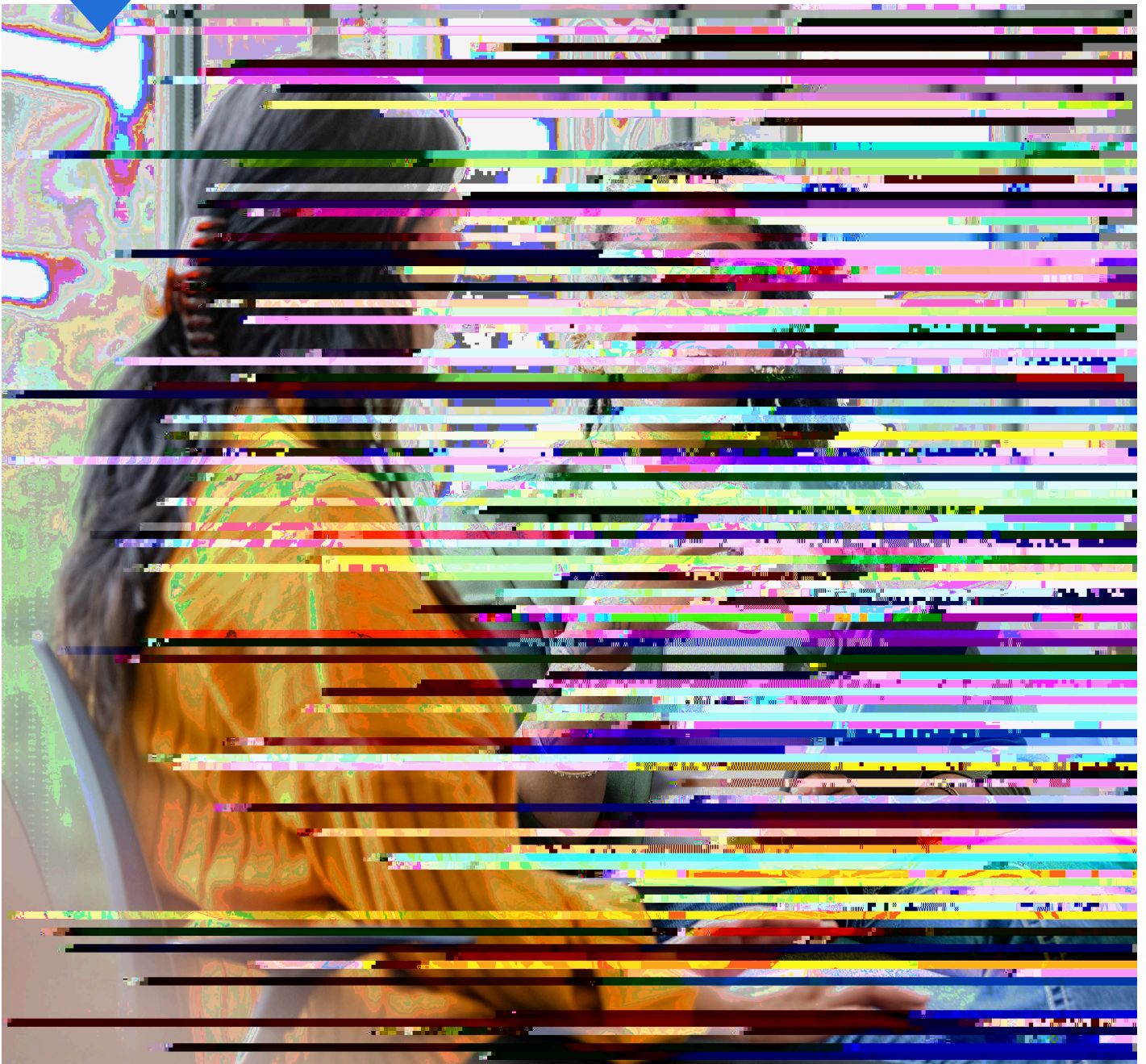


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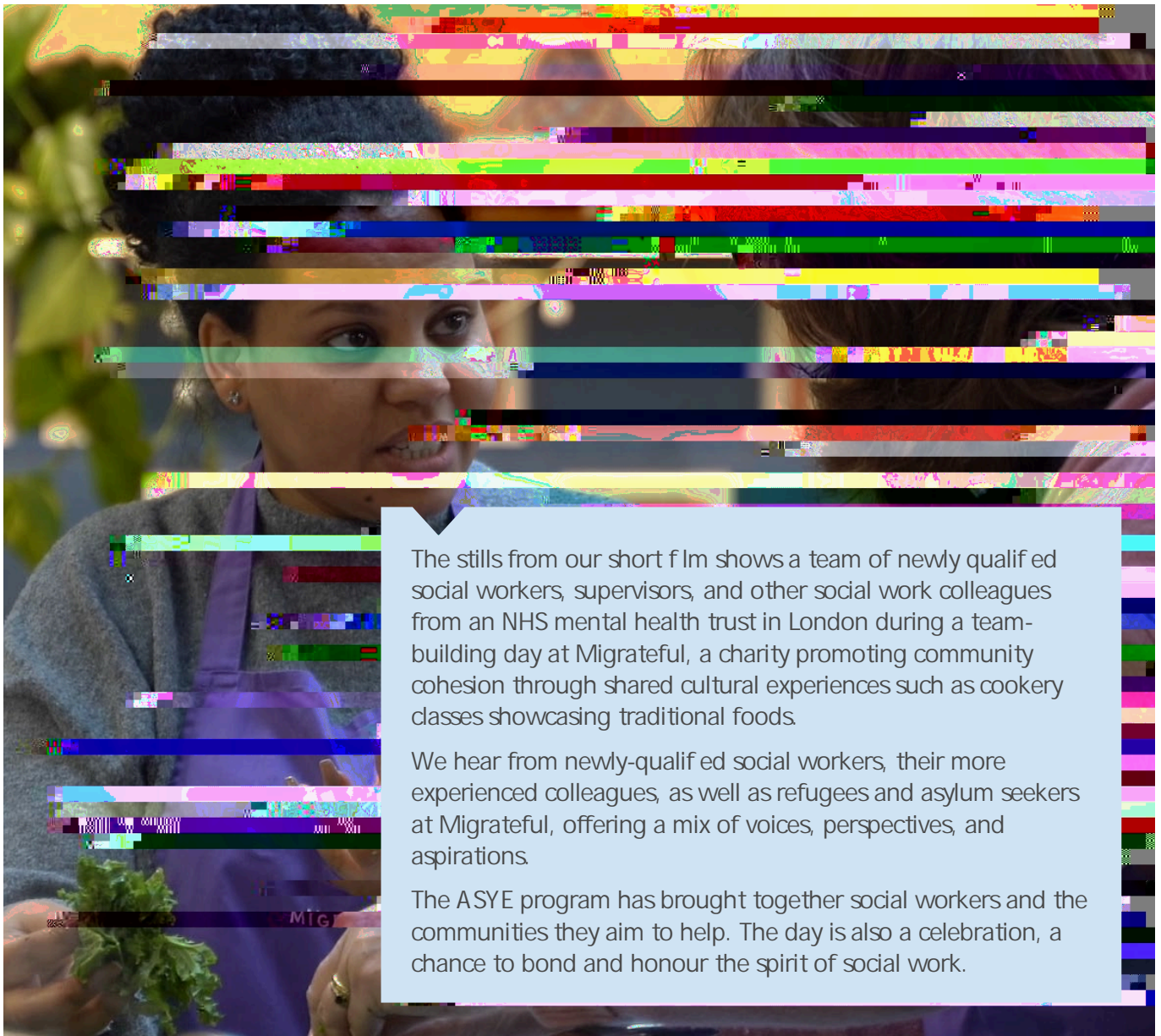
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1. Introduction

environment for newly-qualified social workers, supervisors, and other social work colleagues from an NHS mental health trust in London during a team-building day at Migrateful, a charity promoting community cohesion through shared cultural experiences such as cookery classes showcasing traditional foods.

- ☐ providing an overview of the expectations of the ASYE and how it is currently delivered;
- ☐ showcasing good practice;
- ☐ providing clear practical guidance for trusts to establish their own ASYE programmes; and
- ☐ by framing ASYE in line with the NHS Long Term Plan (2021-2028).

It is part of a suite of resources developed by NHS England (NHSE) in partnership with stakeholders to support social workers employed by NHS Trusts (see also [1.1.15](#) [2021](#)).



i. Why set up an ASYE programme?

The NHS is undergoing significant transformation in its workforce with the introduction of the [ASYE](#) programme.

Newly-qualified social workers are a vital part of the skill mix in mental health services and their effective recruitment and retention form a key part of meeting changing workforce demands. It is vital that NHS trusts ensure that they secure access to an ASYE programme for their staff, whether it is provided directly or in partnership.

ii. National workforce picture

The most recent [workforce survey](#) found there were 3,332 directly employed social workers (WTE) reported by NHS trusts as working in mental health services on the census date of March 31, 2023. Four per cent of social workers were undertaking the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment. Although the direct employment of social workers by NHS trusts has increased, it is nevertheless a small workforce when compared with other professions in the NHS; this can therefore pose challenges for organising early career support.

iii. Access to the ASYE

Access to robust ASYE can vary, depending on local arrangements and leadership. Some social workers may find they have no access to a programme. NHS organisations need to consider the ASYE systemically, alongside paying attention to sR

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5. Why employ NQSWs and what to think about

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5.1 Reasons for employing newly-qualified social workers

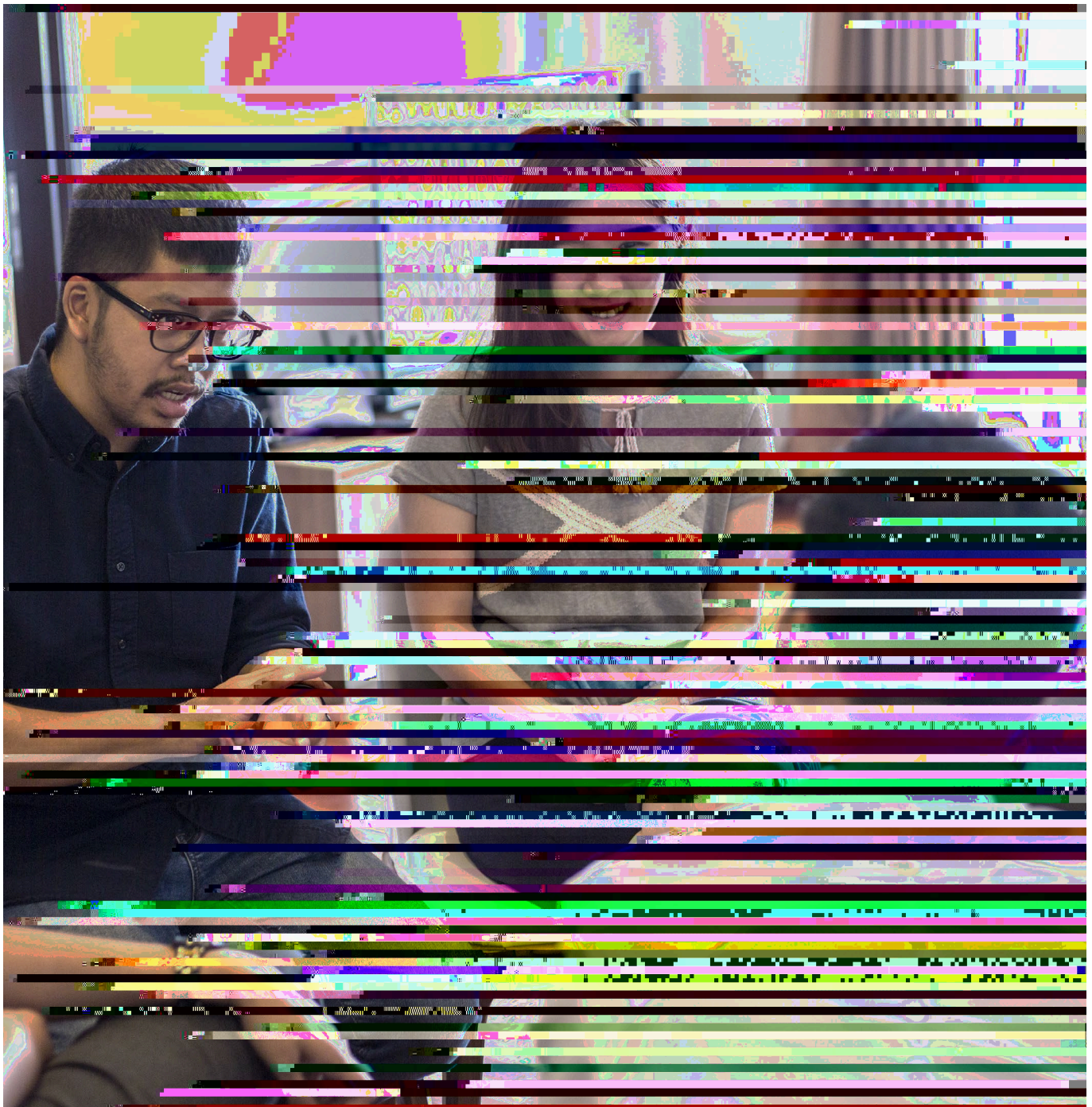


6. Key areas for NHS organisations to consider

6.1 The challenges

Challenges to the role of the mental health social worker and the development of the ASYE programme include poor understanding of the social work role overall and limited knowledge of professional requirements

This lack of understanding is compounded when trying to set up the ASYE programme in an NHS setting. A lack of understanding of the requirements of ASYE moderation processes, where experienced social workers are needed to review portfolios has resource implications for teams



7. What do early career social workers need?

7.1 The ASYE assessor role'

Providing experienced and skilled assessors to ASYE participants is crucial. Assessors offer guidance, support and a safe space for reflection, helping ASYEs navigate their professional challenges and develop their practice. Assessors often find the role enjoyable, and it helps develop their own supervision skills as well as keeping updated on social work theory and practice.

The support input is intense with minimum weekly supervision and close allocation of work to meet competencies. It is expected that protected time would be provided to allow for supervision, regular direct observations and submission of required reports.

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- ☒ support the NQSW in the development of their social work practice;
- ☒ provide ongoing improvement and confidence feedback to promote practice change;
- ☒ provide written feedback and reports of the NQSW's progressive development, leading to a pass/fail recommendation at the end of the programme for which they are professionally accountable; and
- ☒ ensure that the NQSW receives the support set out in the [: *+, -+ ' - \) \(. % ' \(D " # \\$ % & ! ' \) \(% . \(: % / 0 + \\$ \(; % ' 2 ! ' \)](#) (together with the NQSW's line manager).

Organisations can support ASYE assessors by providing comprehensive training, clear guidance on assessment criteria and ongoing support and supervision to ensure fair and consistent assessment processes.



7.2 For experienced social workers

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The ASYE lead in the organisation should routinely ensure that all suitable experienced social workers are asked about taking on this role in their supervision and annual appraisal.

The benefits of this role should be clearly outlined to social workers in the organisation.

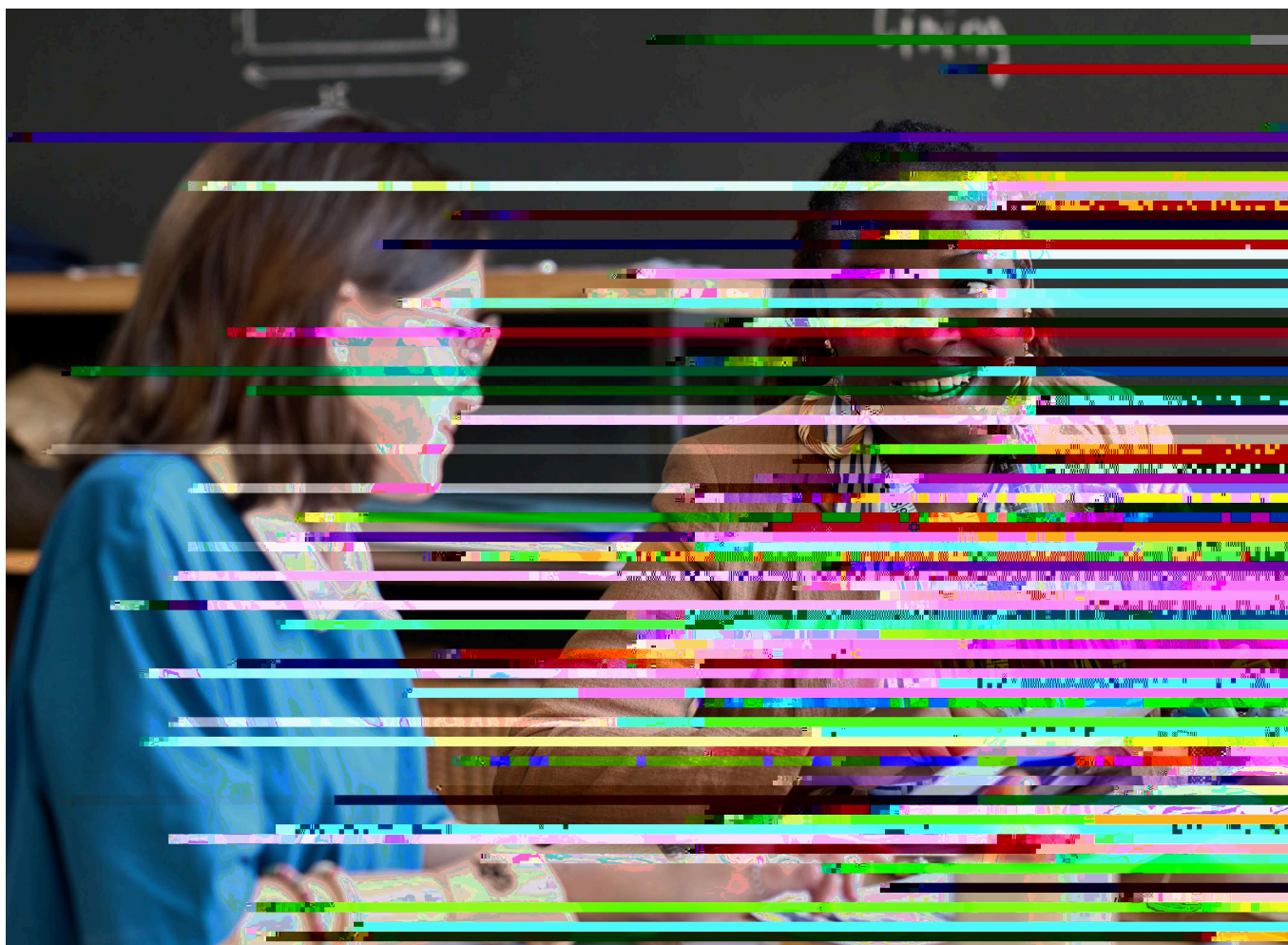
Organisational agreement regarding additional payment for taking on this role might not be available in every area.

7.3 Supporting teams and managers

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- ☒ provide regular performance feedback, opportunities for skill development, and resources to address any challenges faced by ASYEs in their roles
- ☒ clarify the role of the ASYE assessor and provide insights on how organisations can support them effectively within the NHS.
- ☒ explain the role of managers in the ASYE programme, emphasising their responsibilities in providing guidance, feedback, and support to ASYEs.

The one-page briefing for managers (Appendix 1) can be given to all team managers outlining the ASYE programme and their role in supporting a NQSW through their first year of employment.

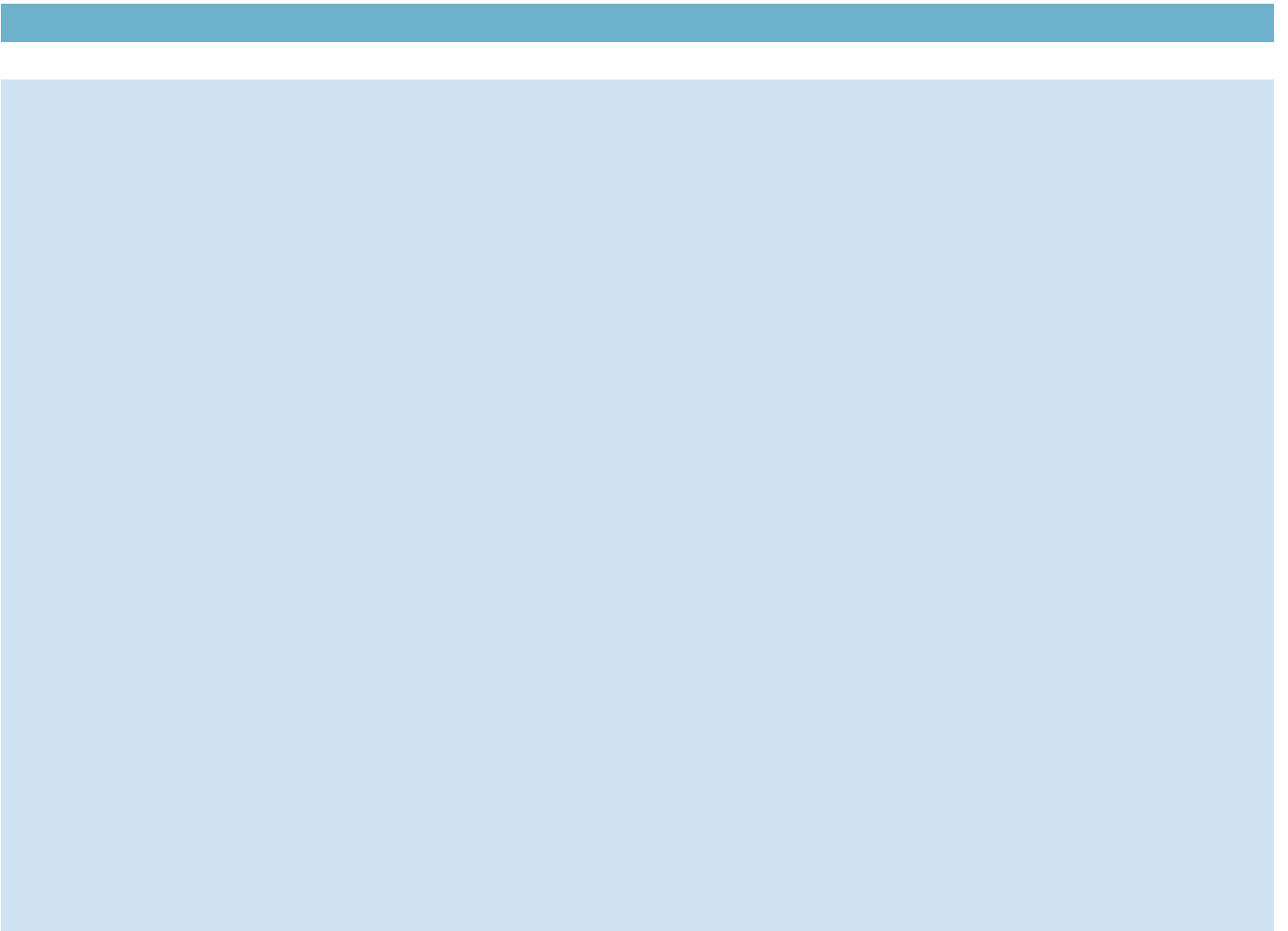


8. Anti-discriminatory practice and the ASYE

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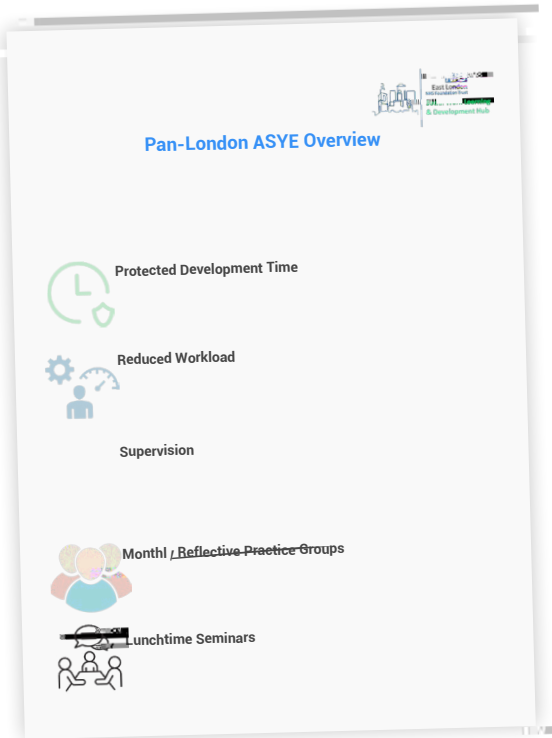
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9.2. Setting up your own ASYE in

There are many examples of mature ASYE programmes in the NHS to learn from.

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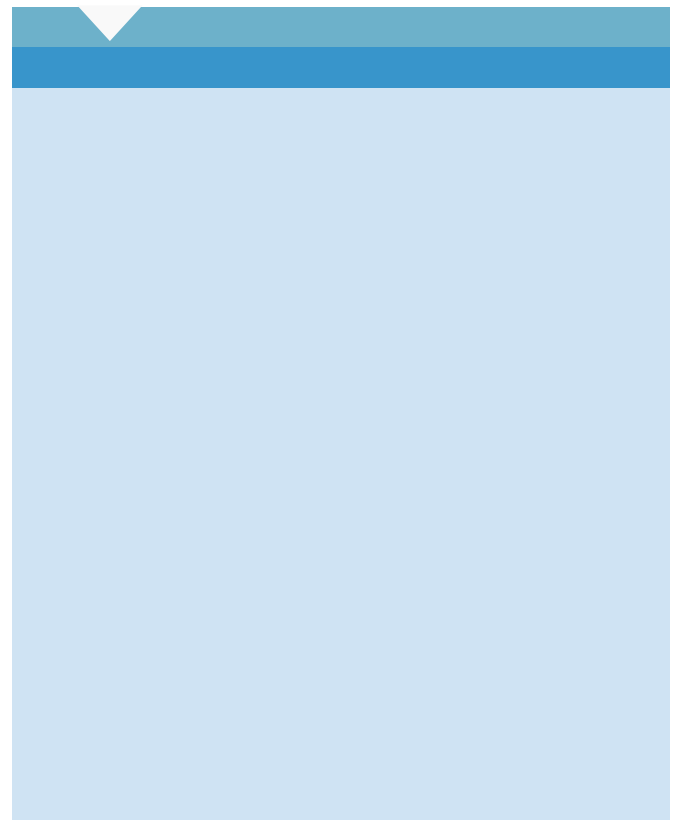
9.3. Legacy social workers

The legacy mentor programme is a national initiative, endorsed by NHS England, which forms a key part of improving experience at work and creating a sense of belonging. BASW provides access to mentoring/coaching forms of support for social workers.

This project, part of the Community, Health and Care programme, is a collaboration between Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System, Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System.

Legacy social work practitioners provide additional support to colleagues in early career as well as students in placements and those returning to practice. In this way, they support the delivery of the ASYE programme and a further year (year 2)

These roles can be for individuals who are at the end of their career or equally those who want to do something differen BR



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1. Abendstern, M., Hughes, J., Wilberforce, M., Davies, K., Pitts, R., Batool, S., Robinson, C., & Challis, D. (2020). Perceptions of the social worker role in adult community mental health teams in England. *Journal of Qualitative Social Work*.



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Vice-Chair Adults Professional Social Work Network.

