



April 2022

# BCPP NEWS

This newsletter is brought to you by Community Development and Health Network (CDHN)



Building the  
Community-  
Pharmacy  
Partnership

It is 21 years since the BCPP programme was first introduced, bringing communities and community pharmacy together to co-develop solutions to local health issues. The focus of the programme has always been on addressing the root causes of health inequalities (the social determinants of health).

In the early years, it was more challenging to convince partnerships to look beyond projects that focus solely on behaviour change. Today, thanks to a robust evidence base, there is broad acceptance of the relationship between social conditions and inequalities in health and this is strongly reflected at policy level.

The context in which we work however has never been more challenging. Poverty has always been identified as an underlying issue in local communities and one that BCPP projects focused on. However, we are seeing a steady increase in the number of applications that are supporting people, families and communities struggling with poverty, debt and deprivation.

Through the programme, we are witnessing an increase in the need for mental health support in communities to mitigate against the impact of poverty, the pandemic, austerity and economic hardship. Our focus on action

across the social determinants of health remains steadfast as does our commitment to community development approaches.

We look forward to the year ahead and are excited to receive applications from communities and pharmacies who are new to BCPP. This year, we are encouraging applications from groups supporting minority ethnic groups, those from the South Eastern Trust area and those representing the LGBTQ+ community and impact practice. We are delighted to have the first evaluation data set under our new BCPP outcomes framework. We are busy collating and analysing this data, which will form the basis of our next Impact Report. It is fantastic to demonstrate the impact of the programme at a regional level. This work has been delayed by Covid but we are sure it will be worth waiting for.

As always, our team offers a comprehensive range of support from the application process through to the delivery of your project. Just give us a call!



**Kathy Martin**

Strategic Impact Manager / [CDHN](#)



# AUTISM SUPPORT KILKEEL AND MAYOBRIDGE PHARMACY

## TIME TO TALK, LISTEN AND LEARN

Autism Support Kilkeel (ASK) raises awareness of autism and provides support and life enhancing services for people living with or awaiting Autism diagnosis and their families/carers in Newry & Mourne area. They assist members to achieve their maximum potential for community involvement, social inclusion and access to employment and other facilities.

The group partnered with Mayobridge Pharmacy for a Level 2 BCPP project working with two groups - siblings and parents of children with autism. Previously Autism Support Kilkeel had benefitted from the support of Contact, a regional charity for families with disabled children, to help them apply for and deliver a previous BCPP project. This time, the group felt confident to take the lead in delivering this project themselves, taking responsibility for recruiting participants and rolling out the project in its entirety.

The aim of this BCPP project was to improve access to information for families and build links between pharmacy and community to ensure provisions of services are being used. After completing the project, young people and their parents would have a better understanding of what the pharmacy has to offer, of coping strategies and a sense of not being alone.

Paul O'Hare, Pharmacist worked with ASK and the group members to plan the sessions, all based around topics which were relevant and would be helpful for them to know more about. Within the small group sessions, the parents and young people were able to share their fountain of knowledge with newly diagnosed families who are struggling to come to terms with everything that a diagnosis brings. Through the existing group, they already recognised the benefit of peer learning and support in the local community where families came together to support one another.



*Being around other siblings helped me and let me know I am not on my own. The evenings and events Sarah organised at the ASK BCPP siblings health programme were really genuine fun and I loved being part of something so positive and supportive.'*

**Callum, Project Participant**

As the BCPP programme was being delivered to young people aged between 11 & 16, the sessions needed to be as interactive and engaging as possible. With each topic Paul covered, he brought supplies from the pharmacy to show the different treatments available. Paul also used videos to help explain different conditions such as asthma and diabetes.

All parents will have engagement with the Education Authority during their journey and felt that SENAC would be a major source of support so they were invited to present at one of the sessions. Contact, a charity incredibly supportive of ASK, delivered a crucial session on how they could help the families feel valued and well informed.

The session by Victoria from Regenerate: Mental Health Hub was co-facilitated with the Pharmacist and was just brilliant - everyone was given diaries with useful tips around how to look after themselves and their mental health. The young people really opened up to Victoria and after the session, the group realised that there was a need for this service for the young people. They devised a new programme inviting all siblings/children with additional needs to avail of the Mental Health Hub.

Another co-facilitated session was with the newly formed Mourne Community First Responders who delivered a mini first aid session. Some sessions were specific to mums only and others were specific for dads however where a session was relevant to both, the group offered childcare to enable both to attend. Reaching both parents, and siblings as young carers, was an important

aspect of this project so that both were equipped with direct links to the community pharmacist which will assist them in achieving their full health and wellbeing potential. Improving health literacy of the participants means that they will be able to navigate the health system more easily and with confidence.

The BCPP project has helped Pharmacist Paul to better understand the issues faced by carers of disabled children and has increased his awareness of the community supports which families rely on in the area. He plans to use this knowledge to pass on to others in similar situations. As a result of the BCPP project, ASK also has more knowledge of what the community and voluntary sector can offer in the Kilkeel area, which is a benefit to the whole community and can be shared widely.

Sarah O'Hare, Programme Co-ordinator, told us about the siblings element of the programme saying *'To be a brother or sister of a child with a disability or additional needs is something special and it is so important to remember that siblings of an additional needs child will always have more responsibility and worry on their shoulders. In delivering this programme to the siblings of Autism Support Kilkeel, we were giving these special people time to talk, time to listen, time to learn, time to have fun and, most importantly, time to make new friends and know they are not alone! I have found this program very rewarding and it has been such a pleasure to meet such wonderful children.'*



*I have really enjoyed this BCPP programme with Autism Support Kilkeel. We have focused on common childhood illnesses with this group and discussed many ways the Community Pharmacy can help everyone in our community. The programme was led by the group's ideas and it was great to see young people coming together and having fun while learning something new at the same time.'*

**Paul O'Hare, Pharmacist**

# CORNABRACKEN AFTERSCHOOL CIC AND BROOKMOUNT PHARMACY

## DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING...TAKING ACTION

Cornabracken Afterschool Community Interest Company (CIC) is based in Omagh and provides integrated and affordable childcare in an environment that assists and enriches the children's development, education, life opportunities and enjoyment. Its services have a crucial role to play in ensuring that families have equal access to high quality childcare.

Partnering with Brookmount Pharmacy, the Afterschool service received £12,000 to run a Level 2 BCPP project with parents of the children around mental health, anxiety, isolation, loneliness and poverty. The aim of the project was to bring local pharmacy and community together to reduce health inequalities and improve health literacy in the local area. Developing a deeper understanding of the social factors that influence health and taking action on these factors was also core to this BCPP project.



Pharmacists Stephen Johns and Catherine Canavan worked with the group of 12 to co-design the programme and plan innovative and interactive sessions around areas of concern and issues currently facing the group members. The aim was to expand the circle of support available locally through community and voluntary sector organisations and also the pharmacy.

On one evening, the group concentrated on mental and physical First Aid. Using the fantastic literature available from Aware Defeat Depression and Action Mental Health, the group developed effective and manageable strategies to protect and enhance their health and wellbeing. As part of this session, the Pharmacists presented First Aid boxes from the pharmacy.



**“** I got so much out of this BCPP project including parenting advice from Parenting NI alongside really good advice from Brookmount Pharmacy. If I was to pick the session I benefitted most from, it would have been when Pharmacists Stephen and Catherine conducted the health checks. It was great peace of mind to get my cholesterol and blood pressure checked.’

**Project Participant**

*lasting and trusting bonds with each other and, indeed, the Pharmacists. We were extremely fortunate to have Pharmacists Stephen and Catherine in attendance at all sessions – the pair brought with them a wealth of knowledge and expertise which our group benefitted immensely from in regard to the enhancement of their physical and mental wellbeing. As an organisation, we were so delighted to have been able to offer the project to our parents, at a time when it was most needed.’*

This BCPP project enabled the group members to improve their sense of connectedness and belonging, they developed new skills, knowledge and experience during and upon completion of the project. The final night was a night of celebration, with the participants receiving a wellbeing health pack from the Pharmacists and interacting with an amazing speaker from a local Mental Health Charity with one participant commenting ‘*such a very enjoyable project and evening for all!*’

**“** Brookmount Pharmacy worked in close collaboration with Melanie and the Cornabracken team to deliver a really worthwhile, effective and purposeful project. The participants really enjoyed the sessions and the sense of community cohesion shone throughout. As a pharmacist operating within the community, I feel it is crucial to establish trusting relationships with our community members. The project was a real success and our key objective - to establish and build physical and mental wellbeing - was met throughout.’

**Stephen Johns, Pharmacist**





# WATERSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE AND MURPHY'S PHARMACY

## BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND SHARING LEARNING

Waterside Women's Centre delivers educational and support programmes for women and families from the local communities and provides information on a range of issues with a signposting or referral on system for those who require specialist support. The Centre provides a welcoming space for women to learn with free quality onsite childcare ensuring that women can access the opportunities on offer.

The Women's Centre participated in the BCPP programme previously and applied for a further Level 2 grant of £12,000 to work with young mums and older women on a 'Healthier You' project. The Centre partnered with Murphy's Pharmacy and Stephen Toland, Pharmacist would be supporting the women on the BCPP project.

This project aimed to support mental and physical wellbeing as we emerged from the pandemic, raising awareness of local pharmacy services and developing connections with community organisations which play a vital role in empowering people to improve their health and wellbeing.

The group of 11 women came together with the Pharmacist to co-design a programme of events. They would meet for 14 weeks to focus on the issues important to them. Ten sessions would be delivered by the Pharmacist and the remaining four sessions would be co-presented with community/voluntary organisations and Stephen, the Pharmacist.

After an energised discussion, the women decided on their programme and were excited to get started. Each week, Pharmacist Stephen updated the group on numerous services offered by the pharmacy including the minor ailments service, palliative care, smoking cessation, health checks and managing your medicines. Having the opportunity to interact with the group over a number of weeks, the pharmacist had time to explain and highlight the services on offer from the pharmacy, which some may have not been aware of thus ensuring that pharmacy services are better used by the group and their families. He also conducted health checks or MOTs as the ladies liked to call them!

As mental health was particularly important to the group, they asked Action Mental Health to deliver the MensSana workshop, covering mental health and emotional wellbeing through a range of activities tailored to the group. The group also availed of sessions on breast cancer, menopause, gut health and healthy lifestyle. They celebrated International Women's Day together bringing a friend along and learning about the array of health benefits from food. One participant who suffers from MS and had been shielding throughout Covid felt the BCPP project gave her the opportunity to meet other women and helped with her depression and anxiety.

These sessions delivered by external organisations ensured the group understood the support that is available for them in the wider community and also knew how to access that support. The pharmacist gained more extensive knowledge of services and support for health and social issues through these sessions.

During the 14 weeks, the women were open to develop and shared their new learning with others coming into the Centre. They tackled challenging issues through discussion and with support from each other becoming more open and confident as the weeks progressed. One participant told us *'The CBT sessions and the information session from AMH has encouraged me to go for help.'*

*"As I learned more about the issues and concerns of the group, I gained a better and more informed understanding of the factors and conditions that impact on the women's lives and that have a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Having this valuable opportunity to get to know and understand the women would never have happened without the BCPP programme."*

**Stephen Toland, Pharmacist**

*"The pharmacist was approachable and caring, I would have no issues contacting him for health advice in the future."*

### Project Participant

Another expressed her appreciation for the BCPP project saying *'The health MOTs were a fantastic way to start the project as we find it difficult to get GP appointments - it was great to get checked out.'*

As a result of the project, there has been a greater connection and engagement between all those who have taken part. It has given all involved the opportunity to learn from each other, share experiences and develop their skills, knowledge and confidence.

Rosemary O'Doherty, Waterside Women's Centre emphasised the benefit of the programme saying *'As an organisation situated in an area of high social and economic disadvantage, we are acutely aware of the many inequalities and barriers that marginalised women face on a daily basis. However having the opportunity to get to know the group over a number of weeks has given us a better insight on individual issues and concerns especially those relating to the current situation. As a result, we are now in a better position to offer continued help and support and signposting on for those who need or require specialised support.'*



# CRISIS CAFE AND MEIGH PHARMACY

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Crisis Café is a mental health service for young people aged 12-18 years providing support on all aspects of emotional and mental wellbeing. It is a youth led service with over 200 ambassadors managed and guided by practitioners with skills in mental health and participation. Offering Crisis Drop-In and Friendship Cafés, young people can access professional support on a non-referral basis, as well as peer-based activities and support to promote positive mental wellness.

The organisation partnered with Meigh Pharmacy for a BCPP Level 2 project where they would work with young people to develop a healthy and resilient mindset within a group setting. The project aimed to increase community connections, provide young people with increased accessibility to community support and reduce social isolation and loneliness which will increase help seeking behaviours.



“ I have learnt so much about the healthcare needs young people face and the barriers preventing them accessing this. As a direct result of the BCPP project, I am better able to help young people in the pharmacy and empower them with knowledge regarding health and choices. The project was so much fun, and I felt everyone opened up and shared which was really lovely.”

**Aine McNulty, Pharmacist**

With the growing mental health crisis across NI, Crisis Café wanted to respond to the mental health needs of young people arising out of disadvantage such as residing in deprived areas, within low-income families and experiencing multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences. Covid-19 had exacerbated this crisis creating new needs arising from the pandemic changing young people’s social lives, daily routine, education and creating difficulties in social connections.

Fifteen young people signed up to the BCPP project and developed the programme along with the Young Advisory Group and the Pharmacist. Empowering young people to make these decisions and be involved in the design of the programme provided them with a sense of ownership and encouraged attendance and engagement.





**“** *The Pharmacist covered a wide range of information about the world of medicine for young people. It was useful to learn that I can speak privately to the Pharmacist. I have since used this service.*

**Harry, Project Participant**

The group met weekly for 14 weeks in the Café exploring various topics chosen by them around positive mental health, coping strategies, health literacy, lived experiences and creating community connections. Ten lead sessions were delivered by Pharmacist Aine McNulty and four were co-facilitated sessions by Aine and community support organisations.

During the project, Aine, the Pharmacist also took time with group members for one to one support and guidance around health and wellbeing issues. Aine educated the group about the role of a local Pharmacy and its services and support improving health literacy amongst the group and knowledge of where and how to access the local services and support.

The group members were delighted to welcome Eating Disorders Awareness NI to the café for an educational workshop designed to increase knowledge and skills around eating disorders, wellness and recovery. Action Mental Health delivered sessions on positive mental health for young people with the opportunity to practise self-care and resilience techniques. Invaluable workshops from Garden of Music and Sticky Fingers Arts took place which explored the benefits of creative activities such as art and music in boosting confidence increasing engagement and resilience whilst alleviating anxiety, depression and stress.

The BCPP project supported the young people by positively impacting through improved health literacy and understanding of the social determinants of health. It provided the young people with coping strategies to

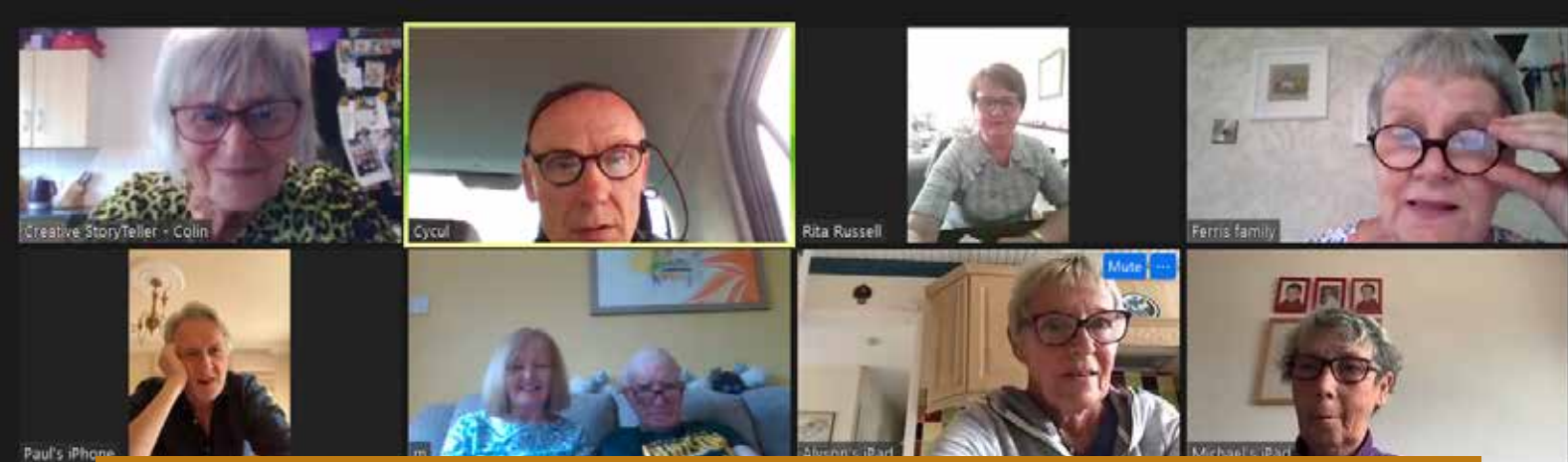
manage presenting mental health issues and increase confidence to seek support. The goal was to break down barriers to accessing services and increase help seeking behaviours and it is fantastic to see the young people utilising Pharmacy services more often after involvement in this BCPP project. One participant said he *‘learned pretty useful stuff*’ while another told us *‘Not everyone wants to go see the family doctor – it feels easier to go speak to the Pharmacist.’*

Grainne from Crisis Café highlighted how passionate the Café is about community development and continually seeks to empower the young people they support by reducing stigma, overcoming barriers and increasing help seeking behaviours. Grainne said *‘As part of the BCPP programme, we provided young people with increased accessibility to community-based support within a warm, inviting and non-stigmatising environment where they can avail of a range of activities and services to improve overall mental wellness.’*

**“** *The BCPP project offered a lot of learning for us and identified support out there that we didn’t know about.*

**Dean, Project Participant**





# CYCUL AND PAUL DONAGHY PHARMACY

THE BEST THERAPY LIFE HAS TO OFFER!

Cyclul is a social enterprise organising social cycle events that encourage participation through grass roots engagement. The organisation has worked with a number of councils and statutory bodies delivering social cycling events including Cycle for Life and the Over Fifties Club providing a safe neutral environment for all ages, genders and backgrounds.

Cyclul partnered with Paul Donaghy Pharmacy to apply for a BCPP Level 1 grant of £2,500 to work with a group of 12 men, women and older people around social isolation and physical wellbeing – all issues which were compounded by the pandemic.

The aim of the project was to provide a positive social platform for addressing social isolation in a neutral caring environment. Due to the pandemic and the associated shielding and caring responsibilities, many people lost social confidence to engage in external social activities. Financial deprivation also had an impact on social activities with many furloughed and some having

lost their jobs. The BCPP project planned to address this, giving participants the opportunity to engage as a collective group through tasks and team building exercises over a virtual cup of tea!

Using Zoom, Paul Donaghy Pharmacist led on four sessions. One session was around Balance for Injury Prevention informing the group that falls are the second leading cause of unintentional injury deaths worldwide and giving them some exercises to help with their balance. Paul also delivered sessions on the advantages of deep breathing exercises, walking benefits and the importance of cycling and how this can help sleep and synchronise our circadian rhythms.

Breakout rooms within Zoom were used so that people had some private space to talk openly about difficulties/worries with one or two group members rather than the whole group. Sharing concerns and opening up to each other happened organically as the group members became comfortable with each other and built up trust.

“The session on health and wellbeing was helpful re watching out for signs of diabetes and stroke. The section on strengthening your core muscles is something that I have been doing since the project ended as my balance isn't the best – also the breathing exercises.’

Dymphna, Project Participant

One of the participants, Rita, expressed her view saying the sessions were ‘very informative and touched on many common illnesses and remedies’ and she would now be living a healthier life by including exercising and a healthier diet.

Eugene Hamill, Cycul felt the BCPP programme allowed the group to deliver a series of interesting and enjoyable health related topics with Pharmacist Paul Donaghy. Eugene said ‘We made meaningful and lasting connections with many of the participants who took part in the sessions and this, in itself, is the best therapy life has to offer.’

“I really enjoyed our Zoom meetings – the information presented by Paul was interesting, informative and useful. Lovely to see friends again – a lifeline in the pandemic for many.’

Mary, Project Participant

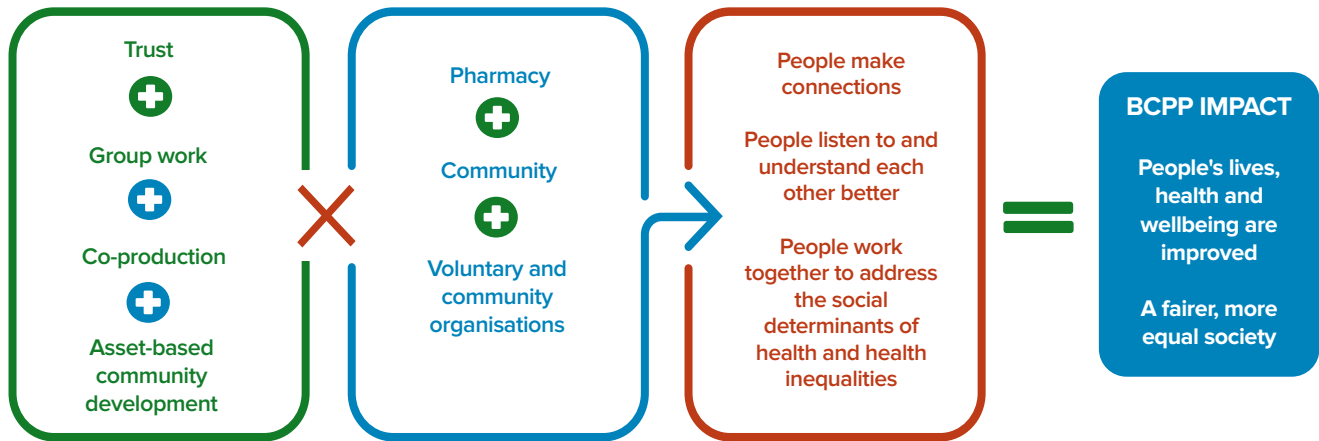
“It was my pleasure to team up with Cycul and deliver this series of talks on various aspects of physical and mental health. Although this BCPP programme was delivered through Zoom at the height of the pandemic, the guys at Cycul managed to create a warm friendly atmosphere where everyone felt comfortable enough to engage in a Q&A at the end of each session. I found this was very rewarding as it helped all of us through what was a very challenging time in our lives.’

Paul Donaghy, Pharmacist





To bring pharmacy and community together to reduce health inequalities using an asset based community development approach



**LEVEL 1** funding – grant up to **£2,500**  
project lasting up to six months

**LEVEL 2** funding – grant up to **£12,000**  
project lasting up to one year

Application forms and guidance notes are available from [cdhn.org/bcpp](http://cdhn.org/bcpp) along with the closing dates for the next round of funding. If you have an idea for a project, please contact a member of the BCPP team who will be happy to guide and support you.

028 3026 4606  
bcpp@cdhn.org  
cdhn.org

