



BigLife Centres

Impact report 2016

Introduction

Big Life Centres delivers health and wellbeing services including:

- **Health and Wellbeing Centres:** 4 centres in Manchester and Salford, helping people to improve their lives through a range of wellbeing groups and activities, and self-help groups.
- **Pathways:** a confidential, personalised drugs and alcohol service designed to help people on their journey from substance misuse to recovery.
- **Living Well Rochdale:** a health and wellbeing service, which helps people to make changes to their lifestyle such as stopping smoking, healthy weight, food and nutrition, physical activity, oral health, sexual health, mental health and wellbeing.
- **Being Well Salford:** a coach-led healthy lifestyle service for people wanting to change two or more aspects of their health and wellbeing, such as alcohol, smoking, weight, exercise or low mood.

72% of people felt they had an improvement in their quality of life since using one of our services.

We held **43** wellbeing programmes and activities and **14** self help groups, which **1,559** people attended.

157 people volunteered their time with us, with **20** people going on to paid employment, and **15** moving on into training.



Our Health and wellbeing centres were visited **165,689** times this year.

Health and Wellbeing Centres

Our health and wellbeing centres offer opportunities for people to improve their lives. The Zion and Kath Locke centres, in Manchester, and the Energise and Willow Tree centres, in Salford, offer a range of wellbeing programmes and self-help groups.

Wellbeing programmes and activities include mindfulness, confidence building and practical activities such as growing vegetables. Self-help groups include a friendship group, a creative writing group, depression and anxiety groups and a sleep support group.



At Kath Locke and Zion centres:

1075 structured conversations about improving an individual's health were carried out

7 events engaged **298** people

At the Energise and Willow Tree centres:

1154 people participated in **17** health promotion campaigns, including child safety; mental health awareness; and gambling awareness.

180 people took part in **22** wellbeing programmes and **5** self-help groups



In surveys taken at all four centres, **93%** of people rated the centre as good or very good. **93%** of people taking part in self-help groups at the centres said their quality of life had improved as a result.

What people say about our wellbeing programmes and self-help groups:

When I came on the Hopes and Dreams course I was very low and felt I had no direction. Each week I learnt more about myself and other people then I started to realise I am not alone. I now feel much more in control, I'm staying well and have more motivation.

Support groups are invaluable, they give you that time to talk and offload that your GP can't.

It has made me feel grounded, relaxed, happy and positive.

Volunteers

Across Big Life Centres, **208** volunteers supported us to deliver services:

- Being Well Salford had **34** volunteers, with **6** finding employment. The service also had **4** student placements.
- Living Well Rochdale had **90** volunteers delivering **4,000** hours within their communities. **8** have now found work and **3** have gone into training.
- The four centres have had **69** volunteers and **10** apprentices and students. **6** volunteers have gone onto employment.
- Pathways have had **15** volunteers, with **7** going on into training.



I'm a facilitator for the art group at the Zion Centre. I used to go to the Energise Centre to a panic attack group, when I was feeling pressured during my art degree. When I got more confidence, I started to help out at the art group there. I started doing a teaching course, and they offered me a placement at the art group here at the Zion.

I really enjoy it. I like helping other people who suffer from low confidence or self-esteem to get help through art, because it helped me so much when I had problems.

Natalie Kheirkhah (above), Volunteer Art Group Facilitator, The Zion Centre

Pathways is an alcohol and drugs service, tailored to the individual to support them through their journey to recovery. It works through one-to-one interventions, structured groups, drop-in groups and eTherapy.

We have referred **703** people to our wraparound service, receiving support from recovery and reintegration, mental health, housing support and harm minimisation services.

This year we worked with **1826** people. **67%** of people who left the service were drug or alcohol free, or had significantly reduced their use.

“I am one of three brothers and we have all struggled with alcohol all our adult lives. I approached Pathways and they immediately encouraged me to reduce my drinking and they then got me a place in a Residential Detox Unit. I stayed there for a week and now live in a dry unit which supports people with substance misuse problems. I feel I have turned my life around and in a few months I will be ready to start volunteering with Pathways.”

Upon leaving Pathways, **95%** of people said that the service had improved their lives.

People who have used our service and left include **11** accessing training, **12** becoming volunteers and **33** gaining employment.

Living Well Rochdale

Living Well Rochdale brings together stop smoking, healthy weight, food and nutrition, physical activity, oral health, sexual health, mental health and wellbeing services, and reducing the risk of alcohol and drug use.

Our services are based in more than **200** community buildings, such as schools and GP surgeries. **76%** of referrals came from some of the most deprived areas in the country.

Through engagement at **239** events, Living Well Rochdale delivered **13,709** brief interventions to members of the community in which **1,925** had a mini health check measuring blood pressure, weight and the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

Additionally, **9,811** people have been referred to us to work with our health trainers, coaches or specialist staff, of whom **6,008** went on to have ongoing support. Of these:

- **4,283** people reported an increase in wellbeing
- **2,000** people accessed weight management interventions, of whom **885** individuals and **206** families lost weight
- **1,500** people set physical activity goals, with **71%** achieving their goals
- **833** people reported reduced smoking, more than **600** set quit dates, and **506** stopped all together.
- **802** people with long-term conditions accessed physical activity, with **88%** increasing their activity levels.
- **780** people were helped in areas such as employment, budgeting and housing, with more than **2,000** referrals to specialist services.



Photo: A Living Well Rochdale volunteer-led walking group



Having had a long period of time off work after breaking my arm, I'd had time to reflect. I didn't have the confidence to do the things I wanted to, as a result of a long period of bullying at work, and realised that I needed to address issues affecting my confidence in order to move on.

I saw a leaflet in Heywood library advertising the Living Well coaching service. Initially I asked for support with weight loss, as I knew this was one of the issues that was stopping me moving forward.

However, what I have been able to really work on is to realise that my beliefs, behaviours and communication were all aspects of my life that I could change and manage.

Working on confidence-building techniques and assertiveness training helped me identify negative belief systems about myself, and how to manage difficult situations and people in my life. Since starting the programme, I have changed my behaviour and communication to become a more assertive and confident person.

"As I grow in confidence, I have changed my diet and am opting for healthier choices a lot more, as a result I am losing weight slowly and healthily. I feel the skills I have learned at the sessions are helping me change my life for the better.

"This would not have been possible without the help that Living Well have given me.

Jo Coleman, 42, Living Well Rochdale service user

Being Well Salford

Being Well Salford helps people to make changes to two or more aspects of their life – smoking, alcohol, weight, exercise and low mood. A team of coaches use tools such as motivational interviewing to help individuals set their own realistic goals.

Last year we had **1,520** referrals. These resulted in **1,136** assessments, and **5,534** sessions delivered. Alongside our one-to-one support, we also held **516** group sessions.

This year, **484** people left the service, of these:

84% feel more in control

80% feel more able to deal with challenges well

Since the service started in 2013, Being Well Salford has had **1,334** people leaving the service.

On arrival to the service:

64% were from the **20%** most deprived areas in the country

46% smoked

83% did less than the national recommended amount of exercise

67% of those who gave us their weight had an unhealthy BMI

After using the service:

65% of people reduced their smoking

44% of those who were obese or overweight reported weight loss

46% were achieving the recommended amount of exercise, compared to **17%** at assessment

72% said their mood had improved



Irene Vaughn has been seeing her Being Well Coach, Hannah, to help overcome two mental health breakdowns, this is her story:

“In 2008 I had a breakdown, through worrying about losing my job and paying my mortgage. I gradually regained my confidence, until a relationship I was in ended when my partner cheated on me. I felt my confidence go down to the ground and I had another meltdown.

“I went to the Willow Tree and found a leaflet for Being Well Salford. I phoned up and clicked with Hannah straight away. The first time I met her, I cried all the way through our session, but I kept coming back and have made great progress.

“I can’t praise Hannah enough – she is definitely the right person for me. She has given me so many options and strategies for when I’m feeling alone or like I can’t be bothered with anything. And when I’ve had a blip, she’s been in touch straight away to help me get back on track. Walking to the Willow Tree to get that leaflet was the best walk I ever made!”



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