

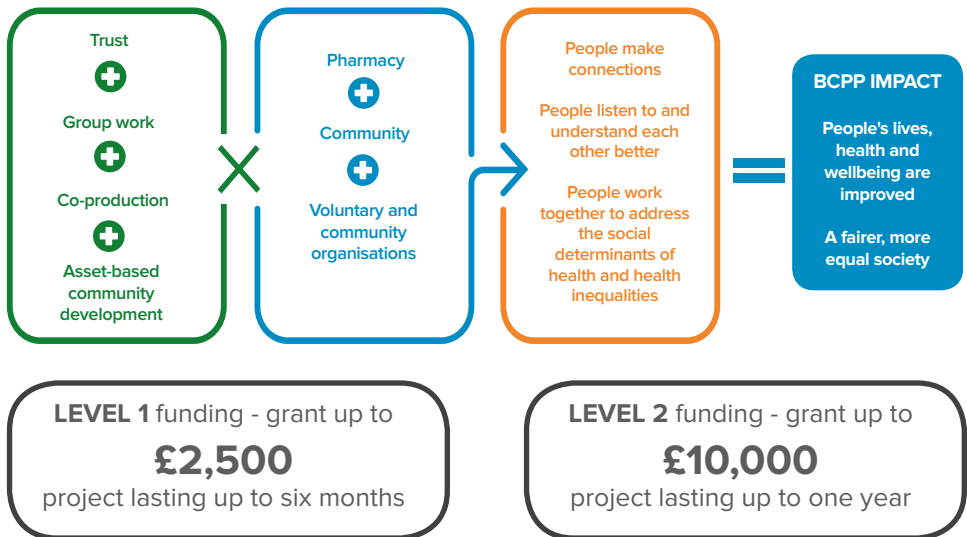


**Building the
Community-
Pharmacy
Partnership**

BCPP GRANTS PROGRAMME

BCPP Aim

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



We recognise that health is impacted by much more than the everyday lifestyle decisions that we make, important as they are. Research shows that social isolation can be as damaging for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. With this in mind, our projects aim to address these wider issues and tackle the root causes of poor health. These vary greatly for different groups of people and may include mental health issues, housing issues, low educational attainment, poverty or debt. Group work and relationship building is at the core of all our projects.

Each BCPP project must be a partnership between a community/voluntary organisation and a community pharmacy and make links with other support organisations in the community.

DOWN RIGHT BRILLIANT AND MEIGH PHARMACY

Supporting parents on physical and mental health

Down Right Brilliant is a parent led support group based in Newry working with children and young adults with Down Syndrome. Offering a Youth Club and Summer Scheme with activities such as dance, circus skills, football and outings to reduce isolation, the group aims to offer support and advice along with the space to build friendships and give the young people a place to call their own!

The group decided to apply for a BCPP project after identifying a clear need to educate parents on physical health, nutrition and mental health. Parents within the group were under immense stress juggling work, family commitments and other additional pressures so information around mental health, one to one support and guidance on medication were vital along with tips and techniques on relaxation and mindfulness. The project also incorporated a pharmacist led session with fathers on 'healthy mind - healthy body'.

The men especially enjoyed Richard, the Pharmacist, talking to them about time management, relaxation and stress and it appears that this was the first time any of them had attended a session like that.



"I learnt so much about the needs of the children during the project and also about the stress that these parents are under to ensure their children meet their potential. The participants really enjoyed the sessions, both men and women – it was amazing to me how quickly they bonded as a group. The flexible nature of the Programme and ownership of the topics made it absolutely their own."

Richard Garvey, Pharmacist

MEN'S SHED FERMANAGH AND ERNE PHARMACY

Improving lives and connections

Men's Shed Fermanagh is open to men aged 50+ with local members enjoying a range of activities including joinery, gardening, basket weaving and keep fit. Focusing on learning new skills, making new friends and having a bit of craic, the shed is the place to be if you live in the Devenish, Erne and Irvinestown area.



The group decided to apply for a BCPP Level 2 project along with Joe McAleer, Erne Pharmacy. With limited resources for men in this rural area, loneliness and isolation are prevalent and this project aimed to improve health and wellbeing by providing men with the knowledge to improve their lives and develop connections within communities. Research shows that older men are less likely to use health services and delay or avoid seeking medical advice, so it was felt that offering services in a community facility would be the way forward with this particular group.

The group looked at medicine use, nutrition, health checks, smoking cessation and also ran a physical activity programme. Action on Hearing Loss delivered hearing checks to the men while Addiction NI gave a talk on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and drinking responsibly. Other organisations such as NI Chest Heart and Stroke and Cancer Connect came in to present to the group and shared valuable information and the men even gained some training on digital skills. As part of this project, the men took part in a life transition class and engaged in mindfulness which was something very different for most of them.

“The BCPP programme allowed our ‘shedders’ to develop their relationship with the pharmacist and helped the men chat about their health and wellbeing breaking down the stigma that men shouldn’t talk about how they feel. By doing it in the shed, I have found the men are more relaxed and willing to share and engage more.”

Eoin McAnuff, Men’s Shed



MID & EAST ANTRIM AGEWELL PARTNERSHIP (MEAAP) AND HEALTH CENTRE PHARMACY, CARRICKFERGUS



Healthy steps to ageing

Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership (MEAAP) is a local inter-agency-based partnership aimed at improving the lives of older people aged 60 years and over, living in the Ballymena, Larne & Carrickfergus areas.

Through its IMPACTAgewell Project, MEAAP realised there was a lack of knowledge around older people living with frailty. MEAAP decided to apply for BCPP funding to run a project around 'Healthy Steps to Ageing' along with Health Centre Pharmacy. This project aimed to build the capacity of community pharmacists to recognise frailty using the Rockwood 'Clinical Frailty Scale (CFS)' and increase their confidence to support older people living with frailty.



As a result of the funding, four community pharmacists have already been trained by Medicines Optimisation in Older People (MOOP) on how to apply the Rockwood CFS to identify older people living with frailty and also how to manage the drug treatment of these older people.

The next stage of the programme is to carry out a planning session around the forthcoming 10-week Healthy Steps to Ageing programme enabling MEAAP and Health Centre Pharmacy to gain valuable insight into what matters most to older people with regard to healthy steps to ageing. They also plan to carry out asset mapping which will include inviting local community/voluntary organisations from the Carrick area and discover what skills the older people themselves have and how they can contribute to the project.

"We feel this is a fantastic opportunity to lead the way in terms of involving and upskilling pharmacists in NI in relation to identifying frailty. The project applies a person-centred community development approach to health to allow each older person to individually explore the context of their lives and look for small but vital steps towards healthier ageing. Throughout the project we aim to create a vlog so people can follow along on the journey."

Andrea Tierney, MEAAP



The Changemakers performing at a joint Public Health Agency and CDHN conference on community development. The Changemakers is a group of people in recovery from addiction, mental health or the criminal justice system. As part of the BCPP programme, many of them attended relevant and helpful sessions delivered by Pharmacist Cathy-Thompson Murphy alongside the partner organisation, The Right Key.



“Using music, singing and other creative arts for recovery, healing and wellbeing, The Changemakers have been fused into an inspirational group of singers. Their songs and poetry map the journey from brokenness to recovery and they demonstrate that it is possible to live a meaningful and purposeful life and to build a new future. They truly are ambassadors for change and hope!”

Sheila Smyth, The Right Key



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