

## Azanda Sithole – Care Network Cambridgeshire

### Azanda's Story

Care Network Cambridgeshire provides information, guidance, and practical support to help people stay at home and to connect with or support their local community. The organisation's services have been developed to empower people with the care and support they need to live independent lives in their own homes and make the most of interactions with their local communities.

Azanda Sithole, Project Support for Care Network Cambridgeshire, explains her role and how she supports Care Network Cambridgeshire to provide Personalised Care:



Azanda Sithole

"I provide support for the three Personalised Care roles Cambridgeshire and Peterborough: Prescribing Link Workers, Health and Wellbeing Coaches, and Care Coordinators. The support I provide includes induction into the voluntary sector, monthly peer support sessions, and weekly service updates sessions.

The aim of my role is to identify how The Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations can meaningfully contribute to the care and support of patients, build links between the Personalised Care roles, and to provide ongoing help and assistance in problem solving.

When a new member of the Personalised Care Role (PCR) starts, I start the introductions they will need to help them embed in their role and to get going. This includes introductions to the Personalised Care Ambassador, Learning Co-ordinator, Mentors, and their peers - who add them to their respective MS Teams groups. The 'Induction into the Voluntary Sector' is a four-day Zoom event attended by all PCR roles. The event's modules are in keeping with voluntary sector aims and values, and link closely to the NHS Long Term Plan - ensuring that the PCR roles work closely with different sectors to address wider determinants of health.

Examples of the modules in the 'Induction into the Voluntary Sector' event include:

1. Introduction to Personalised Care: Understanding your role and how you work together
2. Introduction to the Voluntary Sector
3. Knowing what is in your community and how to link to it
4. Community Development - How to work with your communities
5. Introduction to Housing and Hoarding

We have guest speakers including members from the Adult Early Help, Housing, Community Navigators, Hunts Forum, Caring Together, H.A.Y, and many more.

I facilitate weekly service updates, based on themes identified by the PCR roles. These are designed to connect the relevant statutory, local authority and voluntary sector with the PCRs. The updates are an opportunity to find out how to refer into a service, who the service would be suitable for, and to determine how the service can work together with the PCR to address health inequalities and improve public health. Some of the organisations and the services we have invited and linked with this past year include: DWP, Fuel Poverty Training with PECT, Stay Well, GamCare, PinPoint, Diabetes UK, MIND, Caring Together, Cambs TECS Lifeline Service and Enhanced Response Service, Alzheimer's Society, Cambridge Community Arts, and Age UK Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

The monthly peer support meetings are an opportunity for the roles to meet, share knowledge and good practice, and seek advice from their colleagues in other PCNs. The sessions are structured around addressing a particular topic or case study, and my role as a facilitator is to encourage conversation and collaboration between the roles. I am always on hand to offer one-to-one support to any of the PCR roles, and to help problem solve and be the first port-of-call when facing non-patient related difficulties.

I also send the team a weekly newsletter that contains updates on services, upcoming training opportunities, and invites.

When COVID hit in 2020, most of the Social Prescribers were asked to work from home and with all the initiatives that developed in the community to support people, there was a need for someone to support them to navigate the community. That's when the weekly service updates started, and they have developed from there.

Ultimately, my key aim is linking the team with what the voluntary sector has to offer and also to link them to each other and develop their relationships with one another."



## Further Information

<https://www.care-network.org.uk/>