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2020 WOW! I asked some of my colleagues to describe 2020 in one word. A few choice words were; SHOCKING! BRUTAL! And FABULOUS (don't ask). An extraordinary year that took from us legends including - Sir Sterling Moss, Diego Maradona, Little Richard, Eddy Van Halen and "our Babs" (Barbara Windsor) to name but a few. 2020 taught us a lot. At The East Riding Partnership, It brought us all closer together, even though we were, and continue to work further apart from one another than ever before.

With the introduction of flash meetings which later evolved into the morning safety huddle (or as some of us call it, the safety cuddle) it allowed us to stay in contact with one another when working from home, setting a daily agenda and discussing important matters from the previous day.

Initially using SKYPE, there were some teething problems, with people unable to connect to the meetings, choppy video and delayed audio. The latter would make some conversations impossible and hilarious as people would be talking over one another, leading to a lot of awkward silences then six people all trying to speak at the same time.

Moving across to Microsoft teams, the meetings became much more manageable, and this has now grown in to a part of our every-day working life, something which I think will stick around long after the pandemic.

One of the highlights of my year has been delivering what we like to call “COVID scripts”. When service users were showing symptoms or had tested positive for COVID, two members of staff will adorn full PPE and we then take a 14 day isolation prescription to the pharmacist. The pharmacist bottles the Methadone or Buprenorphine up and we then deliver it to the service user at home. These deliveries always seem to be an adventure of sorts.

The pandemic brought many new ways of working for us at The East Riding Partnership. The new prescription process took a while to bed in and evolved quite quickly, bringing new challenges with it, something that we have now refined and operates like a well-oiled machine. At first “the struggle was real”. It was a whole new way of working and it was taking an entire week to complete. With the support of a wonderful team and many tweaks and changes, the whole process now takes us two days...I wonder if this is the prescription “new norm” (thinking emoji).

In 2019 we had no idea what 2020 would bring, we were going in blind and would have laughed at the idea of social distancing and wearing a mask in the office. These practices are now normal (if you’re hovering over my desk, please mask up!) and we now know what to expect from 2021 and as long as we continue to support one another; we are well equipped and prepared for whatever the new-year will throw our way. BRING IT ON!