Intelligence Gathering during COVID-19
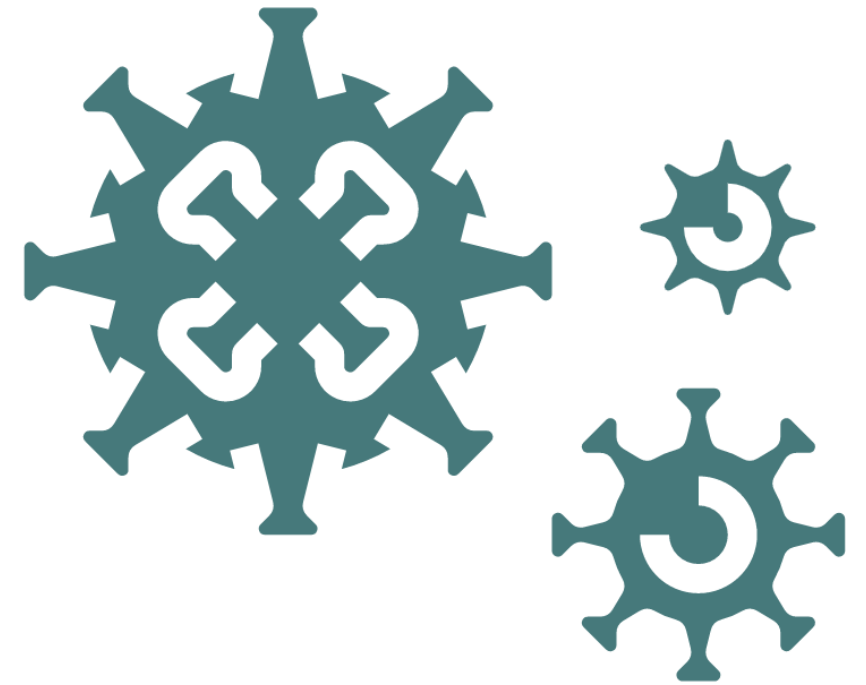
Reflections from Charities & Inspiring Scotland

17 June 2020

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OUR VISION

For a Scotland without poverty or disadvantage.

Since March 23rd we have…

- Hosted 83 Fund Portfolio virtual meetings for charity and project leaders
- Commissioned research
- Conducted 15 fund surveys
- Supported 350 charities
- Hosted 7 webinars
- Had over 150 one-to-one calls with CEOs and Boards

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Our Intelligence gathering has been collated and shared **weekly**…..

But as we look to enter Phase 2, we wanted to spotlight our learning and priorities on a thematic basis, by each policy area and sector we support.

The following slides outline the key learnings, our key responses and future scanning for seven of our funds.

Key learnings

- Going back to the 'old normal' not good enough - means a return to facing problems of accessing diagnostic services, education and employment; and dealing with stigma and exclusion.

- As a result of the restrictions and changes to accessibility, many autistic individuals are feeling de-skilled and that their hard-won independence has been lost.

- For some, COVID-19 has had positive side effects, but some autistic people will be anxious for a long time as we come out of lockdown.

Key responses

- Weekly joint virtual sessions with charities to share experience, gather intelligence.

- Maintaining regular dialogue with autism advisory forums and APOs.

Future scanning

- Building sector resilience and adaptability – policies, working practices, engagement.

- Ensuring autistic people contribute to Autism marketing campaign, wider policy development.

- Supporting collaboration across wider autism networks.

Key Learnings

- **Depth of relationships and trust** enabled wider types of support to be identified

- **Local charities** were able to respond the fastest

- **Support widened to families and volunteers**, not only young people

- **IT for home working for charity staff** was not major barrier

- People **embraced online support**, so connections and conversations continued and sometimes improved

Key Responses

- **Early conversations to establish needs followed by action** – flexible budget used immediately to address basics

- **Weekly individual contact plan** – consistent approach of being there throughout

- **Creativity in delivery of support** – sharing ideas for different activities and ways for matches to have fun

- **'Can-do' attitude** – charities kept going, no question of stopping mentoring support

Future scanning

- **Greater need** and demand

- Importance of **outdoors** for return

- **Blended** online mentoring model

- Online **training for** volunteers – national potential

- Greater **family involvement**

- Face to face will continue

Learning Disabilities

Key learnings

- For those with more complex needs, fear of going back into the community and easing of restrictions (safety/ catching virus)

- Very keen on **'Building Forward Differently'** and system redesign

- Issues of contact tracing and interruption of service if people are tested as positive

- Digital pivoting of business models for all in the portfolio

- Digital exclusion of those with learning disabilities.

Key responses

- Support for **leaders** of the charity portfolios

- Positive discussions with Stakeholders on **system redesign**

- Digital Exclusion – use IS research to open conversation on barriers for LD population

- Emerging leaders programme in progress and development for people with LD

Future scanning

- System redesign

- Ensuring **resilience** of the portfolio

Key Learnings

- All projects remained operational & effective, meeting basic human needs
- Third sector delivery adapted and repurposed very fast
- Local partnerships strengthened
- Public sector absent in some communities & facilities moth-balled
- Food security very fragile for very many

Key Responses

- Creating a supportive, enabling environment
- Trust & autonomy make for agility
- Workers valued as key workers
- Tailored extra psychological support for staff & community members

Future scanning

- Acceleration & accentuation of pre-existing trends: food insecurity, poor mental health, digital exclusion, social isolation
- Keep focused on human need to be & build together while harnessing tech
- People are hungry for human contact & connectedness
- Build anti-fragile local systems of resilience

link up

Local people building flourishing communities.

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Key Learnings

- The move to digital provision has been a lifeline for many young people

- Digital provision allows organisations to support more young people on same level of funding

- Some young people struggle to access required resources & are already showing signs of losing enthusiasm with no face-to-face contact

- Accordingly, some organisations are taking steps to move carefully back to face-to-face, recognising that considerable barriers outside their control exist & great care must be taken

Key Responses

- Involvement with each organisation in constructing revised planning for 2020/21

- Support in the form of regular portfolio calls for organisation leaders

- One-to-one sessions with organisation leaders, supporting individual organisation issues

- Enhancing profile of OFN potential with key SG contacts given the predicted increase in youth unemployment and reduction in college places in 20/21.

- Preparing the ground for a response to the predicted economic downturn similar to that of Our Future Now predecessor fund 14:19, recognising that issues will arise more immediately

Future Scanning

- Dominated by the predicted effects of the economic downturn, which forecasts that young people will be affected the hardest with very high levels of unemployment and requiring action in Q3 and Q4 of 2020

Perinatal & Infant
Mental Health Fund

Key Learnings

- This crisis is hitting families hard – **mental health impact** on parents, children and infants

- **Funding** was already low in the sector – now demand is increasing

- **New business models and ways of working** have brought challenges and opportunities – they are here to stay!

- Importance of third sector to **alleviate burden on NHS**

Key Responses

- All charities continued to operate (including in early stages) – showing great **resilience & innovation**

- **Collaboration and sharing** across the existing portfolio has been invaluable

- Inspiring Scotland **resources and support** has been well received

- We have worked hard to launch the new PIMH fund, giving the sector a longer term financial view

Future scanning

- Challenges for families will continue for some time to come (even when schools go back)

- We will build on the collaborative and supportive work with the existing portfolio until end of Aug

- When new fund is launched, we need to support the new portfolio alongside wider sector

- Opportunity for strategic impact mapping and having 'one voice' as a sector.

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Support in the Right Direction (SiRD2021)

Key learnings

- COVID-19 has underlined existing issues preventing choice & control over social care.

- The Personal Assistant workforce (key to offering people choice and control) is less well recognised than the rest of the social care workforce.

- Huge pressure on families and carers to provide replacement care services where these have temporarily been withdrawn.

- Independent support organisations (go-between for HSCP's and supported people in community), have helped distribute PPE & assess vulnerability of people living independently.

- Organisations have adjusted to home working but many employees do not have appropriate equipment/space to do this longer term.

Key response

- Joint survey with Self-directed Support Scotland (membership body for independent support organisations).

- Joint work with Health Improvement Scotland (SG) to research best practice in social care emerging as a response to COVID-19.

Future scanning

- Capitalise on the role independent support organisations have played to support health and social care partnerships during COVID-19 – they are an integral part of COVID recovery and reform of social care that will have greater emphasis in fall-out of crisis

- Ensure that progress made in implementing self-directed support is not set back as a result of emergency legislation which has put full social care assessments on hold during the lockdown.

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Survivors of Childhood Abuse Support Fund

Key learnings

- All organisations have been able to adapt quickly to deliver some services online, with some concerns around security and lack of experience in use of digital technology
- Some survivors prefer face-to-face services, are having to wait & may not get help they need quickly.
- Concerns raised at the increased risk of abuse of children & domestic abuse as a result of lockdown
- Charities who are reliant on fundraising are concerned about income
- Collaboration amongst our 29 charities is positive and powerful

Key responses

- Training on communicating effectively using technology
- Arrangements made for the charities to use Attend Anywhere/Near Me for 121 counselling
- Best practice and guides shared for using technology and delivering online counselling
- Support raising awareness of childhood abuse & how to prevent or report it - all charities will share message
- Working with charities to produce a film clip to raise awareness of support available for Survivors

Future scanning

- Facilitating further support/training on using digital resources & upskilling as we envisage this is the future for some counselling
- On-line fundraising skills and activity
- Support with getting back safely into buildings for charity colleagues and for those survivors who prefer face to face counselling
- Greater collaboration between charities
- Guides around quality of clinical support

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Key learnings

- Vulnerability of the sectors we support – third sector Early Learning and Childcare providers and Play sector charities.

- There is widespread need for sector expertise in outdoor play and learning, particularly for the 3-12yr age ranges

Key responses

- Providing dedicated, direct support to charities and organisations such as local authorities

- Offering guidance & support to Scottish Government Directorates

- Feeding into collective sector responses by helping to coordinate consultation, engagement, and feedback to Scottish Government Departments

Future scanning

- The outdoors is key to many conversations around national health, wellbeing, education, community and recovery – Thrive Outdoors activities can potentially support this

- Helping the sector to become more developed as a collective voice

- Reviewing how Thrive Outdoors can develop to meet needs within the sector

Key learnings

- Partners are adaptable - but there are physical limits

- Flexibility very important – people, charities, SG, other funders

- SG has been very supportive as the key funder – trusting & flexible

Key responses

- Offer empathy and our humanity

- Signpost to funding and advice

- Support partners in adapting delivery plans – much more digital

Future scanning

- Lots of funding concerns – massive investment in handling Covid might reduce future spending; philanthropy under pressure as stock markets have fallen; much more demand for voluntary sector services

- Some adaptations bring benefits – long planned digitising brought forward, services broadened or narrowed responding to need

- Many will streamline delivery and are identifying sustainable efficiencies to address both reduced funding and greater demand.
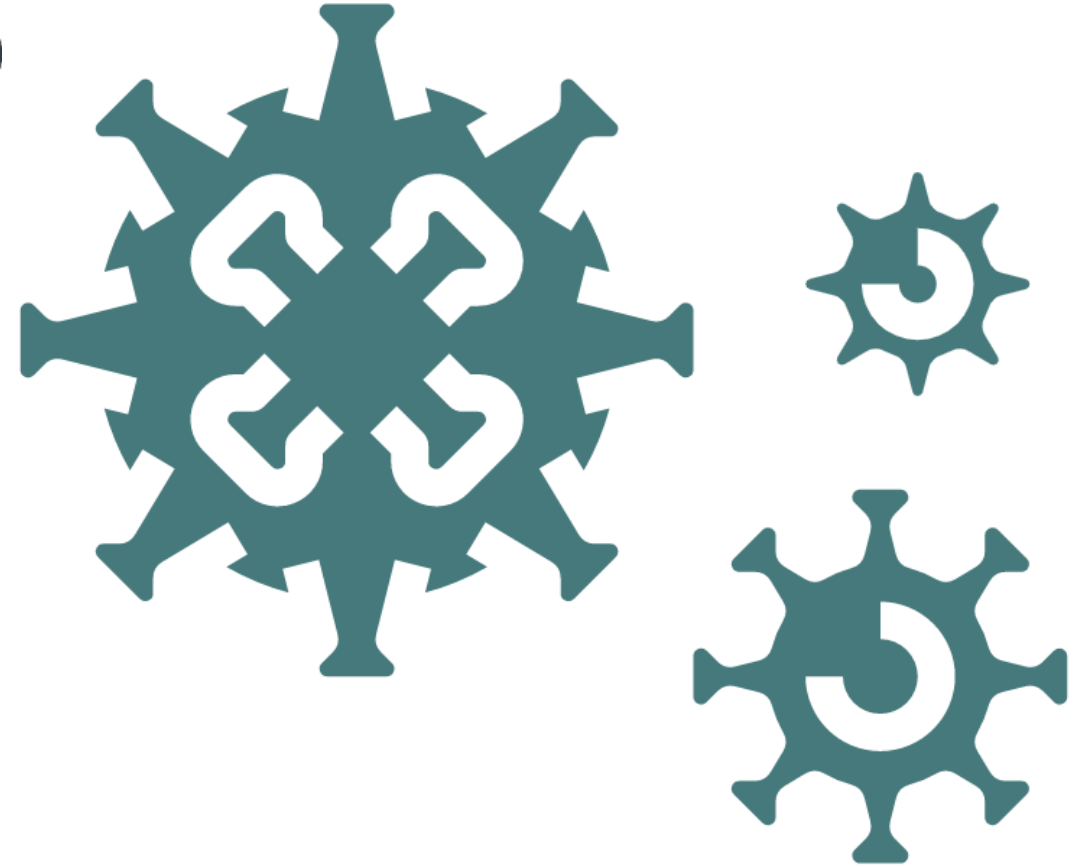
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Collaborating on intelligence sharing

Through the support ACOSVO is offering the sector during Covid-19 they are gathering and publishing the overarching key themes emerging and key issues facing leaders.

The latest ACOSVO insight report is available here: **www.acosvo.org.uk/resources-coping-covid-19**

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Find out more. Visit our website
www.inspiringscotland.org.uk