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Review of the Community Living Well Self Care programme 2018-2024

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2024

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This report covers the whole period of the Self-care element of the Community Living Well programme from start in 2018 to its closure in April 2024. The self-care project was closed in 2024 as commissioners prioritised other aspects of [Community Living well](https://communitylivingwell.co.uk/) (which continue) and other more acute services. Whilst it was running the self-care programme provided valuable support to people with mental health concerns who may otherwise have deteriorated or needed more intense support. This report looks at:

* Number of referrals and sessions under the programme patients referred
* Demographic and other analysis of patients referred
* What happened to patients once they had finished their sessions
* Some case studies from patients.

The self-care programme was delivered by 6 providers:

* BME Health Forum - EmotionalHelp1:1 - A service for Arabic (Moroccan and Sudanese dialects), Farsi, French and Somali speakers that includes one-to-one emotional support and help with practical problems. This service usually consists of 5 sessions offered over the phone or in person.
* Clement James Wellbeing Programme- On-going weekly groups, courses, monthly sessions and one-off workshops and events to help you build confidence, connect with others, and learn something new. Although offering a range of community wellbeing activities, ClementJames do not offer therapeutic support. Activities in-person at The ClementJames Centre. ClementJAmes left the programme in autumn 2023.
* Community Massage London – Massage. A 20-minute 1:1 seated massage or reflexology session or a 30-minute phone guided 1:1 meditation via phone/WhatsApp.
* Central London Youth development - My Recipe, My Story, Activity group for women of diverse backgrounds to explore the stories behind their favourite recipes with others in the community.
* Playground Theatre - Well Read - play reading sessions at The Playground Theatre Cafe. Supported play readings - participants can observe or play an active apart
* Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea - Volunteering on Prescription. A mix of self-care, creative and social workshops and events. Programme also includes group Wellbeing Walks and volunteering opportunities.

After the withdrawal of ClementJames a new temporary service was offered -Neighbourhood Doulas – supporting expectant and new mothers lacking family support and suffering mental health issues. Due to short time on the program ether are less data on this project.

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## An overview of the referrals to CLW self-care over the lifetime of the project

During the lifetime of the programme, there were a total of 2619 referrals.

There were a total of 9265 sessions delivered by projects over the life of the project

## Some information about who was referred and where from

Referral sources over the lifetime of the project

* CLW website were self-referrals from patients (sometimes completed by health professionals)
* CLW staff were from mental health teams and other projects in CLW
* CLW providers were when clients approached providers directly and were then enrolled onto the self-care programme
* GP were referrals from practice staff (many different practices)

Where patients referred live – breakdown of postcodes of patients – total number for each postcode and percentage of total referrals of each postcode. Most patients lived in North Kennington.

GP practices that patients referred to the service were registered with (numbers of referrals)

## Demographic breakdown

**Age range and gender of patients referred by percentage**

**Ethnicity of patients referred where known (this was known in less than half of referrals) by percentage.**

## Outcomes

There were different ways in which outcomes were measured for the project.

* Firstly was an analysis of completions (the point at which referrals were closed) – and the rate at which clients received all the sessions or dropped out for various reasons.
* Second was the measured changed in self-reported wellbeing – all clients completed a survey pre and post-delivery and the change in score was measured.
* Thirdly clients were asked to rate quality of service and how much they had benefited.
* Finally, case studies were collected looking at the personal impact of individual clients.

## Outcomes – What happened to referrals

Cases could be closed at different stages. A proportion of referrals are closed soon after referral as inappropriate for the service or clients decide to not take up the service. However, most referrals lead to delivery of most or all of planned sessions.

There was some variation by service – with some having a much higher rate of non-take up than others. Note - not all services entered sufficient completion data (or had fewer clients in total) - this chart only shows those services with sufficient data

Referral outcomes by service

## Outcomes – Wellbeing scores

Participants were asked to complete a survey on their wellbeing on being referred and at the end of their sessions. They were also asked to comment on the quality of service at the end of the project.

A shortened version of Warwick Edinburgh wellbeing score was used. All providers reported that this had limitations - It asked people to rank how they felt on the day – which could be affected by factors beyond the service but did not assess about any personal objectives that participants wanted to achieve, and whether these were met.

There was a general increase in reported wellbeing at the end of projects from the start. There were however consistently high scores for participants saying that they had benefited from the service (part of the quality of service questions.

The lack of measurement of personal objective was in part balanced by the gathering of case studies. This allowed capture of qualitative impact of programmes on individuals.

There are 7 questions but some had very low response rates and so have been removed from the charts below, similarly some providers had low response rates which may affect the results.

## Outcomes - Quality of service

There were three questions related to quality of service – the project as whole received consistently near 100 % satisfaction. clients were eligible to be re-referred (or refer themselves again) so scores vary slightly by all referrals and unique clients

Clients were also asked whether the sessions were beneficial – with similarly high response rates

## Outcomes - Case studies

Part of monitoring requirements for providers was to provide case studies on a regular basis illustrating the benefits on individual clients. These gave background on the client as well as often including comments from the client themselves. Below are a range of the case studies over the project - and the feedback provided by the clients

**BME Health Forum – Emotional Support 1:1**

1. **Case Study 1:**

S. D. is 43 years old, from Sudan, has two children, she suffers from difficulties to support her children as she is a breast cancer survivor, new to the country came from Norway, she doesn’t have any record regarding her health conditions, living in the second floor flat without lift, depression, stress and anxiety. She is very scared to access social services for support as she thinks will take away her children.

I contacted the client introduced myself, she consented for me to provide CLWS and help. I set up action plans for her as follows: explained the health system, educational system and social services system, how to improve her communication with the health professional. Regarding her accommodation, she doesn’t have a case because all her medical reports and not in UK it is in Norway so she is planning to travel during summer time to bring her medical report regarding her breast cancer after that we can start her accommodation case.

I referred her to Family life organisation for befriending project, then appointed case worker who will help with her children, trips and activities also will help with her shopping. She referred to shelter for now.

She had temperature, cough and headache so I made an appointment for Covid 19 which came negative, called 111 and she taken to hospital for more investigation, she had medication and feeling better now.

She is feeling relaxed confident and empowered, will wait for her medical report from Norway then will start her accommodation case again.

1. **Case study 2**

Zahra is a 54-year-old lady and suffered from physical and mental health issues. One of the reasons adding to her mental health issue was being far away from her parents. Her parents are both old and have many health issues. She didn't want to socialise with anyone. She felt life wasn't fair with her and was sometimes feeling suicidal.

Zahra felt even more depressed after her PIP application was refused. She wanted to appeal but because of her dad’s sudden heart attack, she had to travel to Iran and was very upset and stressed because she thought she would not meet the deadline to appeal.

We offered her emotional support and also helped her with her PIP appeal. She feels much better now emotionally and mentally and also socialises with others to reduce her isolation. I also helped Zahra join other community activities at the Iranian association.

1. **Case study 3**

Ms A was referred to us by the Woodfield Trauma Service for support with her mental health and the CLW project.  We tried on several occasions to get Ms A to engage with us, but she kept putting it off.

Ms A had a lot of unresolved issues and blamed herself which is a mental torture.  The NHS waiting list for therapy is up to 8 months so we offered Ms A five sessions of the Community Living Well Project which supports residents living in RBKC.

 We kept in touch with Ms A from time to time, telling her to take her time, and that we understand her situation and whenever she felt ready, we would be here to support her.  Ms A finally agree to come to our centre and start her support sessions with us.

 Ms A suffers from extreme trauma going back to her childhood that she has not been able to deal with over the years of her life.  From her mother abandoning her and sending her to a foreign country as a teenager not understanding the language and culture, she was vulnerable and taken advantage of by people who targeted young girls and used them for prostitution.

 Ms A has suicidal thoughts every day, but her faith and her son are her protective factors.

 Ms A completed her sessions and reported back feeling so much better and was grateful for the Community Living Well project in giving her the opportunity for someone to listen to her and be able to communicate with her in her mother tongue. During the sessions Ms A had with us we were able to identify other needs that she had and we also contacted the Woodfield Trauma Centre and managed to bring her NHS assessment with a psychologist/therapist closer than originally planned, our intervention made the world of difference to Ms A.

 Ms A mentioned that she is happy to wait for her NHS assessment because she is comfortable knowing she can access our service should she need any immediate support with her Mental Health.  Ms A felt she can trust our service because we made her feel safe, and she no longer has suicidal thoughts.

**ClementJAmes Centre - Wellbeing programme**

1. **Case study 1**

J attended ClementJames' Weekly Wellbeing Group for the first time several months ago with his befriender. It was his first time at ClementJames and he expressed that he had been nervous to attend on his own at first. During his first few sessions, J started to make occasional contributions, gradually engaging more in the space and sharing his own experiences and encouraging others too. After several sessions with his befriender, J started to attend the group by himself every few weeks, and has since then made some fantastic contributions to the sessions, and he is now waiting to receive support gaining work with an advisor at ClementJames, which is a testament to how far J has come and his increased confidence and motivation.

1. **Case Study 2**

N has attended many programmes at ClementJames in the last few years, and has recently taken part in the Women’s Confidence Programme Course. She is studying English Language at Level 2, works part-time as a Nanny and has a five year old son. The following survey was conducted with them:

What did you hope to achieve from attending the Women’s Confidence Programme?

* Even though I do sometimes feel good about myself, I often struggled with feeling very confident. I am often unsure about myself, and felt that I needed to work on my confidence so that I can reach my goals in life. I wanted to be more decisive, and to find ways of dealing with challenges better.

How did you feel when you attended the course?

* At first I felt quite nervous. We were a group of women with a broad range of experiences, backgrounds and ages, and it was a new environment for me. However, we soon bonded as a group and I really enjoyed learning from the other women on the course. I think we got along very well. The sessions were brilliant, there were so many activities covering a variety of topics and we had plenty of time in each session. The space was judgement free and it was good to hear people’s stories and to learn about how the other women had overcome challenges in their lives.

What will you take away from this programme?

* I have learned some really useful techniques for managing my stress, particularly when recognising what is and isn’t within my control. I have learned a lot about communication and how to listen more actively, which I have already used when talking to my family. I am challenging my assumptions about others more, and I try to never make assumptions or judgements about people and their lives, as there is so much going on that we don’t know about.
* Self care is something I haven’t thought about a lot before. Being a mum, a lot of my time goes on my son or on housework. It was really nice to go to a space each week away from home that was dedicated to me. I was able to focus on myself and take time to relax and reflect and feel listened to.
* When there is something bigger I want to change within myself, I now try and take lots of small steps to get there. I think this will have an impact on my future plans as I feel more confident and capable. I am hoping to go to University to study Urban Planning next year, and the course has made me feel more able to do this.

1. **Case study 3**

I enjoyed the support [from the wellbeing clinic] overall it was good and the information I received was very useful, it made me think more clearly about myself. I learnt things that I didn’t know about before which was good for me.

I am more reflective about what I am doing now in terms of improving my life and lifestyle.I have been referred to other parts of the organisation and they have also been great at helping. It was something I had never really experienced before but now I also get help with a career change and I have also had pain in the pastbut the help here isreally good and is helping that too. It doesn’t feel removed from myself but instead feels good for me and my body. [Clinic practitioner] helped me with this a lot.

[Employment Support advisor] is good at helping me to look at things objectively tooas there are things I have overlooked in the past.

[Advice and Guidance advisor] is helping me with housing which has been helpful- it’s long winded but so far so good.Having a third party involved is helping.

Every last staff member [at ClementJames] is great- I have not had that help before anywhere in my life, they are all seriously great.

When I first came [to ClementJames] I felt overwhelmed and it has now given me new motivation and I can see step by step that things are moving along and I feel more settled now.

I would definitely recommend the sessions and the ear acupuncture too. Both of them are very very good- I would tell anyone to try them.

I think you [ClementJames] are a superb service, second to none. I mean honestly you are really great. The signposting is very helpful too. It’s all well and good doing the wellbeing but signposting to other things is really good and that affects wellbeing too so having both has been so good**.** It has pointed me in the right direction- the way all of the staff have worked as a team is unforgettable.

I have learnt a lot and I am grateful. To be honest, I feel emotional just talking about the services you have. They are so good and it is a pleasure to be a part of the work your organisation does, it has helped a lot as a time when I have felt very unsettled and unsure.

**Community Massage London**

1. **Case Study 1**

RB 40 years old, Suffers from depression and anxiety. care taker for family member

Began the sessions December 2020 with concerns regarding emotional stress, negative thought patterns and overwhelm.

She placed this set of concerns on a scale of 5 out of 7, 7 being the worst it could be.

Before the first session she mentioned rarely being able to relax and rarely feeling optimistic.

By August 2021 after 9 sessions of massage/reflexology her emotional stress on a scale of 1-7 went down to a 3. She reported feeling better able to handle difficult emotions due to feeling more relaxed and having a place in which she could go to focus on herself and de-stress.

1. **Case study 2**

PB 56 years old. 7 sessions of massage/ reflexology, and some online self care during lockdown

Chronic stress/anxiety, problems with chronic fatigue/mental fog, insomnia, struggling with caring for 24 year old daughter with Lymes Disease. Also struggling with work due to back pain and to get work due to Covid.

says the sessions were "extremely helpful and successful in giving me comfort and relief physically, mentally and emotionally. Just that touch and care meant so very much to me. I looked forward to the sessions for days and was proud and humbled to be able to receive them. Thank you to all who made that happen."

1. **Case study 3**

JD Underactive thyroid, Depression & Chronic anxiety,Lifelong insomnia

Looking for support with general wellbeing, encouragement with self-care and ongoing support.

When referred in 2020 her main concerns were anxiety and becoming overly concerned with others problems, which was affecting her own wellbeing negatively. On a scale of 1-7 (7 being the worst) she began the sessions viewing her anxiety at the worst it could be. After more sessions, even though these were not regular, she has reduced her anxiety and worry down to a 4. Her second concern was also reduced from a 7 to a 4, described as an ‘aching and tense body’.

She has said “The therapists are fantastic healers. I feel mentally, physically and emotionally stronger after treatment. I’m floating!”

Even with having treatments sporadically she has noticed that the sessions make her feel motivated to do more for herself and have been an integral part of her healing. She feels the positive difference soon after just one session which she carries through into her day.

**Neighbourhood Doulas – joined programme in Autumn 2023**

Survivor of domestic abuse. Isolated and in grief from the recent death of her mother and sister. Unsuccessful induction and then a choice to have a caesarean.

C.E was supported by a doula and post caesarean she was in the High Dependency Unit for more than 24 hours caused by health complications. ND doulas provided emotional and practical support and continuity of care.

Due to an extended hospital stay postnatally due to poor health and complications, C.E requested assistance to move all her belongings from one accommodation to her new assisted living placement. The doula negotiated with the social worker and the client to safely move her possessions. A back up doula with the same heritage brought her food and toiletries that were relevant to her culture and identity. She reported feeling seen and blessed by these kind and simple actions.

“I feel blessed to have the ND doulas in my life at a time I was at my most desperate. They have shown me great love and respect, this is something I will never forget and gives me hope that there are still many people in the world who are kind and helpful”

**Playground theatre – Well Raed**

1. **Case study 1**

The UK in general and large cities like London are experiencing an invisible social epidemic; it comes in the form of the long shadow of loneliness….. It is this experience that drove me to contact and coloured my relationship with Well Read, and why it has been such a positive part of my life over the last two years.

First a brief biographical note. I have lived In London for 40yrs and enjoyed a career working in the fields of addiction, mental health, and offending. Thus, I have been confident, able to interact with others on a range of levels. I flatter myself that I am well read and articulate. Thus, nothing prepared me, for the loneliness that I later experienced after retirement….

Isolation was something that crept up on me, slowly increasing as my already small circle of friends began, for a variety of reasons, to disappear. With the death of my closest friend I suddenly had to come to terms with the fact that, with one exception, an ex- girlfriend living in Kingston, I no longer had any close friends in London.

… As time passed, I began to experience living alone no longer as liberating .. Talking to oneself, even out loud, is a normal human thing. However, when it is the only conversation you have, then the strain on your mental health eventually makes itself felt.

The reality became so stark that I was reluctantly forced to dismantle a well-constructed wall of denial. After reaching out to the Wellbeing Centre much happened. Amongst which was my first contact with Well Read.

The atmosphere is warm and friendly and welcoming to newcomers. … As a consequence of my engagement with Well Read I enjoyed the resurgence of confidence. This led me to start writing again and led, with the support of Philip Correia from Well Read to me reading one of a number of monologues I have written on the subject of loneliness at the National Theatre on the South Bank.

1. **Case study 2**

M has been coming to the sessions over the last few months and had expressed his wish to practise speaking English and work on speaking out loud. M was a journalist and wanted to work on these so he could look for journalism work here. M would come early to the sessions while I set up and we would have conversations about the play. M is getting far more confident in conversations, his reading is becoming really clear, and now he will confidentially ask if there is a word he doesn’t understand. M also now enjoys discussing the play with others in the group. He is brilliant addition to any session.

**Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea – Volunteering on prescription**

1. **Case study 1**

AJ is a full time carer for her autistic son. She has a bipolar diagnosis and is on medication and taking pain killers for her osteo arthritis. When she was first referred to our Wellbeing team’s Volunteering on Prescription service last year, she was looking for support with her mental health, and hoping to “reclaim her identity after twenty years of being a carer”.

At her initial one to one interview with us, she said that she would like to try volunteering, but was finding it difficult to leave the house and to engage with people. AJ suffers from intense anxiety and panic attacks, which often leave her unable to do anything for most of the day.

With the support of our Wellbeing Officer, AJ identified that she might like to try our gardening and play reading groups. She was reassured that she could just attend when she felt well enough, and she was also met and accompanied the first few times.

AJ enjoyed the gardening and play reading groups, both of which gave her the chance to work together with a small, friendly group, build her sense of self confidence, and feel that she was part of a community. We also referred her to peer support at Community Living Well.

AJ attended some of our Wellbeing sessions, including our Mood Boost and Relaxation workshops, during which we talked about and practised some simple mindfulness and breathing techniques. We also explored ideas around understanding anxiety and practising accepting it, in order to take away some of its power over us.

After a few months, AJ felt ready to try a more formal volunteering placement with another organisation, and our Wellbeing Officer encouraged and helped her to find and apply for a volunteer befriender role at AgeUK. It was a big step for her to go to the interview, and she felt a lot of anxiety around it, but she managed it and was successful, and is now waiting for her DBS check.

“Last year I wanted to volunteer and do things but couldn’t. The support I received [from Wellbeing] helped me to build my confidence to try volunteering this year.

I like the flexibility of your programme, and the activities, gardening and playreading, have been really helpful. You can choose whether to come or not – this freedom is really good in the headspace I’ve got. And the emails, letting me know what’s happening – it has opened doors – it is open door support.”

1. **Case study 2**

SM was referred to Volunteering on Prescription by Community Living Well. He has a hearing impairment and suffers from anxiety and depression. He is a recovering alcoholic and had also been feeling very isolated and alone. He was hoping to connect with people and find some meaningful activity.

After an initial assessment, during which SM expressed an interest in art and reading, he started to receive regular welfare check calls. He has now been matched with a telephone befriender with whom he has shared interests. He started to attend some of our online workshops, particularly Wellbeing Art, where there is always a chance to interact with others as well as to be creative. With Volunteering on Prescription’s help, he applied to be a volunteer on a reading programme at North Kensington library, but later felt that he was not ready for that yet - but he did join a reading group. We were also able to refer him to some self-care workshops with Grenfell Recovery College which he found helpful.

In December SM felt ready for some face to face events volunteering with Stepping Stones. He has also planned a guided group walk which he helped to facilitate in January.

"Wellbeing [Stepping Stones] has been very helpful to me. For one, I've been able to give something back again. It's been the biggest side blow against loneliness…I haven't felt so alone. I lived a very isolated life. This has given me a focus, fellowship and comradeship.

Last year I was not talking to anyone, and this was beginning to reflect on my mental health. Since being involved with Wellbeing [Volunteering on Prescription], my mental health has improved. I’ve got a lot better…I have taken different steps forward, like coming out today. It’s about connection.

I never feel guilty saying no – that’s a big plus. I have been given options. I put things on my Google calendar now…”

1. **Case study 3**

C was first referred in June 2021 to the Wellbeing team’s programme from the Grenfell Health and Wellbeing Service. She experiences complex PTSD and ADHD, along with disabling pain in her shoulders and knees which can be incapacitating at times. She often felt extremely distressed and isolated, and was looking for social connection, meaningful activity and emotional support. She wanted to engage with activities outside of her therapy sessions to build her resilience and stability.

During the Pandemic, when many of the workshops were virtual to protect vulnerable clients from the virus, C led some of Wellbeing’s online Cook and Chat workshops from her kitchen. She taught a group to make a regional dish that she grew up with. She also took part in Wellbeing’s online art workshops. C shared with the group during one of these virtual art workshops how art was helping her during lockdown, showing us sketches she had drawn to express difficult emotions. This sparked healthy conversations around different strategies the group were using and helped people to make new connections. C shared afterwards that learning to draw the Mandala’s in particular were a great way to de-stress, the repetitive patterns offering a welcome distraction that felt calming. ….

One aspect of the Wellbeing program C has benefitted from is the opportunity to talk through these issues over the phone. We have also helped to make referrals for Art Therapy through the Grenfell Health and Wellbeing programme. C has also received some one to one support from VCKC’s Wellbeing Officer to apply for her Personal Independence Payments (PIP) to supplement her part time work, as her mental health and physical disability means she is unable to work full time. Receiving this benefit was a great reassurance for C, who had been experiencing food poverty, to the detriment of her mental and physical health. C is now excelling in her paid position, supporting children and young adults with disabilities with their IT skills. Receiving these payments has also helped C to engage with and excel in her volunteering positions.

It is now C’s second year as a client working with the Wellbeing programme. Through the ongoing support of the Wellbeing team C has taken on two long term volunteering placements that are invaluable to the Kensington and Chelsea community. C is a regular volunteer at the Goldfinger Trust’s People’s Kitchen project and has progressed to become an integral part of the meal preparation team, helping to prepare food and set up a free meal for isolated residents to share together at the Panella restaurant at the base of the Trellick Tower.

C’s second placement is with Mencap Equal People, advising on their allotment for young adults with disabilities. In this role, C has also set up an infinity kitchen garden. This is helping to teach their service users about plants, sustainability and healthy eating. C is quickly taking on more responsibility in this role, also helping to support their events and in talks to support their other regular educational workshops.

*“Being part of Wellbeing at the Volunteer Centre has meant that I can work. And it is also very important to me that I can work without taking medication for my mental health.*

*I realised during the pandemic that I was so isolated and needed help. Although I have lived in Kensington for many years, I knew almost nobody. That is when I reached out to the Volunteer Centre. The most important thing for me is to be able to feel part of a community. I never had that before I joined Wellbeing at the Volunteer Centre. Now, there are places where I can go that people know me, and I have fulfilment and responsibility and am understood.”* C, November 2022