



## Ways to Wellness Social Prescribing Scheme

Ways to Wellness is a new service commissioned by NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for people in the west of Newcastle whose daily lives are affected by certain long-term health conditions. GPs and their primary care teams use social prescribing to refer patients to the service. Ways to Wellness adds to and complements the medical support that people receive, to help them feel more confident to manage their long-term conditions and make positive lifestyle choices.

### The Aims

Ways to Wellness aims to improve patients' quality of life and reduce their use of mainstream health services by enabling them to lead healthier lives and better manage their conditions whilst reducing the costs of meeting their needs.

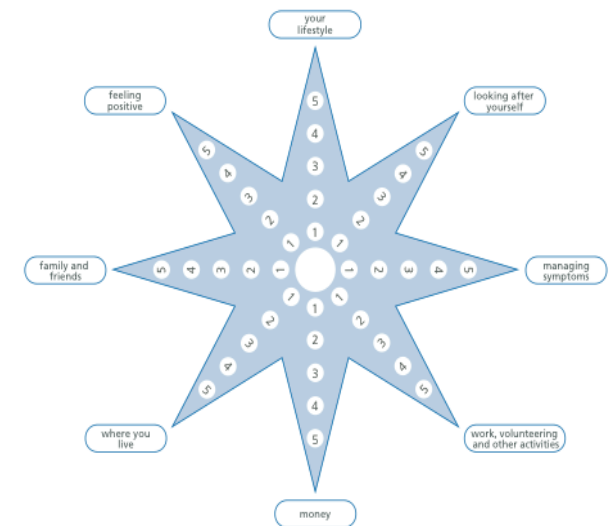
To achieve this, Ways to Wellness provides patients with a Link Worker to help them to identify and work to overcome current barriers to managing their long-term conditions. The Link Workers will work with patients to produce an agreed action plan, which may include a range of activities, such as:

- Getting involved in local groups and activities
- Developing positive relationships
- Accessing specialist services and support
- Healthy eating and cooking
- Getting more active
- Getting support around benefits and welfare rights

Ways to Wellness sets itself apart from other social prescribing schemes by the levels of integration with the work of general practices and the project's long term nature. The project is financed for seven years on an outcome based contract and will offer social prescribing for up to 3,500 patients at any one time in the west of Newcastle.

### Execution

The CCG used a totally unique model to set up Ways to Wellness, securing 'top up' funds from the Commissioning Better Outcomes Fund and the Cabinet Office Social Outcomes Fund in order to cover the outcomes payments within a seven-year contract held by the Ways to Wellness group. Additionally, Ways to Wellness raised finance from and holds contracts with social investors whose investment pays for the cost of the service. The CCG agrees to pay for the provision of social prescribing services to their patients in return for Ways to Wellness demonstrating the value to patients (outcomes) using the points system on the 8 outcomes of a Well-Being Star (as seen to the right) and demonstrating a reduction in secondary care costs.



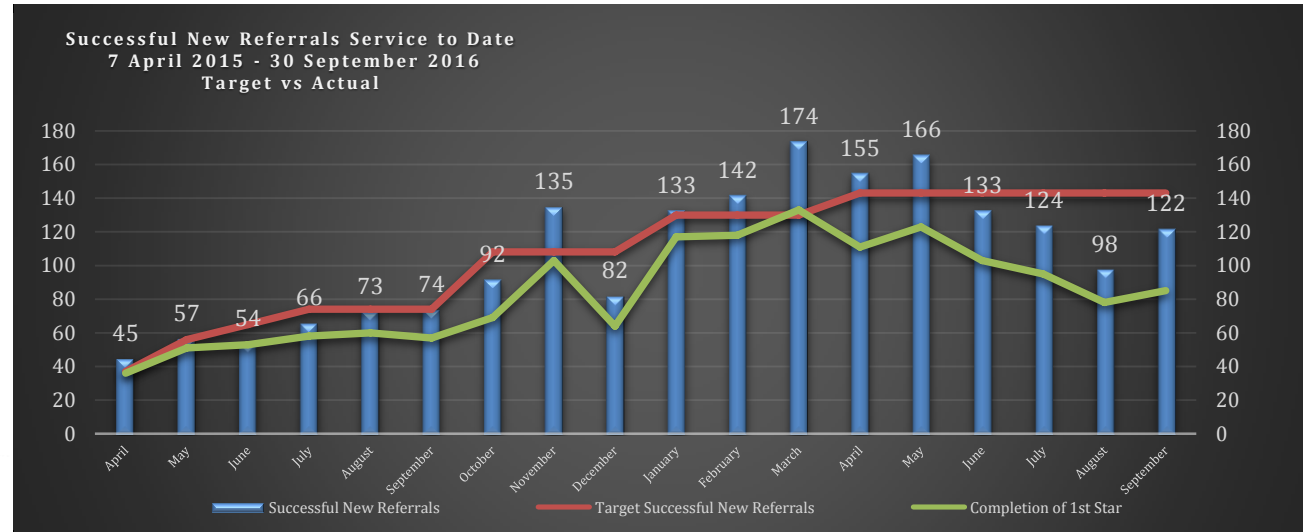
For further details please contact:

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Ways to Wellness holds contracts with four not-for-profit Service Providers who employ the Link Workers and deliver the service.

Ways to Wellness operates using a referral criterion; targeting patients of 40 to 74 years of age with the following criteria:

- Long-term conditions such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD), Asthma, Diabetes (Type 1 or 2), Coronary Heart Disease, Heart Failure or Epilepsy
- Social isolation
- Frequent attenders at GP or hospitals due to poor understanding of condition
- Anxiety or depression (in addition to a long-term condition)
- Poor health but with scope to improve with lifestyle change
- Poor English literacy



## Outcomes

Ways to Wellness has successfully worked with 1,925 patients since its inception in 2015 (as seen on the graph above):

- Year 1 saw 1,127 patients achieving 103% of their target set.
- Year 2 saw 796 successful referrals to date, which is currently 93% of their target set.

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## Well-Being Star

As of October 2016 564 Wellbeing Star (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> assessments) have been completed across 4 providers with an average Well Being Star improved of 4.03 – this equates to Ways to Wellness receiving a 100% outcomes payment for the CCG (£350 per patient).

## CCG Learning

- Whilst issuing such a long contract on a new innovative service is risky, the CCG reduced risk by basing payment around outcomes. Additionally, by using a funding model which draws capital from multiple sources the risk is spread.
- When launching a pioneering model it is beneficial to launch it on a larger scale. It is easier to make behavioural changes if it's difficult to ignore.
- You can create a fantastic service but you can't push patients into using the pathway, there needs to be a pull. The CCG tried to market the service in such a way that people were asking to be referred. Their marketing strategy included films in the GP practices, leaflets and the CCG chair going into each practice individually to promote the service.

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