

Cross-sector collaboration to improve health outcomes August 2023



Introduction

This short report uses real-life stories provided by Enhance delivery partners as part of their quarterly monitoring. The focus is on the way in which Enhance delivery partners in the third sector support older people's physical, mental and clinical health needs in collaboration with Neighbourhood Teams.

*all names have been changed.

Lou's story*

Lou attends the Health Hub weekly to get a wound dressed. Each week Lou chats with the same nurse and the same Enhance worker at the Health Hub. During one of these chats it became clear that Lou was having problems at home with his granddaughter. She was not very nice to him and would even take his bank card and money without asking. It was made very clear to Lou that this was not acceptable and was wrong. At first, Lou just said he would deal with it.

Each week the nurse and the Enhance worker would talk to Lou about his options and ways of keeping himself safe at home. After about a month Lou decided that enough was enough and he would like to move away from his granddaughter. So, with the nurse's support, a referral to Adult Social Care and Leeds Housing Options was made. Until a suitable property is available Lou is staying in respite to get out of his toxic home environment. Partnership working achieved this result for Lou.

Harry's story*

Harry attends a Health Hub and also works closely with an Enhance worker. He is supported by the falls clinic as he is at risk of falling and often falls twice a week or more. The Enhance worker helped Harry to get a key safe fitted and a fall alarm pendant installed. They noticed that Harry was using a smaller, lightweight scooter

that was not really suited to his needs. During a conversation Harry told the Enhance worker that he had fallen off this scooter and had to attend A&E. He said that he does have a more suitable scooter but couldn't charge it.

The Enhance worker went to Harry's flat and fixed the charger for the larger scooter; Harry now uses it and hasn't fallen off since. At the flat the Enhance worker also noticed that Harry didn't wear his shoes correctly and this was a fall risk. When the Enhance worker mentioned the shoes Harry explained that he struggles to reach down to pull them up at the back. The Enhance worker helped Harry to get a shoehorn which he now uses - again reducing the risk of falls.

Tom's story*

Tom had a small head wound due to a fall and the wound needed cleaning and dressing twice a week. At the Health Hub Tom was taught how to do this himself, and staff watched him clean and change the dressing himself to give him confidence that he was doing it correctly. As a result, Tom was discharged from the Neighbourhood Team caseload. He knows that if he needs any extra support he can pop into the Health Hub for advice.

Even though Tom no longer needs to attend he still comes regularly as he enjoys the social aspect created by Enhance and enjoys playing cards with other people there. Tom now also attends an IT breakfast club as he wants to learn how to use the NHS app on his smartphone to order his own medication.

Florrie's story*

Florrie was referred to Enhance by the Neighbourhood Team for help with form-filling and possible onward referrals. She was very reluctant to engage with services and often didn't want visits from staff or didn't understand where they were from. The Enhance worker and Neighbourhood Team referrer worked together to arrange an extended joint visit to Florrie's house. Once there, they explained their different roles and the different types of support each could offer.

Florrie appreciated this and from then on was more receptive to support from Enhance and the Neighbourhood Teams. This collaborative approach also helped to build a more comprehensive and detailed case to present to Adult Social Care so that Florrie could be assessed for longer-term, more intensive support.

Binh's story*

Binh (age 83) was referred to Enhance by a physiotherapist in the Neighbourhood Team. Following a stroke in 2020 he moved to an Extra Care Housing complex in Leeds to be close to his daughter. Since moving Binh hadn't gone out much and missed his previously busy social life. He had been very sporty but due to reduced strength and mobility he struggled to do the sports he loves. In partnership with a Ways to Wellbeing colleague the Enhance worker set up a movement class at the sheltered housing complex for Binh and other residents. This is going well and the number of residents joining each week is growing. Despite some initial anxiety Binh now attends. He feels that the movement class has motivated him to try more movement and gentle exercise in his every day routine.

Binh was keen to get back into outdoor bowls but there is a lack of accessible bowling clubs in Leeds. The Enhance worker supported Binh to discuss the provision of activities in the complex with staff from the Housing Association. They agreed to fund a bowling mat so that Binh and other residents can start playing bowls indoors and outdoors. This is a good compromise and he is feeling very positive about getting outdoors more and introducing bowls to the other residents.

Both Binh and staff at the complex have noticed an overall improvement in his mood and motivation since the new activities were introduced. Binh mentioned that he feels much brighter and more positive. He is proud of himself for trying new things, particularly as this was difficult for him following his stroke, sudden loss of independence and moving to a new home in a new area.

Lionel's story*

Lionel has alcohol and drug problems and was struggling with his mental health. A physiotherapist in the Neighbourhood Team referred him to Enhance for support to access art therapy. The Enhance worker completed an ongoing holistic assessment with Lionel and built a good relationship with him through regular home visits. As well as referring him for art therapy, together they looked into other appropriate art groups as Lionel has an interest in art. He has now started an online arts course that he is thoroughly enjoying and this has contributed to a reduction in his anxiety. The physiotherapist was able to focus on helping Lionel to improve his walking whilst Enhance focused on Lionel's mental wellbeing.

Sally's story*

A physiotherapist in the Neighbourhood Team referred Sally to Enhance for support to engage with her prescribed exercises at home. Having someone to prompt Sally in-person and to supervise her whilst during her exercises provided good motivation to engage with her recovery plan and keep a regular routine. Sally was also encouraged to join a lunch club where she now does gentle chair-based exercise sessions on a regular basis.

Gina's story*

Gina was referred by a physiotherapist in the Neighbourhood Team so that the Enhance worker could help Gina make a GP appointment and arrange transport to get there. On completing a holistic assessment the Enhance worker realised that Gina could benefit from additional support with motivation to carry out daily living activities and with walking. Gina was spending all her time in her pyjamas in her armchair. Together they put a plan in place and set goals such as getting dressed each day and having short, supported walks. Over time, Gina built her confidence in mobilising and has since been able to manage making a drink independently and getting sandwiches for herself from the fridge. This ensured Gina was having something to eat whilst keeping hydrated and this in turn improved her health, energy levels, mood and motivation.

Ann's story*

Ann is an Enhance participant and she was referred to 'Moving On' exercise classes after completing a 12-week Strength & Balance course. Coming to class is the only day that Ann leaves her home and Enhance provides transport for this activity. Prior to attending this group Ann had multiple falls and had no mobility confidence.

Ann had two falls during early Moving On sessions. She didn't hurt herself and the instructor showed her how to get up safely from the floor so that if this happened when she was on her own, she'd know what to do. The instructor also showed Ann controlled ways to sit down on, and stand up from a chair, so that she is more balanced and centred and less likely to fall. Ann says she now does wall presses at home to strengthen as many muscles as possible. Strong wrists help her push up from the floor and furniture. Ann is now stronger physically and her risk of falls has reduced, however she now has techniques in place to cope should she fall. Overall her physical & mental health has massively improved and Ann is very proud of what she has achieved.

Karen's story*

Karen was referred to Enhance by the Neighbourhood Team for a key safe. She was housebound and had previously had her house broken into by the emergency services in order to receive medical attention. Following a discussion with the referrer and a social worker, the Enhance worker arranged the installation of a key safe and also a wall mounted post box, ensuring Karen was able to collect her mail safely. As Karen had limited social contact due to her mobility, the Enhance worker also arranged for Karen to have a weekly telephone befriending call.

Alan's story*

Alan is an Enhance participant who was encouraged to join regular activity groups. At a lunch club Alan got involved with the digital inclusion service. He has a Libre sensor fitted and wanted to learn how to use technology to manage his health more effectively. Alan wanted to measure his blood sugars using his phone so he could monitor this frequently whilst he was out and plan his days out with better knowledge of his health.

With input from Enhance and digital inclusion staff, Alan was supported to source a suitable smartphone which would support the Libre sensor app. They helped him to look up suitable devices using an iPad and find online tutorials on how the app works. Further visits from Enhance enabled Alan to receive person-centred support to set up and use the appropriate devices. Digital inclusion support at the lunch clubs allowed Alan to put this knowledge into practice and also allowed him to explore more health-related technology such as managing appointments online and finding contact details for relevant health services. Alan continues to attend group activities and is now an active member in the community. He manages his health needs more independently and is reconnecting with people and activities he enjoys. Alan said he feels this has contributed towards better health-management and independence. He is now much more confident and relies less on input from the Neighbourhood Team for his medication.

