



## **Report for the Nineveh Charitable Trust**

**February 2022**

We would like to begin by thanking the Nineveh Charitable Trust for the £2000 grant you so kindly provided to Cerebral Palsy Plus for our Talking Therapies and Remote Support project.

The Covid-19 Pandemic really threatened the health and wellbeing of our members who were experiencing increased levels of social isolation and exclusion. This grant allowed us to alleviate some of this for our members, by allowing us to continue to expand our remote and face to face talking therapies and support service, at a time when it had never been more vital to keep our members connected.

We are proud to share some of the achievements we made with the project over the past 12 months:

We have supported more people with Cerebral Palsy and their families than ever before, our membership now stands at over 270, meaning that we continue to grow our membership year on year. Members are increasingly engaging with us remotely, the more virtual events we deliver, the more people find them enjoyable and easily accessible and in turn the demand has grown. Some members who were resistant at the beginning of the pandemic are now really enjoying getting involved in our online support.

Up until our face-to-face services started to resume in October 2021, we were delivering 35 hours per week of remote support via 8 part time members of staff. We had to enlist more staff time to providing remote support due to demand. Now that we are meeting in person again, we continue to provide 25 hours of remote support per week and staff contact an average of 80 members per week via zoom groups, meetings, individual telephone calls and emails.

In addition to group Zoom sessions, our staff also made hundreds of one-to-one calls to members who required it. This was completely tailored to meet the needs of each member individually. For example, some members required a couple of calls a week and others only required a more occasional call. We were able to successfully deliver such bespoke support due to the strong relationship that our staff work hard to build and maintain with our members. This experience has certainly reinforced how valuable these relationships are, and how important our passionate and dedicated team of staff are.

We also encountered many challenges over the past 12 months, including responding to requests from our members for tablets and software. We felt it was important to support members with this if required, to ensure that no one was further excluded due to lack of access to technology, however lack of equipment and access to the internet was an issue in some cases. We combated this by trying to provide as much IT support as possible, and we were able to secure a local IT company to make visits to some of our members in residential care settings, to ensure their IT equipment was sufficiently set up so that they could benefit from our virtual support.

We have learned a lot over the past year and have made some unexpected discoveries. The remote support we provided was so well received and enabled us to engage with new members that had never attended our face-to-face support services. The Zoom sessions have been so popular and there is a real appetite for them to continue now that we are returning to in person support. This is something unexpected that we will facilitate, as we understand how important it is to be guided by our members, and we always strive to listen to individuals and adapt our service provision to meet the needs of our members where possible.

To conclude, this project aimed to provide face-to face and remote support to our members, to alleviate some of the social exclusion that many people with Cerebral Palsy face, and which increased significantly during the Pandemic restrictions. We feel we successfully achieved what we set out to; we know this because our sessions grew in popularity week by week. We are proud of the way we were able to adapt to meet the diverse needs of our members and were able to continue to be a valuable source of support. Although we will continue providing remote support, we are delighted to now be meeting many of our members in person again. The support of the Nineveh Charitable Trust truly helped us be there for our members when they needed us most, and provide a high level of holistic support.