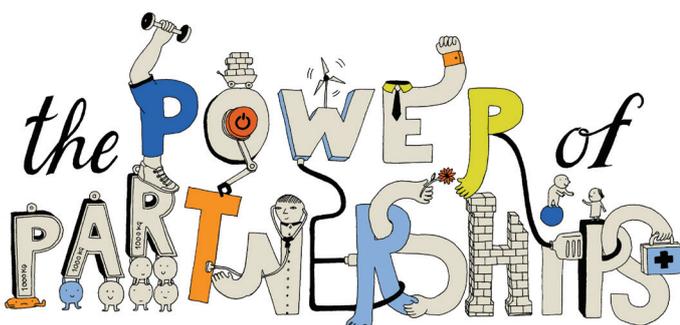

Building Health Partnerships

No. 04

One of a series of Partners in Practice case studies from the Building Health Partnerships programme.

Building health and wellbeing resilience in Durham

A Community Health Navigator scheme developed through the Durham Building Health Partnership (BHP) programme is supporting individuals to take ownership of their health and wellbeing, encouraging uptake of community-based services and reducing usage of primary health services.



IVAR Institute for Voluntary Action Research



NHS
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Key points

- External facilitation is incredibly helpful to kick start effective partnership working and collaboration, both between Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), the local authority and the voluntary community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector and among VCSE organisations themselves.
- Openness and trust are needed from the outset. The Durham BHP group wanted to create cultural change and move away from a traditional medicalised approach to commissioning and that could only be achieved if everyone understood and bought into this change.
- Working with diverse communities, from ex-miners and sheep farmers to office workers and professionals, needed an approach that could adapt to different users and contexts and BHP supported the development of this approach.

“Through BHP we now have a common understanding of health needs. We have been able to pilot things we’ve never been able to make happen before.”

ABOUT BUILDING HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

The Building Health Partnerships programme aims to improve health outcomes through supporting the development of effective and productive partnerships between Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local authorities and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. Supported by NHS England, the programme is delivered by Social Enterprise UK in partnership with the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR). It takes a facilitative approach, working with a cross-sector group.

“Sometimes an impetus is needed to bring people together. Building Health Partnerships provides that. By focusing on just a couple of main priorities we have given ourselves the chance to see real, measurable results.”

The core sessions include the following:

- a diagnostic session to create a shared understanding of the national and local health policy context
- a partnership development session to cement partnership working and develop an area-based action plan to address the key challenges
- an expert seminar to tackle specific local needs and build local knowledge
- a partnership development session to embed learning and review delivery of action plans
- additional bespoke support and facilitation from a dedicated facilitator.

➔ Find out more: www.socialenterprise.org.uk/buildinghealthpartnerships

Background

Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgfield Clinical Commissioning Group (DDES CCG) had already been working in close partnership with more than 140 local stakeholders to co-design and develop a stroke prevention commissioning strategy.

Among the barriers to patients taking action to prevent stroke, they found that GPs were confused about the services available from the voluntary and social enterprise sector (VCSE). To address this, the DDES CCG and three Durham voluntary sector infrastructure organisations wanted to draw up an assets map of the sector and design a commissioning and referral model that GPs would find easy to use.

Through enabling voluntary organisations to play a key role in designing and implementing the stroke prevention strategy, they would also create resources and an approach that could be applied to other conditions. The Building Health Partnerships (BHP) programme was a chance to undertake this work with a wider range of partners and influence the perception of the VCSE sector with commissioners and the public.

What we did

Durham BHP partners attended an expert-led seminar to hear more about stroke interventions; the use of brokerage systems for referrals and the power of social media for communications and information.

They agreed that each of the three VCSE infrastructure organisations would employ three Community Health Navigators (CHNs) to manage referrals from GP practices.

The CHN service would ensure that clients who did not require a specific medical intervention were supported to access local activities and services that could help to improve their health and wellbeing.

CHNs would work with VCSE partners to develop pathways of support for individuals and create and deliver personal activity plans through one-to-one consultations.

They appointed Pioneering Care Partnership to coordinate the project, providing a common induction process and managing the three CHNs, helping them to share information, databases and recording policies.

Our approach

The BHP programme brought together representatives from the local authority, public health, voluntary organisations providing front-line service delivery and infrastructure bodies.

They agreed to:

- develop new approaches to stroke prevention and other health issues
- ensure that the model works in different contexts
- link this work to ongoing activities and structures.

A number of projects were already looking at how volunteers could support people with long-term conditions. One of these was providing a single point of contact for people who wanted to connect with others who were living with similar conditions or circumstances. At the same time, an established mental health project was looking into social prescribing, with GPs providing prescriptions for volunteering.

All of these provided invaluable experience and knowledge for the development of the stroke prevention project.

The partners also undertook extensive engagement with GPs to ensure that they understood and knew how to use the new CHNs. They recognised that a culture shift was required and agreed to identify GP 'champions' who could help communicate with this key group.

Several further initiatives have been put in place to boost the success of the project.

- Voluntary organisation Veterans at Ease agreed to pilot it with their own users across Durham to test the model in different contexts.
- A map of local VCSE provision is being developed and two local organisations already linked to working with stroke prevention are providing information on risk factors and lifestyle choices.
- A university partnership body has been approached to undertake a research programme into the new model and the DDES CCG is utilising its own evaluation approach for the project.

What was the impact?

The Community Health Navigator service was mobilised across Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield (DDES) in October 2013.

By mid-February 2014, they had engaged with 72 clients, referring 39 of them to 'Healthy Lifestyle' or 'Wellbeing' interventions including:

- drug awareness support
- counselling services
- healthy eating services
- services that promote and facilitate physical activity
- services focusing upon tackling obesity (promoting healthy eating)
- general health services
- carers support services.

Early responses from clients suggest that the service is having a positive impact on their lives. One client said:

"I found the Community Health Navigator a friendly person and she helped me find the right help I needed. The Navigator put me in touch with the Family Wise Team, SMART Money Team and introduced me to Healthy Eating. Without the help of the Navigator I wouldn't have had the support I had."

The Navigators have worked closely with the Stroke Association and Veterans at Ease to ensure that the CHN model works in different contexts and links to ongoing activities and structures.

Out of this work Durham CCG and VCSE are developing an experience-led commissioning team, embedding patient and partnership engagement in the commissioning process.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

 @bhealthp

Contacts on the project are:

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"None of that intelligence, or that opportunity to approach people, would have been available without this programme."

Social Enterprise UK

We are the national body for social enterprise. We are a membership organisation. We offer business support, do research, develop policy, campaign, build networks, share knowledge and understanding, and raise awareness of social enterprise and what it can achieve. We also provide training and consultancy for clients of all kinds.

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Institute for Voluntary Action Research

We work to understand, support and strengthen voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisation and management using action research. We work collaboratively; concentrate on problem-solving; and want our work to be relevant and practically useful.

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