

**Learning visit report  
Versus Arthritis 13658**

<b>1.1 Date of visit:</b> 17/10/19	<b>1.2 Name of visiting Funding Manager:</b> Julia Mirkin	<b>1.3 People met with:</b> Sally Vincent, CYP Service Manager; Clare Fletcher, Head of Impact Management; Zoe Chivers, Head of Services.
<b>1.4 Programme Area &amp; Outcomes:</b> Making London More Inclusive\Work supporting young disabled people (aged 16-25) in the transition to adulthood and/or independent living Making London More Inclusive\Services helping people with a newly acquired or diagnosed disability to maintain choice and control in their lives		
<b>1.5 Purpose of the award:</b> £129,000 over three years (£38,500; £43,000; £47,500) towards one FTE Young People & Families Coordinator, London-based programme costs including: workshops, family events, volunteer costs and a contribution to overheads.		
<b>Grant start date: 03/04/2017</b>		<b>Grant end date: 03/04/2020</b>
<b>Project progress and difference made</b>		
<b>2.1 Project Outcome 1:</b> At least 65% of young people report an increase in levels of confidence about their future. <b>Progress made:</b> As the outcome targets were reviewed and changed following the year two monitoring report, the progress recorded in this report covers a relatively short time period. 50% of recent event attendees reported a sense of increased confidence, deriving from meeting other young people with Arthritis and 57% reported feelings of greater confidence about their future.		
<b>2.2 Project Outcome 2:</b> At least 70% of young people report an increase in their ability to talk about their health. <b>Progress made:</b> 57% of young beneficiaries reported an increased ability to discuss their health as a result of engaging in the youth service offered by Versus Arthritis. As there have been new members joining the group, a significant number were at the beginning of their learning journey. Learning with peers builds experience and develops the skills required by young people to take an active role in the management of their health.		
<b>2.3 Project Outcome 3:</b> At least 80% of young people report feeling less isolated. <b>Progress made:</b> The Grantee mentioned that it had had concerns about using the word 'isolation' in its evaluation materials for young people; they had been concerned that it wouldn't be as meaningful as using phrases that referred to time spent with friends, for example. However, they included a question asking if engagement with activities led to feeling less isolated and 79% of respondents indicated that it did. 70% of attendees reported that they had stayed in touch with young people met previously at events and 79% reported having made new friends. 21% of respondents reported 'sort of' making new friends and also reported a desire to keep in touch with people they had met. The Grantee mentioned that it needed to define what isolation is for young people and accommodate the fact that isolation can mean different things in different contexts and for different people.		
<b>2.4 Project Outcome 4:</b> At least 65% of young people report an increase in their knowledge of and ability to manage their arthritis. <b>Progress made:</b> The Grantee mentioned that greater progress against this outcome is likely to be achieved from its one-to-one support for individuals. However, 46% attendees reported learning things to help them to manage their health from peers.		

**2.5 Project Outcome 5:** 80% of volunteers report and demonstrate increased knowledge confidence and new skills.

**Progress made:** Only one training session has been offered since the new outcome targets were agreed, which focussed on dealing with Trans children. Feedback from this was not available at the meeting.

### **Impact and learning: Funding Manager comments**

**1. Impact:** *what is your opinion on the overall difference the grant is making?*

The Grantee reported that 93% of event attendees appreciated the networking aspect of the service and the opportunity to talk about their life choices with other young people. This work has supported the set up of a Young People's advisory panel, which has been funded by Awards for All. The funding has also supported the critical analysis of the evaluation framework for working with young people, especially aligning it with the organisation's new Theory of Change.

**2. Learning:** *what has the grantee learnt in delivering the grant?*

A key lesson is the distinctiveness of its work with young people from its work with adults, which has led to the development of the evaluation framework.

**3. Knowledge:** *is there any relevant knowledge for CBT's wider grant-making e.g. local or subject specialist knowledge?*

Arthritis tends to be more prevalent in women and if you suffer with an auto-immune disease, you are likely to suffer with more than one, so healthcare needs are often complex and require considerable management. Socio-economic factors exacerbate arthritis and it is also familial, so if one person has it in a family, it is likely that other family members will have it too, increasing worklessness, isolation and dependence on state benefits. Childhood arthritis is not managed well by schools; children are often not believed that they are suffering with a disease commonly associated with older people.

**4. Total assets:** *is there anything else CBT can be doing to support the organisation?*

The Grantee would value support with messaging to city businesses that Arthritis is not just experienced by old people. It would also value the opportunity for young people with Arthritis to advocate for flexible working to enable them to work. Building on this, Versus Arthritis would like to know more about opportunities for young people with Arthritis to do work placements or work shadowing, to which they could signpost their beneficiaries.