

# CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

## TITLE: Evaluating the impact of the Community Connectors project on Adult Social Care and residents in Sefton.

I don't want to bother anyone but I need help changing a light bulb.



I wish I had someone to talk to.

I wish I had more visitors.



I feel worried about leaving the house.

I wish someone would knock on my door for a chat.



The evaluation of Community Connectors aimed to assess the impact of this early intervention and prevention initiative on diverting inappropriate referrals away from the Adult Social Care pathway in Bootle. Aims:

- Establish the impact of Bootle Community Connectors on the Adult Social Care call log in Bootle
- Establish the impact on client's loneliness and mental wellbeing scores and activity in terms of access to local groups.

## Background

The Community Connectors project is a borough wide service which helps to reduce the levels of loneliness, social isolation and low level mental health experienced by residents. This evaluation focused on the outcomes of the Community Connectors project, specifically its impact on Bootle township residents and Adult Social Care. According to Sefton Council's Bootle Township Profile, there are over 23,000 people over the age of 65 living alone in Sefton. It is possible that many of these people experience isolation and loneliness. Often these people have low level mental health needs such as anxiety, stress and depression. With limited social networks relatively minor situations can quickly escalate to crisis e.g. debts, illnesses and problems with neighbours. When in crisis many people are likely to contact public service agencies such as Adult Social Care (ASC) and the Police.

## Who was involved?



Community Connectors project is managed by Sefton Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). Registered Charity No. 1024546. Registered in England, Company Ltd. by Guarantee No. 2832920.



## What did we do?

Using both quantitative and qualitative data, the impact of the initiative in terms of early intervention and prevention was measured by the number of clients referred to Community Connectors from Adult Social Care, whether the client's loneliness and mental wellbeing scores improve during their time with the project, and whether they still require Adult Social Care's input. The qualitative approach explored the experiences of service users through case studies and 7 semi structured interviews. Collectively, we developed excellent working relationships between Sefton Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), Sefton Council's Adult Social Care Team and the Contact Centre, with information sharing between agencies. We developed relationships with local services, organisations and community groups in Bootle, and recruited volunteer Community Champions. Public Advisors were recruited to the evaluation; one, a support worker and the other is a Community Project Manager.

## What we found and what does this mean?

The majority of referrals come from 'other organisations' (such as GP's, Health & Wellbeing Trainers, and hospital departments such as therapy team, Stroke team) as opposed to coming directly from Adult Social Care (ASC). This shows Community Connectors is being used as an early intervention and prevention measure.

## The Community Connectors Project has supported the significant reduction of clients on the ASC call log from 920 (June 2017) to 576 (November 2018).

Between June 2017 – end of October 2018:

- 72 participants from Bootle were referred to Community Connectors
- 51 consented to anonymised quantitative and qualitative data being used in this evaluation
- 30 clients have complete the Community Connectors project with the remaining cases open.
- 100% of these clients reported reduced feelings of loneliness and social isolation
- 100% of these clients reported an improvement in their mental wellbeing
- 26% reported an increase in digital media usage, which was used as a tool to reduce loneliness and social isolation
- 48 people have been supported to attend 24 different local groups and services

## What is NIHR CLAHRC NWC?

The mission of the NIHR CLAHRC NWC is to work collaboratively with Partner organisations and other stakeholders including members of the public to co-produce and conduct high-quality, leadership enhancing, applied research designed to decrease health inequalities and improve the health of the population of the North West Coast.

## Find out more

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