



The Camre Bursary Scheme was launched on 28 July 2009. It was established through a partnership between North Wales Police, North Wales Probation, The Community Justice Integrated Services Board for North Wales, Social Firms Wales and CAIS Ltd and included a donation of £50,000 from The Welsh Government.

To date, 240 applicants have received funds from the Bursary. Most requests come from individuals who require some financial support to further their employment/training prospects, and a few requests come from groups to assist in sport or leisure activities which prove successful in helping team building, confidence building and mutual support for those who take part.

The partnership panel that oversees the fund and scrutinises all the applications has requested that a short review should now be compiled to keep a check on the benefits of the fund and that it is still achieving the original goals.

Introduction:

A feedback questionnaire (see appendix 1) was sent to 84 recipients of funding through the Camre Bursary Scheme. A total of 18 (21.4%) were returned, which is slightly less than average for evaluating a service. However, it shows important feedback and can inform the need for the future of the scheme.

Results:

All 18 questionnaires received, gave positive responses to the questionnaires. All felt that the Bursary had helped in some way even if immediate employment or training had not been achieved.

Groups – Two responses

Two questionnaires were received from groups, which have carried out their own review of their individual projects, which is beyond the scope of this review. It is clear, though that the Camre Bursary funding has enabled the on-going running of the projects which then benefits the participants.

One of the groups wrote: "For the past two years the Bursary has been vital for the development of our delivery in the area and has had a huge impact on many people's lives".



The other group wrote: "It showcased recovery, supported ***, and their development and journeys. People found work, volunteering, learning, recovery and friendship".

It is clear from the above that the Bursary has brought benefit to the organisations in a way that may otherwise not have been realised.

Individuals – Sixteen responses

Having been asked: Do you feel that the course(s) you attended helped with your personal development/recovery journey?

100% responders answered, "Yes". This is important to note because not all found employment or achieved their main goal but still there is a positive feeling about the course they attended helping them in some way.

Seven individuals (have found employment directly as a result of being given the Bursary. The benefits of this have been varied and include:

- an increase in confidence
- being able to provide for family
- an increase in self-esteem
- long-term job prospects
- having permanent accommodation.

The eight individuals who have not yet found employment, still report a positive outcome of receiving the Bursary. All feel that it has given them a chance of getting a job even though it has not yet been realised. All felt that the Bursary has helped them move on with their lives. The comments include:

- it has given me stability
- it has put me in a position to set up my own business
- I know I have a chance of employment
- it is helping me in my voluntary work
- it has made me aware of the importance of looking after mental and physical health
- I have gained self-esteem
- I feel better about myself
- I have a sense of achievement.



These comments are particularly important because it shows the lasting effect the Bursary can have. The benefits appear to be the same to those who have not been able to find employment as those who have. The hope is still there and job seeking is apparently ongoing.

Laub and Sampson (2003) cite stable employment as an effective indicator to recovery in substance users and this view has consistently been upheld by research literature over the past 15 years. The outcomes of the Camre Bursary appear to support this too, despite the small sample.

All responders were asked if they felt that the course they had attended had helped them physically/mentally.

Thirteen people responded "yes" to this and the reasons varied considerably. Some felt mentally much more stable, it gave a vision of long-term goals, money was seen a good thing and future prospects were exciting. One person wrote that it had reintroduced a number of good things in life that had been forgotten. Another felt better because it was the first qualification they had ever achieved.

Conclusions

Whilst it is difficult to draw conclusions from small numbers, it cannot be a coincidence that all responses showed positive results of having been granted the Camre Bursary.

It is important to note that 43.75% of recipients found employment. This equates to a cost of £6,512.60 per person.

In 2011 it was reported on "Dragon's Eye" that the European Regional Development Fund had paid out £213m in grants and by May 2011, 4849 had been created which equates to a cost per job of £44,000!

Looking at a specific project, Peer Mentoring, which received European Funding of £8m over 3 years ending in 2015, the cost of finding employment had reduced considerably to a cost per job of £7,919.

The Camre Bursary Scheme is clearly a "cheaper option". But, of course, it pays out grants to people who are already relatively stable and perhaps need less support than some others. On that basis the cost is bound to be less.



However, the results of the questionnaire do show that even if people do not gain immediate employment, hope does not disappear. The effect on the mental state and substance use has a lasting impact, which is vital for ongoing stability.

Best and Gilman (2010), suggest that activity, and this might include employment, increase the recovery capital that people collect when participating in activity and this has a ripple effect on families and communities.

The benefits of the Camre Bursary must, therefore, not be underestimated, as it is clear that the benefits are not just for those who are in receipt of the funding, but there will also be a positive effect on those around them such as their families, friends, or community.

It is hoped that the Bursary will continue with all partners participating as the benefits surely outweigh the alternative.



References

Best, D. and Gilman, M. (2010) **Recovering happiness, Drink and Drugs news**, 15 February 2010

Laub, J.H. and Sampson. R.J. (2003) **Shared Beginnings, Divergent lives: Delinquent Boys to age 70**. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press