

PEER WORKER APPRENTICESHIP THE CELLAR TRUST SPOTLIGHT PIECE

Read about The Cellar Trust's experiences with the new Level 3 Peer Worker Apprenticeship Standard.

The Cellar Trust

The Cellar Trust are a mental health charity based in Shipley, Bradford. We have delivered peer support through our range of services since 2016. In 2018 we won the Positive Practice in Mental Health Award for Crisis and Acute Care, in 2019 we won the Charity Times Cross Sector Partnership of the year award. Such has been our success in proving the effectiveness of peer support within a range of services, in 2021 we used this knowledge and experience to develop our own two-day peer support training programme to be delivered externally. This training is accredited by OCN Learning at Level Three. We have since delivered this training on a national (and even international) basis! The Cellar Trust have also been asked to take part in national work that has taken place around peer support as an emerging role including being a member of the Health Education England (HEE) Task and Finish Group for the Mental Health Peer Support Workers Competence Framework. The Cellar Trust, alongside With-you Consultancy and Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust was also commissioned by HEE to write a thought piece on Peer Support in Crisis Services.

Provider Networking

The Cellar Trust is part of the Peer Worker Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group. We are really excited about this apprenticeship because it supports a career path for those working in peer support and values the voice that organisations like ours have in this sector. The Cellar Trust joined the Peer Worker Apprenticeship: Provider Networking Directory which aims to serve as an enabling tool for networking between large and small providers to facilitate the delivery of this apprenticeship. The Provider Networking Directory can be found here.

In our aim to partner with a large provider we researched local colleges and approached Bradford and Calderdale as both seemed a great match for us in terms of values. Both colleges place a high level of emphasis on providing social value, on innovation and on working collaboratively with partners. We approached the colleges and asked for the relevant contacts and emailed them to ask for a meeting to discuss further. It took a few attempts to organise these meetings.

Undeterred we continued to contact both colleges and once we had met and discussed the details both seemed very keen to take things further. Marissa Lambert, Programme Lead/Chair of the Trailblazer Group very kindly offered to come to these meetings and I'm so glad she did as she was able to offer a vast amount of knowledge about the apprenticeship itself and procurement plans. This seemed to reassure both colleges and both seemed to use this in-depth information to plan in practical terms how that might work for them. We have also used our contacts within Bradford District Care Trust to discuss the apprenticeship with them and their role in using the apprenticeship as an employer organisation. After two initial meetings they seem very excited about using this scheme to develop their peer support workforce; this would open up a significant quantity of placements for potential peer support apprentices.

Advice to Other Providers

My advice to any other providers is that if this is something you are excited about being involved in then I would try and research partner providers as soon as possible. Look for people who match your values and will be as excited about this apprenticeship as you are. I would also urge providers not to feel disheartened if you don't hear back initially – people are busy and it can often be difficult to get to the right person. However, once you do make contact and give them all the information I am sure it will be something they want to consider!

Level 3 Peer Worker Apprenticeship