

BCPPNews



Welcome to BCPP News, the newsletter brought to you by the Community Development and Health Network (CDHN). We hope you enjoy reading about some of the projects we have funded recently and the great work they have been doing through the BCPP programme.

South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF) and Lisbellaw Pharmacy

SEFF provides a range of services to its membership including a befriending service and educational programmes. They run the FACT (Fermanagh and Armagh Connected Together) Project which aims to reduce loneliness and isolation in people over 60 through a range of activities and interventions. For their Level 1 BCPP, the FACT project partnered with Pharmacist Corinna Collum from Lisbellaw Pharmacy in Fermanagh.

For the rural village of Lisbellaw, their pharmacy plays a pivotal role to residents' health and wellbeing as the nearest doctor's surgery is in Enniskillen, over 5 miles away. In this project they covered topics relevant to the group that included: Minding your Medication, Good Sleep, Looking after yourself using Minor Ailments and You are What You Eat.

Many older people become lonely after the death of a close relative, friend or pet and often are afraid to seek help. Partnering with Cruse Bereavement for one session with the Pharmacist ensured they understood that there is help available to cope with loss and during this session the group made memory salt jars.

Jennifer Ferguson from FACT said, "Our group really enjoyed being together and sharing their



life experiences. They told us how much they have benefitted from the topics that were explored in a clear and transparent way. The relationship between the Pharmacist and FACT has been strengthened and allows us to signpost our members if they have issues in respect to their health and well-being."

Pink Ladies/Pink Panthers and Bradley's Pharmacy, Springtown

Pink Ladies/Pink Panthers are a cancer support group that have been running for 11 years. They offer support to anyone that has had a cancer diagnosis and also their family and friends. They provide a range of support services and activities to enable those affected to come to terms with life during and after treatment. They were funded for a Level 1 BCPP project that was made up of 6 sessions with their local Pharmacist Rachael Dunne, Bradley's Pharmacy, Springtown. For this project they brought together 18 men who were cancer patients and survivors with a goal of giving them the confidence to make positive changes.



Pictured are the Pink Panthers doing their Healthy Cooking evening as part of the BCPP programme. This allowed the group to discuss the importance of healthy eating and how to prepare and cook a healthy meal.

At the start of the programme, the participants met up with their pharmacist to decide what they would like to cover in each session and were very vocal with their opinions.

The group covered the issue of mental health in different ways by looking at 'Healthy Body, Healthy Mind' and 'Clearing your Head'. These sessions enabled the group to discuss the effects of a poor diet on your mental health and was very relevant to the participants who had had bowel cancer and had made healthy changes to their diet in recent times. They also

covered the importance of taking time out and how to have control over your feelings which was very beneficial.

Partnering with Drink Think for a 'Drink Wise, Age Well' session on alcohol was well received as they have seen first-hand how alcohol is used as a means to cope with the difficulties and stress that comes with their situation. They covered drinking facts and truths around binge drinking and social drinking. There was a lot of chat about the misuse of alcohol and medication and the dangers of mixing both as most participants are on prescribed drugs and had no idea how excessive consumption of alcohol could cause unwanted side effects or even decrease the effectiveness of their medication. This session has led to the group taking up a 6-week course looking at their mental and physical health.

Michelle McLaren, Development Worker, said "Focusing on mental and physical health improvement has given participants confidence to talk more and make positive changes. This project also demonstrated that you don't need to be young to change habits or form new ones."

The most positive aspect of the project was that at the end, all the participants felt confident enough to walk in to other places for help and support regarding issues affecting them. One man admitted that he felt like he was annoying his GP but now he is confident that he can speak to Rachael in the Pharmacy at any time. This has resulted in him feeling less anxious as he often would often have waited up to a week for an appointment with his GP.



Pink Ladies/Pink Panthers have recently secured funding for a Level 2 BCPP project where they will work with 15 male and female members who are survivors along with their family members and carers. The group will meet fortnightly and have chosen 4 community based groups to partner with.



Session topics included

- Services your Pharmacy offers
- Drink Wise Age Well
- Healthy Eating Healthy Body
- Clear your Head
- Stress Management



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The Right Key and Johnstone's Pharmacy, Dromore

The Right Key is a not-for-profit musical performance organisation that brings positive social change for people at the margins of society. They deliver 'singing for health' workshops to improve the health, well-being and quality of life of disadvantaged groups. They provide a range of community activities and services in their Recovery Café in Dromore. They open the Café one day a week for elderly participants and provide a hot meal and the opportunity for older people to meet and socialise.

For their Level 1 BCPP project they were funded to run a 5 session programme with recovering alcoholics to take place over 5 months. The 5 sessions explored health related issues relevant to the group and included the mental and physical impact of long term alcohol abuse, healthier lifestyles, the benefits of exercise, pharmacy services and over the counter medication.

Their Pharmacist Cathy Thompson-Murphy from Johnstone's Pharmacy in Dromore delivered and facilitated the sessions and stayed for the singing workshops. Cathy said, "The joy emanating from the workshops was a clear indication of how much a person's mental state can be affected by doing something positive."

For their Level 2 BCPP project they worked with their Community Chords group, a group of elderly people who come to The Right Key for the Reminiscence Café and Lunch club. The goal was to bring about positive change to the lives of socially isolated older people. Research by Age UK shows that loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health and has a physical effect equivalent to that of smoking or alcoholism.

Sheila Smyth, The Right Key, said, "When I mentioned the possibility of working with our local pharmacist the group were delighted. They liked the idea of strengthening the relationship with local pharmacy, and learning about what was available to their specific age group. **We came up with the project together, deciding who would participate and what topics we would cover so the group had real ownership of the project and were never just passive observers.** The group has fifteen participants, with others arriving afterwards for lunch and the singing session."

As they were already a part of Community Chords, they had bonded well as a group. Friendships had been forged through the singing, and there was a lot of fun and laughter. This has been a great way to address the wider issues affecting them including lack of social/family contact, lack of transport, low income and vulnerability. Confidence has grown within the group and they were really pleased that Cathy the pharmacist participated in the singing activity with them after delivering her session. This is a great opportunity to learn, share and have fun.



Voice of Recovery Performing Live and taking Harmony to a whole new level!

Sheila said, "This has been a real lifeline for those who attend, with many saying that it is the highlight of their week. For many of the participants it is one of the times in the week where they have company and a proper cooked dinner."

"I now know that I am not the only one going through this. That makes me feel so much better. I don't feel alone anymore."

Participant comment

The project included two performances by the group. One was the Council Christmas dinner event which catered for 90 people and Community Chords performed at this along with the pharmacist which was a fantastic experience.

Participants from the Level 1 project now volunteer for the Level 2 project. They help clean and prepare the venue, prepare cooking and help with serving a healthy dinner and clearing up. They also collect some of the participants and leave them home. This support and encouragement is invaluable.



Pictured are Kathryn Turner (HSCB), Sheila Smyth (The Right Key), Kathy Martin (BCPP), Sharon Brown (The Right Key), Tracy McAlorum (HSCB) and Pharmacist Cathy Thompson-Murphy (Johnstone's Pharmacy)



Singing for Health workshops improve the health, well-being and quality of life of the groups



The sessions in The Right Key include everyone and are so much fun!

Session topics included

- Drug Compliance
- Depression and Anxiety
- Medicines
- Diabetes
- Pain management
- Healthy Eating
- Mental Health
- Dementia
- Exercise and sleeping



The Hope Centre and Boots Pharmacy, Ballymena

Ballymena has a high drug and alcohol addictions problem and the Hope Centre is long established and trusted within the community to provide a wide range of support, education and help. They previously received BCPP funding for a level 1 and a level 2 project and used this previous experience to include family members and carers alongside their clients for this Level 2 project. Family members are suffering alongside those experiencing addiction due to the stigma and isolation that comes with addiction.

For their Level 2 BCPP project they worked with 14 people in recovery from alcohol and prescription medication addiction – 9 men and 5 women. The group already had a close bond as they were clients referred to the HOPE centre and then on to the BCPP project.

Adele Winning, The Hope Centre said, “Each session is information based with interactive quizzes and the group certainly do have fun! Our Pharmacist Caroline always includes information on how the community pharmacist can help those with problems and about other support available. The group feel very comfortable and ask questions throughout the session and take part in her one-to-one clinics that are held at the end of every session.”

Topics covered included

- Anxiety and Stress
- Diabetes
- Hepatitis and HIV
- Sleep
- Community Safety
- Footcare and Podiatry
- Managing Meds
- Smoking cessation
- Oral health
- Mood and food
- Money Management
- Medication Myths



Adele said, “Many of the group have expressed how they share new information learned with friends, carers and family members. Caroline is also getting to learn more about community services in the area and can signpost other people on to them.”

Caroline Bustard, Boots Pharmacy said, “This is my first BCPP project but I had come to the Hope Centre before on an ad hoc basis when



Some of the participants spoke to the group about their life experience and shared stories that were both heart-breaking and inspiring.



Never underestimate the power of a cup of tea and a chat!

One to One support for

- Benefits
- Benzodiazepine reduction
- Pain management
- Anxiety
- Panic
- Stress
- Memory loss
- Anger
- Depression



I had been invited to speak and I loved it so it was a good idea to get funding for a project. In the beginning, the group were worried about how much they could say in front of a health professional but luckily that quickly changed. I have learned more as a pharmacist and their questions have given me great scope for learning. Our sessions usually involve tea and coffee, a talk and something interactive such as a quiz – this really brings the learning to life.”

One participant, Sonya, said “I wouldn’t be the best eater but the talk on diabetes and the amount of sugar in things was really eye opening. Talks made me more aware of what I eat and helped me control my diet. **Bringing in people like CAP (Christians Against Poverty) to talk about debt management was just what I needed. I hadn’t realised there was help out there – I thought that I was on my own.** Previously I had just been ignoring the problem.”

The partnership has been so successful because the Pharmacist is in tune with the participants and is friendly so the group can ask anything. There is great communication between the Pharmacist and the Hope Centre and they are always bouncing ideas off each other. During sessions they used a room at the back and they sat in there with the door open for one-to-one chats. Often participants had questions that they didn’t want to ask in front of the others.

Caroline said, “This is a great group of people enjoying chat and food together. I am learning as a Pharmacist so we are learning together.

People think Pharmacists give out pills and don’t know what services are free and available. We give advice that is relevant and accurate – much more than just meds. I have been able to talk through services that the Pharmacy offers for free.”

Adele said, “Due to the nature of addiction and recovery it can be difficult to engage participants for a long period of time however within this project, the core group remained strong and they all looked forward to attending. It has become a distraction from their ‘recovery work’ and allows them to informally gain new information amongst friends and then have lunch, a game of pool and enjoy complimentary therapies.”



Some of the participants shared their stories with the group



BCPP Funding

Level 1 funding

For community groups/organisations or Pharmacists who are interested in exploring ideas and needs through a community-pharmacy partnership. It consists of a maximum of £2,000 for a project that takes place over 6 sessions and can last up to 6 months.

Level 2 funding

For community groups/organisations and Pharmacists to work in partnership with each other to address locally defined needs and bring about sustainable improvements in health and well-being. You must have a clear vision of what you want the project to achieve. A Level 2 project consists of a maximum of £10,000 for a project that takes place over one year.

Please be aware that we can support you to develop your partnership, ideas and application. Contact us if you are thinking of becoming involved.

Information on closing dates, our new Application Forms and Guidance Notes are available on our website www.cdhn.org/bcpp-how-apply



We will be hosting a funding workshop before the Level 2 closing date so please check our website and Facebook page for dates. Our previous funding workshops have been very well attended and participants found them to be extremely useful in helping them with their application form.

For further information call us on T: 028 3026 4606 or email bcpp@cdhn.org

Launch of the Impact Report and Impact Card

We recently launched the BCPP Impact Card and Report at Cooper's Pharmacy, Belfast. Representatives from Coopers Pharmacy, West Belfast Parkinsons Group, CDHN and HSCB were in attendance.

This report examines the impact of the BCPP programme by looking at:

- 1) **How much have we done?**
- 2) **How well have we done it?**
- 3) **What difference has it made?**

By collecting data from participants, pharmacists and community partners, BCPP is able to show improvements in health, positive changes in how people use pharmacy and better relationships between Pharmacists and Communities. We then aggregate this data to demonstrate impact at a programme level.

To view our Impact Card and Impact report visit: www.cdhn.org/impact



Picture from left to right – Michael Cooper, Coopers Pharmacy; Fionnuala McCaughley, West Belfast Parkinsons Group; Kathy Martin, BCPP; Jude Austin, CPNI; Tracy McAlorum, HSCB; Kathryn Turner, HSCB.

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