



Welcome to the final edition of the **Creating an Ordinary Life - Active Support Newsletter**

It's difficult to think we have come to the end of the *Creating an Ordinary Life - Active Support Project*. Over the past three years we have worked with 480 staff, who have directly or indirectly, supported over 240 service users to take part more in their own lives. I would like to personally thank everyone who has taken part in the project. All the support staff for changing the way they work, all the managers for supporting their staff to make these changes happen and to the service users for their achievements and their contributions to the newsletters.

There have been some significant changes in people's lives. The latest newsletter articles show just how profound some of those changes have been:

- Reductions in behaviour that is challenging
- People developing new skills by taking part in routine activities
- People being supported to maintain current skills
- People with complex and profound learning disabilities being supported to be involved in their own lives

Services have also reported on improvement in health:

- Weight loss
- Reduction in the intake of alcohol
- Reduction in smoking
- Improvement in mental health
- Reduction in medication for mental health
- Improvement in oral hygiene

The training and support from the project has enabled teams to review their support methods and look at what a person is doing, can do and with the right support, needs to do.

We have produced [guidance aimed at parents and family carers](#) relating to Active Support, with pointers as to what to look for in services where teams say they are using Active Support – to know it is actually happening in practice.

We have also produced [a short easy read document for people using services](#) about what support they should expect to receive from staff. No more 'Hotel' Social Care but an enabling style of support.

For support teams who want to achieve a knowledge based qualification on Active Support there are QCF based distance learning materials available from ARC. [See the ARC website here](#) for details or email Lisa.Lenton@arcuk.org.uk.

As we know Active Support is evidence based and really helps, where implemented and supported well, to show how people are supported to maintain their wellbeing, responsibilities and skills to have an ordinary life. The audit and inspection of services should be driving up standards of support.

If inspections are to include paperwork and observation, then there is a place for paperwork that can demonstrate engagement and participation. As we know Active Support methodologies show this in a very simple format. It shows what people are doing and how people are being given opportunities to do more in their own lives both at home and in their community, including having responsibilities towards an ordinary life.

Inspectors may need further training to be able to identify and quantify disengagement and to have their horizons broadened about the level to which engagement in meaningful activity is possible, even for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, people with behaviour that challenges, dementia or mental health. But, as I continue to say, we must not rely on the paperwork - where teams are supporting people using Active Support you will see it happening!

The project also served to highlight the need for specific training for support staff and managers, notably in the areas of communication and positive behaviour support, coaching and mentoring.

Where training had been provided, there was often no carry-over of that training into the workplace.

Reviews from Pilot Services

The following excerpts are from some of the services implementing the Creating an Ordinary Life - Active Support Project. They have reflected on how Active Support is impacting on their service and teams and how the implementation of the Active Support approach is progressing within their service:

- "We wanted something which would support us to change and embed a different culture of support which was enabling... We wanted this type of support so that it was quite simply 'The way we do things'."
- "Our local commissioner was also very impressed with the Active Support programme."
- "People are less frustrated. People are doing more for themselves and are given more opportunities and responsibilities."
- "This project will not end for us. Livability as an organisation has adopted this style of support for all of its services. Active Support will remain the focus of support we will provide."

Read the full feedback on the [Reviews from Pilot Services](#)

Thank you

The Project has been extremely fortunate to have been supported by some of the original researchers of Active Support: Professor Kathy Lowe, Dr Edwin Jones and other professionals working in the field of learning disabilities who were part of the Advisory Group.

We are also indebted to the following Services and the people registered onto the Project:

- Allied Healthcare
- Autism Care UK
- Broadoak Group
- CareTech
- Chescombe Trust
- Devon County Council
- Edward Lloyd Trust
- Flexible Support Options
- Halas Homes
- Life Opportunities Trust

- Livability
- Martha Trust
- National Autistic Society
- Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA)
- Perthyn
- Prospect Housing and Support
- Prospects
- Quality Care
- Robert Owen Communities
- Somerset Care

As well as the ARC staff in Chesterfield.

You can read the [Creating an Ordinary Life - Active Support Project Publication Report](#) for more details about the project.

If you are interested in accessing training on Active Support for your staff team please contact Lisa.Lenton@arcuk.org.uk

As a final note, the Association for Real Change would like to thank the Department of Health for providing funding to run this very successful and influential project and from myself all I can say is we must keep on, keeping on and on and on...

Christine Rose
Creating an Ordinary Life - Active Support
Project Manager

You're receiving this newsletter because you have purchased from us, or asked to be on our mailing list.

[Edit your subscription](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

Association for Real Change
ARC House
Marsden Street
Chesterfield
S40 1JY
Tel 01246 555043
UK Company No. 01658354