



CASE STUDY: ACTIVE LANCASHIRE LAUNCHES ACTIVE WELLBEING GROUP TO SUPPORT NHS TEN-YEAR STRATEGY

KEY AIMS

- To bring together health, leisure, social care and ICB partners across Lancashire and South Cumbria through an Active Wellbeing Group
- To improve integration between health services and leisure environments
- To identify opportunities for delivering healthcare services outside traditional clinical settings
- To support preventative and rehabilitative patient pathways, including falls prevention, MSK and occupational therapy
- To address NHS workforce capacity and capability challenges through collaboration with the leisure sector
- To improve patient access to care by exploring co-location and alternative delivery models
- To raise awareness of health system challenges among strategic leisure leaders
- To strengthen joint working relationships between the NHS, ICBs and local leisure providers
- To inform policy discussions around hospital estates, co-location and joint investment
- To identify workforce and skills gaps across health and leisure sectors
- To support evidence based approaches to physical activity within health and social care
- To align local delivery with the NHS Ten-Year Plan and wider system priorities

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

Active Lancashire has worked with Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB colleagues as well as our Active Cumbria colleagues to develop an Active Wellbeing group across Lancashire and South Cumbria. This group is made up of strategic leaders from leisure providers, NHS therapy teams, occupational health and social care representatives, along with ICB colleagues who lead on physical activity/ occupational health. The work has facilitated conversations between health and leisure to raise awareness and present opportunities for health services to be integrated within leisure environments. We have begun to see changes in how healthcare can be delivered, including advocating for their inclusion in hospital estates strategies, promoting co-location, and fostering joint investment opportunities. The work will continue to identify ways in improving care delivery, increasing efficiencies within the system, identifying potential workforce and skill gaps between health and leisure.

Across Lancashire and South Cumbria, patients are struggling to access secondary care that are often situated within hospital or other clinical settings. It has also been identified the ongoing challenges of capacity and capability within the NHS workforce to deliver care in fields such as cardiovascular, falls prevention, frailty, blood pressure and physiotherapy. Active Lancashire has been working with the health system for several years to try and identify opportunities for collaborative working across sport and leisure with health. Active Lancashire as a member organisation has been working with ARCNCW to listen and understand the challenges faced by health and social care and taken that learning into its Active Wellbeing group development alongside Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB.

By working with our Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB colleagues, we have been able to bring together key leaders from leisure to raise awareness of the challenges being experienced within health and social care with the strategic leads for leisure across our districts. This led to opportunities being identified and small-scale delivery taking place including a falls prevention group that is taking place in Burnley being delivered by leisure on behalf of health.



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NEXT STEPS AND LESSONS LEARNT

- **Expand Integration:** Continue developing and refining patient pathways, especially in falls prevention, MSK, and occupational therapy, ensuring they are embedded in both health and leisure systems. Remain flexible and responsive to changing needs and opportunities.
- **Strengthen Partnerships and Share Learning:** Deepen existing relationships and bring in new stakeholders to support sustainability and innovation. Share best practice and learning across partner networks to support more patients and professionals.
- **Influence Policy and Investment:** Continue to advocate for further investment in leisure centres as clinical and therapeutic spaces, influencing both local and regional policy.
- **Monitor, Evaluate, and Adapt:** Track the impact on patient outcomes, NHS costs, and community health, using evidence to drive further innovation and integration.

The group meet regularly to discuss opportunities, experience 'best practice' with a recent visit to Kendal Leisure Centre to see how local health services are delivering from within the leisure centre and build on existing conversations on workforce development. Alongside this work, initial research was done to understand what existing health services are being offered within leisure environments. This identified around 60 across 51 different sites.

To date, the work has had an impact on policy changes in how healthcare can be delivered, including advocating for their inclusion in hospital estates strategies, promoting co-location, and fostering joint investment opportunities. There has also been improved working relationships between health/ ICB and local leisure leaders. In the future, we hope small scale projects such as the work taking place in Kendal and Burnley will be able to be scaled up across Lancashire and South Cumbria with opportunities now being identified for research to build on existing knowledge of current workforce capacity and capabilities and what gaps exist across health and leisure workforces. This work will particularly focus on preventative and rehabilitative patient pathways to reduce NHS costs, improve patient experiences and outcomes whilst also supporting the objectives of the NHS 10-Year Plan.

NIHR funding has supported Active Lancashire in continuing to develop its own understanding of health and social care, how physical activity could support patients through an evidence-based approach and develop strong relationships with and between health and leisure.

We have developed a press release and an impact video featuring key stakeholders giving their views/ stories.

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ARC NWC'S IMPACT ON
OUR WEBSITE HERE:



IMPACT AND OUTCOMES



<https://activelancashire.org.uk/active-wellbeing-group-launches-to-support-nhs-ten-year-strategy/>