebate on their council tax bill.
- The introduction of a new benefit called **Personal Independence Payment (PIP)** will gradually replace **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)**, which is currently paid to people under 65 who have daily care or mobility needs. Not everyone who gets DLA will be able to get PIP in future.

For more detailed information, please see the enclosed leaflet on Welfare Reform. You can also get accurate free advice from our in-house CAB Adviser — please speak to a member of the team for an appointment.



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The Trustee/Directors of Positive Action are:

Chairperson: Peter Hellowell
 Treasurer: Matthew Plumridge
 Secretary: David Pointet
 Peter Robinson
 Frances White
 James Crawford
 James Austin
 Steve Thompson

The staff members are:

Chief Executive: Donna Bone
 Services & Development
 Manager: Brian Bridger
 Support Services Co-ordinators:
 Aldershot & Surrey: Simon Cooke
 Aldershot & Hampshire: Julie Teare
 Portsmouth & Hampshire: Russell Farley
 Southampton: Matt Williams
 Community Engagement
 Co-ordinator: Andy Wheeler
 Administrator: Christina Best

The copy deadline for the next edition is 07/06/13

The Positive Action Trustee Board advise that all articles appearing in this publication represent the individual views of the contributors which do not necessarily represent the views of the Board or the organisation. As such, the board does not accept responsibility for any loss or consequence arising from any article appearing in this publication however caused.

Other Support Organisations and Helplines

In addition to ourselves the following groups provide services and support:

HIV/AIDS Support

*Body Positive Dorset,
 Bournemouth
 01202-297386
 Groundswell, Southampton
 02380-631651
 St Peters House Project, Redhill
 01737-763000
 TVPS, Reading
 0118-9353730
 TVPS, Slough
 01628-603400
 THT South, Woking
 01483-263160*

GUM/Sexual Health Clinics

*Chertsey (Blanche Herriot)
 01932-722669
 Frimley Park Hospital
 01276-604105
 Guildford (Buryfields)
 01483-537007
 Leatherhead
 01372-362845
 All Hampshire clinics including
 Portsmouth
 0300-3002016
 Southampton
 0300-1237399*

HIV Social Worker

*Dawn Scully, Surrey
 01372-832360*

Community Clinical Nurse Specialists

*Charlotte Broughton, Surrey
 07789941289
 Ian Akin, Surrey
 07917551901
 Ruth Sim, Surrey
 07825680776
 Liz and Katrina
 Hampshire & Southampton
 02380-900219
 Helen Blackman
 Hampshire & Portsmouth
 02392-680350
 Jane Butt, Portsmouth
 02392-680200*

National Helplines

*i-BASE (treatment info)
 020-7407-8488
 NHS Direct
 0845-4647
 Sexual Health Line
 0800-567123
 THT Direct
 0808-802-1221*

Sexuality Support

*Ian Cole, Development Worker for
 Gay Men, Surrey, 01932-355533
 Geoff Cook, THT Surrey
 01483-263162
 Sexual Health Promotion Team in:
 Hampshire: 0300-1239117
 Portsmouth: 02392-680368
 Southampton: 02380-515238*

African/BME Support

*Sexual Health Promotion
 Hants, Southampton, Portsmouth
 0300-1239117
 Mavis Buwa, THT Surrey
 01483-263161
 Africa Advocacy Foundation
 020-8698-4473*

Useful websites

*www.aidsmap.com
www.nat.org.uk
www.tht.org.uk
www.hivaware.org.uk
www.myhiv.org.uk
www.mambo.org.uk
www.hants.gov.uk
www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk
www.healthygayhampshire.com
www.surreycc.gov.uk
tinyurl.com/surreysexualhealth
www.southampton.gov.uk
www.portsmouth.gov.uk
www.shoutloud.org.uk
www.sheahampshire.net*

If you have been exposed to HIV, PEP (Post Exposure Prophylaxis) is available through GUM clinics and A&E departments but must be taken within 72 hours - call or visit immediately after exposure.

Information on Welfare Reform

The government is introducing changes to benefits in 2013. These changes will affect many of our service users who claim benefits to help pay their rent, or those who claim money for a disability. The changes mean that some will get less money from their benefits than they did before. Most of these changes will not affect people of state pension age.

Changes to housing support in the social rented sector

From April 2013, if you live in a council or housing association home and you have one or more 'spare' bedrooms your housing benefit may be reduced.

Who will be affected?

- Residents aged 16 to 61 years old (and rising in line with the retirement age for women)
- Residents who get any amount of Housing Benefit - for example those who are getting full benefit, but also those getting partial Housing Benefit because they are working
- People who are sick and disabled will not be exempt, nor will those who need a spare bedroom for visiting non-resident children

What is a spare room?

The new rules will mean you will be allocated one bedroom for:

- Each adult couple
- Any other person aged 16 or over
- Two children of the same sex under the age of 16
- Two children under the age of ten regardless of sex
- Any other child
- A carer (who does not normally live with you) if you or your partner need overnight care

What happens if you have a 'spare' bedroom?

If you have one 'spare' bedroom your Housing Benefit will be cut by 14% of your eligible rent. If you have two or more spare bedrooms, your Housing Benefit will be cut by 25% of your eligible rent. If your Housing Benefit is cut, you will be expected to pay the difference between your Housing Benefit and your rent.

Case Studies

Mr and Mrs A live in a two bedroom flat. Under the new rules they will have one spare room. Their Housing Benefit will be reduced by 14% of their rent and they will have to pay the difference.

Mr and Mrs B live with their daughters, aged 13 and 15 in a three bedroom house. Under the new rules their children will be expected to share a bedroom until their eldest child reaches 16 and so their Housing Benefit will be reduced by the equivalent of 14% of their eligible rent a week until her birthday.

Where can I get help or find out more?

If you are worried about being able to afford to pay your rent from April 2013 you should ask for advice now. Our in-house CAB caseworker can put you in touch with the right support for your family if you are experiencing financial difficulties. Speak to Matt, Julie or Simon to book an appointment.

Benefit Cap

From April 2013, the overall amount of benefit you can receive will be capped. The government will add up how much money you get from a range of benefits including: housing benefit, jobseekers allowance, employment and support allowance, child benefit, child tax credit and carer's allowance. If the total comes to more than the maximum amount allowed, your Housing Benefit will be reduced.

What is the maximum amount of benefit that I will be able to receive from April 2013?

- £500 per week for single parents
- £500 per week for couples with or without children

Welfare Reform continued...

- £350 per week for single people without children

Who will NOT be affected?

Households where an adult

- is entitled to working tax or pension credit
- is in receipt of the support group component of employment and support allowance
- is in receipt of attendance allowance or disability living allowance (or its intended replacement the personal independence payment)
- is in receipt of industrial injuries benefit (or the armed forces equivalent)
- is in receipt of a war widows/widowers pension

In addition where an adult in the household has been employed continuously for the previous 12 months, the benefit cap will not be applied for 39 weeks.

Who is most likely to be affected by the benefit cap?

Those most affected will be households with three or more dependent children where no adults are working.

Universal Credit

The Government is introducing Universal Credit in an attempt to simplify the benefits system. It will provide a single payment for people looking for work, those unable to work because of illness or disability, or on a low income and working; it will be paid by bank transfer to each household on a monthly basis, and will be paid in arrears.

Which benefits will be affected?

The following benefits will be replaced:

- Income support
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Working tax credit
- Child tax credit

How will I be affected?

You will receive one lump sum for your household to cover all the benefits (including Housing Benefit) and tax credits, listed above. If your Housing Benefit is currently paid directly to your landlord, this will stop and you will need to make arrangements to pay your rent yourself.

If you don't already have a bank account you should consider opening one; for more information on basic bank accounts you can contact the Money Advice Line helpline on 0300 500 5000 or Tynetalk on 18001 0300 500 5000 or their website at www.moneyadvice.org.uk and www.moneyadvice.org.uk/en/articles/free-printed-guides .

You can also contact our in house CAB caseworker or visit the Citizens Advice Bureau website www.adviceguide.org.uk for further information.

When will it be introduced?

The system of Universal Credit is being trialled in the Manchester area from April 2013, and will be introduced across the rest of the country from October 2013.

Council Tax Benefit

In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit for people of working age will be abolished. It will be replaced by a locally devised scheme. Local authorities (the Council) have been consulting on replacement schemes. In many areas this will mean that tenants will have to start to pay some council tax, whatever their income, where in the past they may have been entitled to full benefit.

Putting the Spring into your Emotional Wellbeing

With spring in the air, the days are getting longer and the weather hopefully warmer. We should begin to feel more motivated and invigorated after the long winter months. Are you? Or are you stuck in a rut? Do you feel like you're going round in circles with life's challenges? Would you benefit from some practical assistance or from an emotional wellbeing spring clean?

Why not take advantage of the Emotional Wellbeing Service offered through PA?

One way to start would be to complete the Life Balance Wheel on the reverse of this page. It'll highlight the areas in your life that are going well at the moment (in balance) and perhaps those that are not.

All you need to do is consider each section and then colour in the appropriate segment to the level (1-5) that reflect where you are at the moment, for example you might colour in the rings right up to number four or five if you are happy with your relationships. Once you've done this for each of the eight areas look closely at your results. Is the wheel in balance or could things be better for you?

If you have areas you would like to discuss in more detail please give a member of the team a call and support can be offered to you. For the categories on the top half of the wheel you may want to consider the Emotional Wellbeing service. We can provide support to you individually or through the following workshops being held at the Aldershot Centre initially.

The individual support and/or the workshops could help you to:

Cope with anxiety

(8th May)

Events that happen can change the way we think and feel. You can't change what has happened but you can change the way you think and feel about them. Feeling anxious and stressed can cause problems in your day to day life and affect your emotional wellbeing. Learning coping techniques can help improve your quality of life.

Motivate yourself

(10th July)

Life events and sometimes comments people make can cause you to think differently about yourself. You can lose confidence in who you are and what you can achieve. This can make you withdrawn and isolated. It can make you less able to live a fulfilling life. Learn ways to build your self confidence, increase your self esteem and motivation.

Deal with life's changes

(11th September)

We all have ambitions and goals. Sometimes coping with everyday life can be hard and we forget about what we would like to be doing or achieving. Why not take the time to look at your life. Look at what you would like to change and how you are going to achieve it.

Cope with life's stresses

(20th November)

You need to be able to accept the things you can't control and take control of the things you can. Learn the difference and learn how to take control of your life. Take the stress out of life and enjoy each day.

So let us help you put a 'spring' into your step! Make contact with a member of the support team at PA who will be happy to speak to you about getting the most out of life.

Life Balance Assessment Wheel

Physical Health – Is your physical health impacting or stopping you doing what you need or want to do?

Emotional Health – Do you feel tired all the time? Do you lack motivation? Do you feel anxious? Have you stopped doing the things you enjoy?

Identity and Self Esteem – Are you happy with who you are? Do you feel confident?

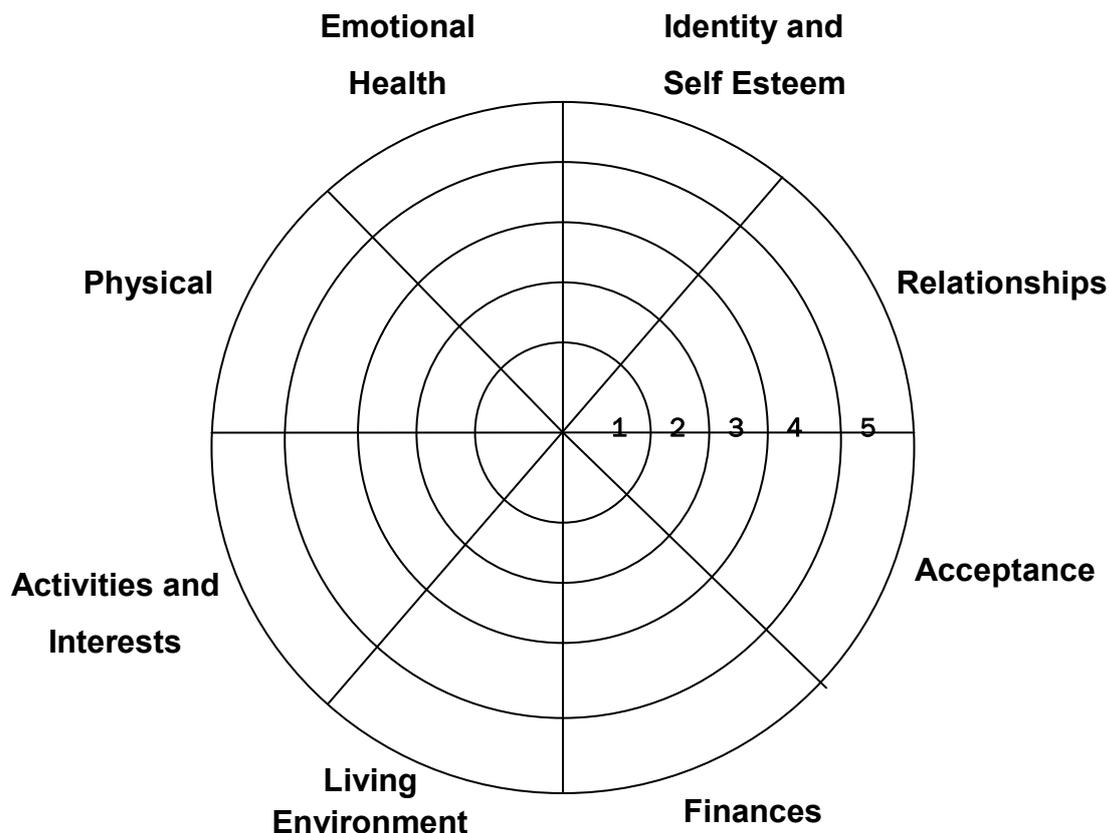
Relationships (friends, family, partner) – Think about the people around you. Do they make you happy? Are they supporting you? Are your relationships positive and meaningful to you?

Acceptance – Have you accepted your HIV diagnosis? If you are not HIV positive are you comfortable with the HIV diagnosis of your partner/family member/friend?

Finances / Money – Are you coping with your finances? Are you managing to budget for day to day living? Do you have debts that are worrying you?

Living Environment – Think about your living arrangements. Are you happy about who you live with, where or how you live?

Activities and Interests – Are you doing the things you enjoy? Would you like to try out new things?



- 1 = Really bad or none
- 2 = Very much lacking in my life
- 3 = Could be better but getting by
- 4 = I am content
- 5 = It can't get any better than this