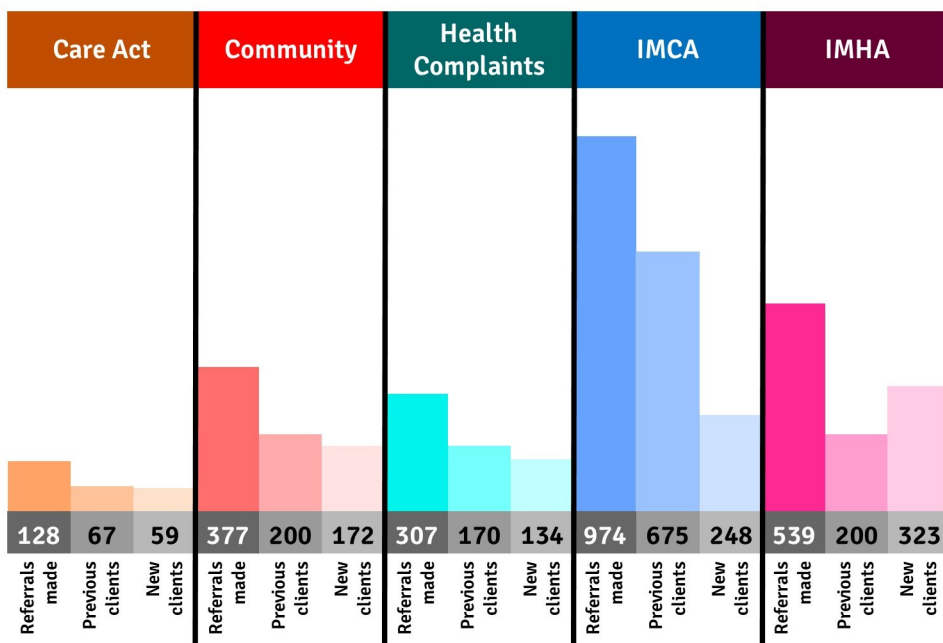


2021-22 Annual Report

Introduction

The past year has seen us achieve many goals, start new project work and surmount challenges. Our statutory and Community Advocacy services have supported many people to be heard and have their rights upheld. Our inclusion projects had some major successes too, with the Leeds Autism AIM service supporting a record number of people and Asking You! getting new consultation work.

New projects working beyond Leeds including Yorkshire Autism AIM and the Out Spoken project have been set up. The Leep1 team, meanwhile, have survived and even thrived, despite facing challenges due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



In total, our statutory and Community Advocacy services worked with almost 2,500 people between April 2021 and March 2022.

For these services, we acknowledged all referrals within two working days.

78% of clients said their expressed outcome was at least partially achieved.

97% of clients told us they were at least somewhat satisfied with the service.

Our advocacy services

Leeds Autism AIM

In the past year, Leeds Autism AIM have supported close to 700 people. Their Health Access Project and post-diagnostic support continue to thrive, while new Lottery funding has helped them to resume mentoring and one-to-one peer support.

In addition, the team have co-produced resources with other agencies, including an autism alert card with West Yorkshire Police and an Autism Health Passport with local NHS services and Leeds Mind.

- 684** Total people supported
- 410** Autistic adults supported
- 139** Professionals supported
- 135** Parents/carers supported



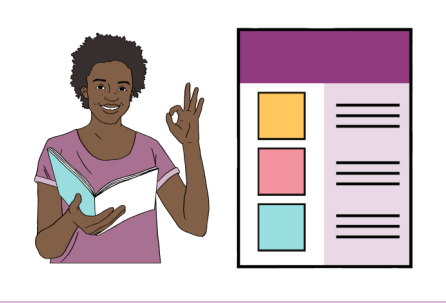
Yorkshire Autism AIM, funded by a four-year grant from Comic Relief's Changemakers Fund, started in autumn 2021. Their initial work focused developing peer support with Leeds Mind, including groups and training.

They also enabled consultation work with autistic adults in inpatient wards, delivered training for advocacy and social prescribing services and are developing self-advocacy tools going forward.

Yorkshire Autism AIM

Alongside Leep1, the Asking You! team have been sharing stories about barriers faced by adults with learning disabilities with organisations such as Healthwatch and Forum Central.

Whether online or in-person, they have helped to keep the Leeds Learning Disability People’s Parliament going. Consultation work on improving services in Leeds has been done in the past year, whilst their Citizen Advocacy service enabled volunteers to meet with their matches remotely via video call.



CHANGE have worked on a training platform to ensure our wider organisation’s training is more consistent. They have also made accessible documents, including a staff handbook.

Their project work is growing, including Out Spoken, run in partnership with Yorkshire MESMAC, work on a heritage project on learning disability and on the Turn to Us peer advocacy project. Their Easy Read work continues too, working with clients including Macmillan and The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Leep1 continued to provide support to their members in spite of COVID-19 restrictions, running groups online when needed. Café Leep was open when restrictions allowed, while they have worked on the ALaDDIN digital development group with other third sector organisations in Leeds.

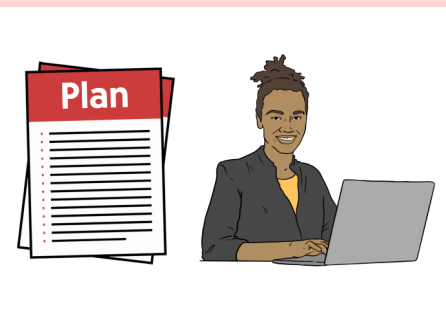
They helped to keep people informed about barriers experienced by people with learning disabilities at forums, whilst they have provided learning disability training internally and externally.



We have 11 Trustees and dozens of others in volunteer roles throughout our advocacy services and inclusion projects. As the wider world started to open up, we were able to recruit and train more volunteers.

In the meantime, Citizen Advocates and Autism Mentors were able to meet with their advocacy partners and mentees online. Where possible, Leep1’s volunteers helped out at the café, with their Out and About group and at their club nights.

- **Turn to Us:** A new project led by our Community and CHANGE teams, providing peer and self-advocacy to parents working with social workers
- **Yorkshire Autism AIM:** A mental health equity project working with autistic adults across West Yorkshire, run parallel to our existing Leeds Autism AIM service
- A Lottery-funded project led by CHANGE, focusing on the history of learning disability



- Our aims for the next year and beyond include:
- Developing more advocacy-based solutions to Health and Social Care issues
 - Helping to drive system change by supporting the people who use our services
 - Improving awareness of advocacy