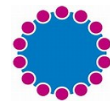





# OUR VISION AND OUR HANDS

Bedfordshire and Luton Wheelchair Service  
Occupational Therapists, Assistant Practitioners and Administrators



**The Wheelchair Service Vision Statement:**

- Be friendly, reliable and client focused
- Provide a quality service to all our clients
- Support our clients' clinical needs in a caring and safe environment
- Promote our clients' functional independence and wellbeing
- Improve standards of care and challenge their practice



## A reflection on the importance of making time for Team Away Days, the benefits for the team and the service

### What was the problem?

- The Wheelchair Service (WCS) has experienced on-going pressures from multiple sources
- Backlog of clients on a waiting list, increased volume & clinical complexity of referrals, staff shortages, equipment supply issues and increasing costs.
- The team are at risk of burn out from the continued emotional pressure they experience daily

### Aims

- To enable the team to relax and support each other in a space away from the work base
- To define what matters the most to them
- To provide time to reflect on and review the team values and vision
- To acknowledge their contributions and skills
- To begin to re-frame and think differently about the issues the service faces

### Our Creative Responses

**Clay Sculptures**

1. When life feels like a square wheel, WCS help clients to be free to enjoy their world
2. WCS (diamond) use the tools in our tool box (knowledge and skills) to enable our clients (inclusive people) to engage (ring) with life
3. WCS facilitates our clients to fly free and grow though the provision of the right wheelchair. They are able to escape their previous limitations



**Hand Tiles**  
We make a difference together



### What did we do on our Team Away Days?

- September 2021 theme: Our Vision and Values**
- The team used various creative tasks to explore personal and team values. The service vision and mission statements were reviewed; a final service vision was agreed (see top right)
  - During the closing group exercise the team created clay sculptures to reflect the vision (see right)
- May 2024 theme: Our Hands**
- An art therapist started the day by helping the team look for the bigger picture in any situation. The team then used an image of a mountain to reframe the issues and opportunities they face. The day ended with everyone in the team creating a tile based on their hands. The combined artwork acknowledges the unique part we all play in providing the WCS service, it is on display on our main clinic room. (see right)

### How does a Team Away Day improve the lives of our staff and service users?

Teams come back from away days motivated and energised. They have a renewed vision and passion for what they do and why. On the day there is opportunity to share concerns and generate ideas that will drive service improvements. They are more aware of each others perspective and team work improves. An away day can be the catalyst for changes that positively impact client care

### Outcomes

- **Biggest Mountains that the service needs to climb:** The lack of time to get things done, staffing shortages and wheelchair specific knowledge / experience
- **Helpful learning for team:** Edward de Bono's Thinking Valleys. The image of a mountain generated ideas, which helped to define issues that were mountains and those that were really molehills
- **Next steps:** Managing caseload sizes, understanding how time is used, and reviewing and updating the Eligibility Criteria

### Learning

- Because the team felt too busy, booking an away day was delayed. With hindsight it should have been booked sooner; before the team became fatigued, and the positive momentum from the previous day was lost
- Choosing the right type of activity is vital for team engagement. Verbal group work and sharing make some feel uncomfortable. Use of accessible, creative tasks enabled small group sharing and individual expression to feel easier

### Next Steps

- The team will begin job planning to gain better understanding of what each job role involves
- The team has begun managing caseloads and triaging new referrals differently
- The next Away Day will be booked in early 2025