

CHAIR’S REVIEW OF YEAR APRIL 2017 – MARCH 2018

Achievements and performance

The last year has continued to be a period of significant change for SNAPS in terms of the consolidation and development of the charity and its work. SNAPS has always managed to meet its core objectives – what has happened over the last 3 years is that the Board and staff have stabilised and professionalised the organisation, and building on those firm foundations, developed and expanded SNAPS to provide more support for more families. I’d like to mention 4 specific areas – our operations, our finances, our Trustees, and the future of SNAPS.

Firstly, our operations – we have continued to grow and implement changes in how SNAPS operates over the last year. We have increased the number of days on which we operate each term from 5 at our low point in 2014, to the maximum available number of Saturdays in each term, usually 11-12.

Overall this means an increase from 100 20 minute therapeutic sessions to 500 in a term, 5 times the provision from 3 years ago, meaning that SNAPS can offer significantly greater support for families.

We are operating at the maximum level possible at the North West Leeds site (Penny Field School) and cannot expand any further on this site. We therefore negotiated opening at a second site, Broomfield School in Belle Isle, South Leeds, and have gradually expanded our operation there to, once again, open every Saturday available. Broomfield does not have a hydrotherapy pool but does have a sensory room and a second rebound room, which presents SNAPS with room for future growth.

Key to these changes has been the operations and management team we have working with us, and the appointment of a Project Manager, a Finance Manager, and our first Community Fundraising Manager - the team of staff, physiotherapists, instructors and volunteers work tirelessly to deliver our services – we can’t thank you enough for all your hard work.

Secondly, our finances– I am pleased to be able to report that our finances have stabilised, our reserves are well covered and we have additional funds to support our continued expansion and development.

SNAPS is an independent charity, not an agency of social services or Leeds City Council, and we take no financing from local or national government in any form. In the current economic climate, and with cuts to government grants so prevalent, our independence has been seen by our funders as a strength.

The Board’s intention has been to make SNAPS financially sustainable and we believe that we are making the best progress than we can towards that objective, although it is clearly challenging for any smaller charity. Unless income streams can be developed independent of our client base, all we can do is push the ‘sustainability horizon’ back as far as possible. This is the date to which we could fund our operations if we took no further funds in from today.

SNAPS has a good story to tell and we’ve shown that we can competently manage the steady growth required to build a successful organisation and expand the provision of service to the families of Leeds.

Thirdly, the Board of Trustees - We are lucky in having a group of talented people with widely differing backgrounds and skills to be the current Board of Trustees, to help set strategy and provide oversight of our work, and I would like to acknowledge their hard work and contribution in the last year in helping to deal with the issues facing the charity, in what has been a challenging period, and to continue our successful journey.

And lastly, the future of SNAPS -The Board agreed a new ambitious 18 month Business Plan running from October 2017 to March 2019, and that has been running for 6 months, with good results. Picking out a couple of highlights from our planning:

SNAPS ran a successful day-time family activity session during the Christmas break, and has plans for another during the Easter, with a further 5 during the Summer break in 2018. The development of a holiday programme is an exciting development to help support our families during the periods when the schools from which we operate are closed.

As part of our marketing programme to tell our story and increase publicity around the issues faced by families with children with additional needs, we have been reaching out to local politicians and Council executives, with some success. Visits by the local Councillors to both sites have proven very

successful, with a presentation to the full City Council planned for later in 2018.

Thirdly, the development of the Leeds Children’s Additional Needs Network or Leeds CANN, a new venture which SNAPS co-founded, continues apace, with 36 children’s charities and statutory bodies across the Leeds area now working more closely together with the aim of creating a more effective information and resource sharing market place supporting families.

The good news in this review is down to the hard work and determination of the team and the family that is SNAPS.