



Welcome to the latest edition of the South Tyneside Social Prescribing Newsletter. Last month we promised you monthly updates moving forward. However, the day job has kept us busy (as you'll see later in this edition) so we're getting to you a bit later than planned. We're all human so I am sure you'll forgive us. As usual, grab a cuppa and settle in!

### *Good News Stories*

- front page and centre stage - let's hear about the impact our work has had on the individuals we work with

#### **Scott's Story**

Recently we met with Scott Mason who has set up his own Cocaine Anonymous group in South Tyneside. The purpose of speaking to Scott was for us to share the details of the group with those we work with who might benefit from his support. But then, we learned something – Scott had previously engaged with our service and the group he has set up is a direct result of the support he received.

Scott first engaged with our service in June 2021. Scott had already made some positive life changes and was keen to maintain these and keep moving forward. He told us that last year, he'd had a six-month period of sobriety during which he had felt “brilliant”; Scott was keen to work toward and maintain ongoing sobriety. In addition, Scott was feeling isolated, wanting to do more with his time, and was interested particularly in volunteering and how he could support others in the local community – “a sense of achievement from helping others.

Throughout his time with the service Scott was supported to;

- maintain financial wellbeing whilst volunteering by gathering information about permitted work
- identify and engage with volunteering opportunities including with a local food bank (Hospitality and Hope) and homelessness charity (NE Homeless)
- manage his emotional wellbeing as it fluctuated throughout his journey
- consider strategies for reduction and eventual abstinence from drug use including connection with Cocaine Anonymous at their most local group in North Tyneside
- increase his patient activation level (PAM) from a Level 1 to a Level 3 indicating that he has moved from a state of “overwhelmed and disengaged” to “taking action and achieving many behaviors at guideline levels”



Scott told us that our support was **“life saving and life changing”**



If you feel you would benefit from some support around your use of amphetamines and/or other stimulants, please contact Scott directly on 07961 037291

#### **“Sheena”**

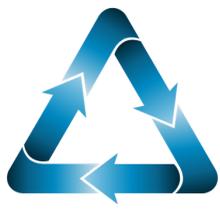
Sheena identified as having depression for about 2 years. She feels the trigger was linked to a number of factors; loss and grief, break up of a relationship, increased debt, alcohol misuse and a subsequent suicide attempt.

At the time of referral Sheena was currently living with a parent but this was far from safe as her step parent is addicted to alcohol and abusive towards her. Sheena has known this person for many years and has been a victim of abuse and threat of violence from them previously. Sheena did not have support from other family as relationships with her siblings were also abusive. Sheena had support from her employer who were providing Occupational Health support and counselling. Sheena had also used the email support with the Samaritans when needed and finds this a good method of support. Sheena identified the need to find her own home and reduce/clear debt.

During her time with the service Sheena received support from her Link Worker in the following ways;

- provision of education about domestic abuse and how this applies in her situation
- sharing information about contacting appropriate services including 101, Northumbria Police DA support, Women's Aid and Bright Sky app
- exploration of housing options and Link Worker connected Sheena to Bernicia (provider of social housing)
- sharing information about contacting the Initial Response Team (Crisis Team) number at times of mental health crisis
- exploration and setting of small but achievable goals
- support to change phone number to reduce abuse by this method and reported incidents to the police

Sheena has moved into safe but temporary accommodation with a friend whilst she looks for a more permanent option. She is continuing to access counselling and is considering CBT therapy. As part of her own self-care Sheena has returned to physical exercise (cycling, hiking and the gym) and attended seminars with motivational speakers.



# FIRST CONTACT CLINICAL

ENABLING HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

*"Team work makes the dream work"*

- an update on some the collaborative work we are part of in South Tyneside



**South Tyneside and Sunderland**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Increasing uptake of Diabetic Screening - a Social Prescribing approach

We have recently started a piece of work with the Diabetic Screening Service in South Tyneside aiming to increase the uptake of Diabetic Screening appointments using a Social Prescribing approach. Over the next twelve months, individuals who have not attended their screening appointment in the last three years will be contacted by a member of our team and offered a "what matters to you?" conversation. Through their engagement with us, we aim to increase individuals' knowledge, skills and confidence to better manage their health and wellbeing and support them to overcome barriers that might be preventing them from engaging in health care.

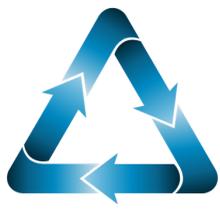
## What Actually Matters Meetings (WAMMs) - Borough-wide roll out

Across 2021, one of our Care Coordinators in South Tyneside has been working alongside CCG colleagues to pilot What Actually Matters Meetings, otherwise known as WAMMs. WAMMs are meetings consisting of representatives from multiple disciplines (such as health, social care, housing, VCSE providers etc.) that take place to discuss an individual, their support needs and how those needs can be best met by those represented at the meeting. WAMMs are different to the traditional MDT model; meetings that take place at a scheduled time during the day/week, are demanding of the time of those representing the multiple disciplines (sometimes last for two or three hours, or potentially even longer) and often result in attendees to the meeting hearing about individuals who aren't relevant for their particular service. A WAMM is scheduled to talk about a particular individual, only involves those services that are relevant to that individual's care and is significantly shorter than a traditional MDT so less costly in terms of time. Thanks to the amazing work on the pilot, the model is set to be rolled out across GP practices in South Tyneside from April 2022.



## Easing "Winter Pressures" for health & social care providers in South Tyneside

Led by South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group, codeveloped with the support of the Primary Care Networks, South Tyneside Adult Social Care and a number of local VSCE providers, and using the learning from work we did in 2020 with individuals most at risk from the Covid pandemic, we are delivering a piece of work supporting health and social care providers in the borough by proactively targeting those most at risk during the winter months. Individuals are being identified by their GP practice as "very high risk" or "high risk" of being hospitalised and/or causing extra pressure on health and care services over the winter period. We are offering a bespoke approach to engagement depending on the level of risk associated with the individual, using tech solutions such as VoiceScape, the support of volunteers and our own Care Coordinators to contact individuals, ascertain their needs and offer ongoing support. Local organisations South Tyneside Council, Groundworks, Inspire, Vision & Hearing Support, South Shields Football Club, WHIST, Your Voice Counts and Age Concern have also been involved in the developing and cascading of a Winter Ready Checklist. This is a great example of how we can pull together across the borough in times of need and we extend our thanks to everyone who is part of this important piece of work.



### Gateways Team Update

- exploring, testing and embedding pathways that enable us to deliver our purpose to harder to reach cohorts



#### Force for Change Project

In 2021, South Tyneside Council received funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund to establish a Link Worker model for local people with an Armed Forces connection. The aims of the project are;

- Embedding referral pathways for individuals with an Armed Forces connection into our local behaviour change and social prescribing services
- Connecting individuals from the Armed Forces community into local services available to them
- Developing an understanding of the needs of individuals with an Armed Forces connection through information gathering activities
- Using this information to develop training to support service providers in the area to better enable access to the Armed Forces community
- Develop and deliver training/support to volunteers within the Armed Forces community with a view to them becoming peer mentors or “peer pals”

#### Mind the Gap - Commitment to Carers

Mind the Gap is a programme which aims to help Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) to identify and support carers from vulnerable communities through co-production and carer-led innovation.

In 2021 we were successful in being awarded funds through a codeveloped bid with the local authority (South Tyneside Council), Public Health and local VCSE providers. Our aim is to understand what matters to adult unpaid carers of people who misuse alcohol and drugs. As well as being shared with the ICS, South Tyneside Council have also committed to ensuring that the learning will shape the delivery of key priorities our local Carers Strategy.

#### NHS England and NHS Improvement



#### Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner Operation Payback and Violence Reduction Unit funds

In 2021, we were successful in our bids for funds from the Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner through their Operation Payment and Violence Reduction initiatives to develop pathways into Social Prescribing for individuals involved in, or at risk of, offending behaviour. The aims of the project are;

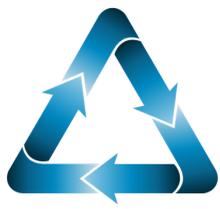
- Develop and embed referral pathways for individuals involved in, or at risk of, offending behaviour into our local behaviour change and social prescribing services
- Use a Social Prescribing approach with individuals with the aim at preventing offending or reoffending
- Focus particularly (but not exclusively) on younger individuals (aged 16-25) for whom these behaviours are not yet embedded



#### High Intensity Users Project

Following a successful pilot across 2019-20, in 2021 we were recommissioned by South Tyneside Joint Commissioning Team to continue our work in South Tyneside District Hospital, working with High Intensity Users of emergency/acute health services. We work closely with the Emergency Department and Psychiatric Liaison Team at STDH to identify and offer support to these individuals. Last year we worked with 128 individuals via this pathway.





# FIRST CONTACT CLINICAL

ENABLING HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

## Meet the Team

- we've had a few new faces join us since the last issue - let's meet them!



Scott Hunter  
Link Worker Coach



Julie McDougall  
Link Worker Coach



Anne Murray  
Health & Wellbeing Coach

## Work with us

At First Contact Clinical our job is to enable healthy change in the people and places that need it most. We are looking for people to join our teams who want to help us to do this.

Our teams believe that people are capable of change, are experts in their own lives and have individual strengths, needs and preferences. Our teams believe that people feel empowered in the presence of empathy and in the absence of judgement – when they are listened to, understood and valued.

As a First Contact Clinical worker your aim is to support the people you are working with to identify and draw on their strengths and those of the people around them, enabling them to make healthy changes.

We are looking for you to bring your unique self and life experience to this work which is a key asset in doing this role well. We recognise that we are people first and professionals second. We will provide full training and ongoing supervision to ensure you have the opportunity to continuously develop and reflect on your practice.

If you are interested in other people and working with them to enable healthy change then we want to hear from you!

Visit <https://firstcontactclinical.co.uk/About-Us/Job-Vacancies>  
to see our latest vacancies

## Your views wanted!

We want to keep you informed and up to date about the things that matter to you, in way that is accessible to you. Our Newsletter is one way of doing this. We try to include things that we think are relevant and we share it with everyone we think might be interested.

We'd like to hear from you about the communications you'd like to see from us (what do you want to know?) and in which format (how do you want to receive it?)

We'd appreciate if you could take a few minutes out of your day to complete a quick survey - it should take no more than 5 minutes - to enable us to continually improve our communications.



You can access the survey at  
<https://forms.office.com/r/j11Y3a2PMT>  
or scan the QR code below to take you  
straight there



Don't forget to follow us online for more regular updates too!