



Partnership Southwark Newsletter April 2023

Welcome to the first Partnership Southwark newsletter of 2023! Published to keep you informed on our work to better join up health and care services and close the gap on inequalities within the borough. If you are interested in hearing more or being involved in this work, please contact our programme team [here](#).

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Our partnership goes from strength to strength

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Our partnership goes from strength to strength

**Dr Gavin McColl, GP, Clinical Director of Southwark Primary Care Network,
Primary Care Representative, SEL ICP**



In the first newsletter of 2023, we want to wish all our colleagues across Southwark all the very best for the year, which seems to be advancing at great pace! Making great progress also are our plans for shaping the partnership as a joined up force for tackling health inequalities in our borough, by working closely together with and on behalf of our residents.

Our priorities as a partnership are emerging and will soon be confirmed in our upcoming Health and Care plan, available in the summer. The plan will set the direction for the partnership in the coming year. Very much designed as an action



plan, areas of focus include the 1001 days programme, concentrating the first two years of life and maternal health so that all women and their partners feel empowered to provide the best start in life for their children. Work is underway to coproduce a pilot approach to the programme in Camberwell.

Also highlighted in the plan is the importance of the 'Vital 5', indicators of poor health -hypertension, smoking, obesity, alcohol misuse and mental health - with initiatives in place to overcome these issues in our population. With Vital 5 health kiosks already in the borough and an analysis of hypertension prevalence locally, this area of work continues to make progress. Alongside the area of Vital 5, collaborating with our communities and partners to expand the provision of early intervention and community based mental health support is a central part of our plans for adults, young people and children for this year and next.

For our older residents, our aim is to help keep people active, productive, independent and socially connected for as long as possible. Looking at falls prevention, lower limb care and better joined services for those living with dementia is where efforts are concentrated for our older people through our health and care plan.

Underpinning all of our work is a determination to shift the traditional 'top-down' way of doing things towards working collaboratively with our residents, communities, voluntary and community groups as well as our statutory partners on an equal basis to ensure that services work for the people that use them. By working in this way we hope to better address needs, tackle inequalities and produce better outcomes for our residents.

Two new grants funding panels tackle health inequalities in Southwark

Tackling health inequalities in black and minority ethnic communities

Partnership Southwark and Community Southwark have been working together to set up an innovative new grants funding panel whose members are community representatives from the REACH and Latin American networks at Community Southwark. Uniquely the panel has come together to devise, design and build the funding programme independently, using their collective expertise to ensure that the funding is aimed at and meets the needs of the Black, Latin and minority ethnic communities in Southwark, to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

The programme is set to launch in the near future and we will share the details widely.

Social prescribing fund making good use of health inequalities funding

A recent round of funding to tackle health inequalities in the borough has been allocated to support local organisations who deliver social prescribing activities This



was led by Partnership Southwark, with a panel including social prescribing link workers and local VCS leads. The panel received a large number of strong applications for funds and decisions on successful applicants will be made shortly. Panel member and social prescribing link worker in North Southwark, Mary Olushoto said: “Applicants demonstrated a high level of commitment and creativity making our job very difficult. We will share the successful projects very soon.”

Appleby Blue – a new, modern almshouse for our older residents in Southwark

United St Saviours Charity, who work with Partnership Southwark through the Age Well programme, will soon be opening an exciting new development of supported and affordable accommodation for older residents. A beautiful new almshouse will join the collection of properties run by the charity, designed by award winning architects Witherford Watson and Mann.

On the site of a former residential care home, the project uses traditional almshouse design principles in a contemporary way.

The building offers 57 new homes and residents qualify to apply if they are over 65, have lived in Southwark for three years or more and are of limited means. The aim of allocating homes by both United St Saviours and Southwark Council has been to reduce loneliness and to build a community feel. As well as self contained easy to maintain homes in a lively community setting, the amenities at Appleby Blue include an on-site community centre, a community kitchen, a stunning garden room opening onto a landscaped courtyard and rooftop allotments and growing spaces.



The development will invite the community in to share the facilities, with plans to set up a cookery school in the community kitchen and to run regular intergenerational activities to place Appleby Blue firmly at the heart of the community. Residents will also have the opportunity to have a say on what is important to this age group, by working with universities giving their feedback, experience and ideas to shape future agendas around later life, reflecting the aims of our Age Well programme of work.

Supporting Young Carers – Jess Wilson, Young Carers Support Coordinator, Imago



Imago support Young Carers in Southwark and work into the Start Well programme at Partnership Southwark

On a Friday afternoon in a community space at Surrey Quays, Jess Wilson is setting up activities for a young carers workshop that takes place every other Friday during term time. Jess's aim with her time with the young carers is to provide a safe and welcoming space for children with caring responsibilities to finish their school week with some fun and says: "It's important that kids get some time to just be kids, away from the challenges of their home environment, and to enjoy themselves with others that understand".

Young Carers at the workshop range in age from 8-18 years old and have come to the group run by Imago from a variety of referral routes, including self-referral. Schools suggest children who would benefit with support from Jess and the team at Imago, as can social services, GPs and Early Help panels. A Young Carer is anyone taking on caring responsibilities for a family member with a long-term illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse issue. This can include caring for a disabled sibling. To follow up referrals Jess speaks to the SENCO at schools, safeguarding leads and parents, and asks children to fill in an assessment form which will flag the level of need to guide Jess and the team on the most suitable support. This could be attending workshops, holiday respite or one-to-one support. Jess says: "It takes time to build relationships with children and families, and our aim is to make children feel as comfortable as possible and under no pressure."



Jess feels the best bit about her job is spending time with the kids: "I can see the relief it brings when they can just enjoy themselves at workshops and the good feedback we get from families makes it feel really worthwhile". She adds: "We are here if children want to offload and cry, but also here for some fun and laughter, and making a positive difference is so rewarding".

Mental health first aid training

Southwark Council are running free Mental Health First Aid Training for those working with refugees and asylum-seekers.

What is Mental Health First Aid?

The Mental Health First Aid course applies the model of physical first aid training to mental health. It trains you to listen, reassure, and respond in a mental health crisis – and potentially how to prevent a crisis happening.

What is the training offer?



This specialist training enables attendees to become accredited Mental Health First Aiders. The training includes skills and knowledge to support the mental health of refugees and asylum seekers, in a supportive, inclusive environment.

The training is free and run over two full days. There is a course in each month from March – June inclusive and there are half-day information sessions available too. To register click on the date you would like to attend, below.

For more information contact Rebecca.sinnott@southwark.gov.uk .

When is the training?

- [12/13th April](#)
- [11th/12th May](#)
- [14th/15th June](#)

We are running half-day sessions that offer an overview of the course:

- [21st April 1pm-5pm](#)
- [22nd May 9am - 1pm](#)

Partner News

Life saving testing rolled out at St Thomas' A&E

Patients aged 16 and over who receive routine blood tests when they attend the emergency department (A&E) at St Thomas' Hospital will be tested for HIV and hepatitis B and C, unless they choose to opt out.

The emergency department is one of the busiest in the country with more than 61,000 blood tests carried out each year. The combined blood borne virus testing will lead to earlier diagnosis and treatment for people who may be unaware that they have one of the viruses.



Since July 2015, all patients over the age of 16 having a blood test in the emergency department at St Thomas' have been tested for HIV, unless they chose to opt out. This has resulted in more than 2,300 positive results.

Dr Bo Wang, a consultant gastroenterologist and hepatologist at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Southwark and Lambeth have some of the highest rates of HIV and hepatitis B and C in England. Testing is needed because infection often does not have any symptoms, so people wouldn't necessarily know unless they have a specific blood test. Chronic hepatitis B and C infection are major causes of liver cirrhosis and liver cancer, but with early diagnosis and management these complications can be prevented."



Healthwatch Southwark holding free community health event – blood pressure, diabetes and stroke



Healthwatch are holding a free community health event focusing on blood pressure, diabetes and stroke on 3 May 2023, 12-3pm, Cherry Gardens Hall TRA, 210 Jamaica Road, SE16 4RT

The event is open to all and guest speakers will be attending to discuss these issues that affect many in

our borough.

Health checks will be available provided by Partnership Southwark and anyone wishing to attend can register [here](#). Any teams wishing to have a stall at the event can contact: daniel@healthwatchsouthwark.org.

Community Spotlight

Celebrating the work in the community to support our residents.

This edition's guest reporter is Huw Macdonald, Specialist Registrar with Southwark Public Health.

Keep the Drums, Loose the Knife: working to eradicate FGM and support survivors

Last summer, I joined Southwark's Public Health Department as part of the Specialist Registrar training programme, the first step on my pathway to becoming a Public Health Consultant. But my journey towards public health began well before that, when I worked with a charity supporting people with learning disabilities. Seeing first-hand the health inequalities faced by this group of people struck a chord with me. It taught me that listening to the concerns of our community can be an eye-opener to barriers in the way of improving health. I've since been motivated to use my skills to tackle health injustice jointly with local communities.

An important health issue I'm currently exploring is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Sadly, FGM is still happening in many parts of the world, even though it can cause serious health consequences and violates the rights of women and girls.





In Southwark, it is estimated that there could be up to 5,900 women and girls living with FGM, but only 160 cases were identified by NHS services last year. But those numbers only tell part of the story, which is why I wanted to speak directly to affected women.

That's when I discovered Keep the Drums, Lose the Knife (KDLK). This inspiring Southwark community organisation, run by survivors of FGM, is working to eradicate the practice and provide outreach to affected communities.

I had the chance to visit KDLK last autumn and participate in a workshop with affected women, family members, professionals, and community members. Women shared their experiences in a safe space, while we all learned about available services, and discussed ongoing work to prevent FGM. The workshop was expertly facilitated by KDLK founder Sarian Karim Kamara and Janet Fyle MBE, a registered nurse and midwife, who jointly delivered a passionate education and awareness-raising session.

I was moved by the stories that attending women shared, and impressed by the strong mutual support provided by KDLK. It was clear that KDLK plays a critical role in empowering women - amplifying their voices within their communities to put a stop to this harmful practice. They also work to raise awareness and understanding among health and care professionals.

The audience's reaction to the workshop was powerful. One of the main takeaways was that education is key in preventing FGM. Targeted, culturally sensitive education from community representatives who respect the culture, but are also frank and honest, is essential in stopping the perpetuation of this harmful practice.

We also discussed barriers that survivors of FGM face when seeking support. It can be difficult for affected women to come forward because of fears of getting relatives into trouble, reliving past traumas, and language and cultural barriers. In many cases, it is not just one thing stopping them, but a combination of many factors. One story we heard was particularly striking - a woman who had little money, couldn't speak English, and didn't know about the range of services available. Luckily, KDLK was able to help her access the support she needed.

Participants finally stressed the need for support and counselling for survivors. Survivors face significant physical, psychological, and social impacts, and need culturally sensitive and holistic support to rebuild their lives.

Based on these insights, we proposed a review of mental health support for women with FGM, and awareness training for a wider group of staff to make it easier for people to seek help. This community-centered approach we're taking is essential to ending FGM and providing necessary support to those affected.



If you want more information about the work we're doing on FGM or a copy of the FGM JSNA, please do email me on huw.macdonald@southwark.gov.uk - we're always happy to chat about this important issue.

