Welcome to our summer newsletter.

The Comensus Community Involvement Team have been working with students for over twelve years, our aim is to enhance health and social care education through sharing personal experiences. Comensus now work across several Schools and as such are kept very busy. It’s often hard to take the time to share what we do or celebrate the work of our volunteers. We hope that this newsletter will serve to promote our service and keep you updated on our recent success stories.

We work across the University with the Schools of Social Work, Care and Community, Nursing, Community Health and Midwifery, Health Sciences, Sport and Wellbeing, Medicine, Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences and Dentistry.

Staff members are Lisa Malihi-shoja (Service User & Carer Lead), Janet Garner (Facilitator) Chris Essen (Facilitator) and Steven Seymour (Project Officer)
A Comensus members perspective of Manchester university pharmacy education conference

The day began sat at the Java Bar cafe, sipping a macchiato as I awaited Janet’s arrival at Manchester Oxford Road station.

On a more serious note the day was most informative and certainly heightened my awareness of all things Pharmaceutical!

Janet and I split up to 'garner' separate info and share what we'd learnt of the sessions we'd attended.

Having had previous exposure to Flipped learning by our learned young Stevie (thankyou Steven) I picked Nottingham universities take on flipped learning. A great deal was absorbed into my mind that causes me to think that FL is the way forward!

I particularly enjoyed the workshop on pharmacy students and long-term stress and learning that Mindfulness was being trialled as a coping mechanism for dealing with 'issues'.

So grateful to have had the chance to attend that day.

Thankyou
Janet, Maggie and I attended the East Lancashire Hospital Trust and Uclan Medical Conference

120+ delegates attended from all different medical professions and lay people, so throughout the day there was lots of networking.

It was a full agenda with workshops in the morning and speakers during the day including from Uclan, Professor Cathy Jackson, Dr Jenny McDowall and Professor St John Crean.

There was a very interesting talk from Prof Ian Cumming OBE, CEO of Health Education England as well as presentations from Dr Amanda Doyle and Dr Damien Lynch.

School of Nursing Involvement Advisory Group

By Chris Essen

The School of Nursing are keen to have a more integrated approach to how service users and carers contribute to its business. From the start of the new semester, in September, they will be hosting a monthly Involvement Advisory Group, made up of service users, carers and teaching staff from the different fields of nursing.

This is a very timely move, because the BSc Nursing Degree is coming up for revalidation, which means that we will be reviewing everything taught on the course and making sure it appropriately incorporates service user and carer voices.

The group will also offer a more general forum into the future, for staff to come and talk about their involvement ideas and seek advice on how to take these forward.
Comensus visit Salford Quays for their summer day out

By Arthur Chappell

The meal at the Salford Quays Beefeater was terrific, and all the better for the company of about twenty Comensus staff and volunteers. Everyone respected the meet up times which I’ve never known before on any trip anywhere. Unprecedented!

Several drivers kindly offered lifts to those of us who don’t drive. Many thanks all round there.

More real ale might have been appreciated at Beefeater but the food and service were faultless.

We sat on the quayside in the blazing Summer heat, envying those brave souls who were enjoying cold refreshing looking water sports like canoeing, raft riding, surfing and swimming in the former Ship Canal.

We had a choice of destinations to explore between the meal and our return transportation. The Lowry art gallery, the Lowry Outlet shop and entertainment complex, and as chosen by me and a few others, The Imperial War Museum. I have visited all the Quay centres before being from Manchester myself.
The Imperial War Museum (North)

Now celebrating its 100th anniversary, the Salford IWM is housed in a very distinctive building designed to look like the peeling shrapnel of an exploding shell. The museum captures the horrors of modern warfare though with strongest emphasise on the First World War. Exhibits include the field gun that fired the very first shell fired by the British in the Great War. Further in, the museum commemorates a soldier hot and wounded in the opening salvos on the Somme and left wounded in No Man’s Land for a staggering two weeks before he was rescued and he survived.

The extraordinary film shows with all walls, ceiling and floor used to project a three dimensional sense of being under fire, or in the heart of the Blitz, mixed with commentary from those who really were there. Civilians, women, children, refugees, the nurses, the concentration camp survivors, conscientious objectors – all are represented.

There are chilling reminders of the small wars, the Spanish Civil War posters, The Cold War is there, toy helicopters made from hell casings sold as souvenirs in Vietnam in the aftermath of the war there, Fascist propaganda tract, including those of Oswald Moseley, and many photos of war ravaged weary faces of people who just wish the fighting will end so they can reunite with loved ones. There is a shattered girder from the ruins of the World Trade Centre following the 9/11 tragedy – a scary reminder of the War we all saw on TV brought even closer to home.

As we left we were invited to answer ‘a few questions’ for a visitor opinion survey – the one criticism I had was how that questionnaire lasted over twenty minutes. We returned to the Beefeater for a few more drinks before getting in the cars and returning home to Preston. A big thank you to everyone at Comensus, especially Peter who was driving the car I travelled in.
Compassion

By Anne Rawsthorne

Look at the picture who do you feel compassion for?

The little girl—lost, afraid, alone, hungry and cold. Where are her parents, extended family, siblings, her blue fluffy rabbit, are they all dead or did she just get separated from them? When did she last eat, sleep or feel safe? What horrors has she seen—will she get flash backs all her life, will she even live more than a day or two what terrors are behind her, what more is to come? Poor poor little girl lost and alone but just for this moment safe, she has found someone to lean on, someone to protect her, but what will tomorrow bring, further misery, hardship or a ray of hope? Poor little girl.

The Soldier—he doesn't look very old but he has obviously seen combat. He looks as if he may be part of a pals unit. Where all the young men in the street joined up together, how quiet is that street of two up, two down houses now. No laughs and cheerful jokes as the teenagers push each other about on their way to work at the local mill or ship yard., just a street of mothers dreading the sound of a knock at the front door. He looks as if his wounds have been dressed. Will he be sent home or patched up and returned to the front. How many of his pals are still there he now knows the stress of battle, can he face going back again. When will his war be over—what is happening at home? Are his family managing without him and his wages. Who helps look after his aging grandfather now? Will they all survive?

The Nurse—there she stands tall and straight. Her apron is still clean so she only just came on duty. Was she up all night in theatre caring for the wounded? Has she had breakfast, how many hours will she work today, has she got backache, are her feet sore where her boots left the mud?

Why did she choose this job? What of her family back at home, has she had a letter, what did she tell them in hers—that ’all is well here?’ can she cope another day, week, or month? How can she be strong enough to support all the people who need her? She and her colleagues will do their best—but.

Will this war ever end?

So take a good look, have a good think and tell me again who you feel compassion for?
Forthcoming events

Wine Tasting, Antipasti and Live Music (inc Raffle)

When
Friday 8th September
19:30 onwards

Where
Chorley Sporting Club
Duke Street, PR7 3DU

£15 a Ticket

A charity event to support the Great Britain Wheel Chair Rugby campaign to compete in the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic games. Event will be hosted by Stuart Robinson AKA Legless Robbo

Tickets Available through —
Alison / Nigel Holgate
Email: aliholgate@sky.com
Mobile: 07525733543
Or Barrica Wines, Botany Bay

Preston Arts Festival 2017

The 16th Annual Preston Arts Festival runs from Sunday 1st October through to Sunday 15th October. The festival will be officially launched by the Mayor of Preston in the Minster on the afternoon of Sunday 1st October followed by a free concert.

The Festival is organised every year by Preston Arts Association with the aim of promoting awareness of the arts in Preston. It provides a showcase for local arts organisations and individuals as well entertaining and enlightening audiences and providing opportunities to have a go at new skills. Over 50 different events will be taking place in the two weeks of the festival. These include theatre, workshops, films, exhibitions and fairs, guided walks, talks and a wide range of performance events. The Festival events guide giving all the details of content, times, location and price (many events are free) will be available in a large number of locations from the beginning of September.

Preston Arts Festival is once again pleased to co-operate with the In 4 Film Festival, details of which are included in the events guide as part of the overall festival. By Mike Cracknell.
Films start with live music performances at 6.30pm and are followed by an audience debate covering the topics highlighted in the film.

Monday 9th October 18:30
Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close

Tuesday 10th October 18:30
I, Daniel Blake

Wednesday 11th October 12:30
Trolls—sing along version

Wednesday 11th October 18:30
A Monster Calls

Thursday 12th October 18:30
Dallas Buyers Club

Friday 13th October 18:30
Still Alice

Burnley Screenings
University of Central Lancashire: Princess Way, Burnley BB12 0EQ

Tuesday 17th October 17:30
Cake

Wednesday 18th October 12:30
Infinitely Polar Bear

The Comensus group are regularly looking for new volunteers, so if you yourself or someone you know would like to join us please do get in touch.