

Growing charity receives £2,000 grant

Keynsham-based charity Make a Move has received a grant of £2,000 to enable it to continue to run a dementia project in B&NES.

The funds will be used to deliver unique music and movement sessions to older people with dementia attending day centres. The charity has done this work successfully for the last three years, but had been unable to run the project since September due to a lack of funding to pay the expert practitioners who deliver the sessions.

Make a Move approached the London-based Hospital Saturday Fund (HSF) for financial support and on Friday representative Shelley Whittington came to Keynsham Library to present the charity's founder and chief executive officer Michelle Rochester with the cheque and to find out more about her charity's work.

HSF, which dates back to 1873, is funded by the profits from the sales of HSF health plans. It supports medical-related charities



Michelle Rochester receives the cheque from Shelley Whittington, from the Hospital Saturday Fund

and has given away £850,000 this year.

Michelle said: "We are so grateful to the Hospital Saturday Fund for their support. These sessions have an incredible impact, including enabling beautiful moments of re-connection between the person with dementia and their carers or loved ones. It is a privilege to be part of those moments."

Research shows that movement to music can help slow the progression of dementia, and help maintain



connections to the memories and who the person with dementia was before the illness. Through movement, older people with dementia can also maintain and even improve their physical experience and social engagement in life.

Additional benefits of dance/movement therapy with older adults and people with dementia, including those in advanced stages, are an increase in vitality, self-expression, relaxation, alertness, self-esteem, social connection, alleviation of anxiety, loneliness, and isolation, flexibility and strength.

Make a Move, which has been running for five years, is a charity made up of, and working with, expert practitioners to support children, young people, older people, new mums, employers and the community.

Since 2011 Make a Move has grown from a charity working solely in schools to one that continues to work with children in 63 schools (which is funded by both BANES Council and schools), mothers suffering from postnatal depression (funded by the Big Lottery) and people who suffer from dementia.

Michelle was a dance teacher for nearly 20 years, working extensively in schools throughout B&NES and Bristol. This work extended from secondary to primary schools where she began to develop a programme to raise children's self-esteem by using music and creative movement to provide them with ownership of their own creative movement. This way of working led to additional outcomes such as improved school attendance, improved behaviour, and happier classes or groups of children.

What started as a way of making children happier has now been developed and modified to become a method of using music and movement to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the people who participate in any one of Make a Move's projects.

People able to self-refer, however most are sign posted to the charity's services and classes through health and social care professionals as well as teachers at schools and colleges.

Find out more at <http://www.makeamove.org.uk/>



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