

**PRESS RELEASE**

**March 10 2011**

**NHS North Somerset Commissioner thanks Volunteers**

Volunteers in North Somerset have been given an official thank you by Primary Care Trust commissioner, Julie Kell, for their work within PositiveStep, the psychological therapies service for the community in North Somerset.

Since January 2009 PositiveStep has been offering free psychological therapies, based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), for anyone experiencing anxiety, depression or other common mental health difficulties in North Somerset. To date 38 volunteers have helped staff to deliver psycho-educational courses such as 'Stress and Mood Management' and 'Low Mood' to members of the public who have been referred by their GP or contacted the service directly. The service also offers some CBT treatments on a one-to-one basis for people with more complex difficulties.

Julie Kell attended a celebration event this month at the Beechlands Hotel in Weston-Super-Mare to thank volunteers for the many hours they have put in to delivering PositiveStep services. She said: "Their input has helped to ensure that since the launch of the service, over 3000 people per year in North Somerset have benefited from the work of the team. Volunteers provide an invaluable addition to the service, bringing a wealth of skills, expertise and experience which help patients to feel welcome, supported, and in good hands".

PositiveStep is a partnership of Second Step, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP) and ATOS Healthcare. Volunteers, many of whom have had personal experience of mental health issues themselves, work alongside paid staff to deliver psycho-educational courses, and to support computerised CBT courses in community venues.

For information about volunteering contact Kirsten Stephen at: [kirsten.stephen@second-step.co.uk](mailto:kirsten.stephen@second-step.co.uk) or on 01934 523785. For information about PositiveStep services contact the team on 0800 688 8010.

**-ENDS-**

**Editors Note:**

- **PositiveStep – supporting wellness in North Somerset.:** PositiveStep offers support through GP surgeries and self-referral to people with common mental health difficulties – including advice about self-help, consultations with mental health specialists and access to a wide range of courses and services. We run a range of psycho-educational courses (e.g. stress and mood management, low mood, beating low self-esteem, anger management) and offer one-to-one CBT support across North Somerset. Patients will have an initial assessment with a Wellness Advisor who will guide them through the range of treatments on offer.

<http://www.positivestep.net/>

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[www.second-step.co.uk](http://www.second-step.co.uk)

[www.awp.nhs.uk](http://www.awp.nhs.uk)

- NHS North Somerset is the local Primary Care Trust for North Somerset. The trust was established in April 2002 to ensure the provision of the highest quality healthcare services to the residents of North Somerset. It was recently assessed as one of the most improved PCTs in England by the Care Quality Commission.

**Press Release issued by Karen Daniel at NHS North Somerset. For more information please contact her on 01275 546895 or at**

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