

# Together Better Project Volunteering In Primary Care

- ▶ Spring Hill Practice
- ▶ Elsdale Street Surgery
- ▶ Somerford Grove Practice
- ▶ Lawson Practice
- ▶ Nightingale surgery
- ▶ Richmond Road Medical Centre
- ▶ Lower Clapton Group Practice

VOLUNTEER  
CENTRE  
HACKNEY

TOGETHER  
BETTER  
@ VCHACKNEY

NHS

City and Hackney  
Clinical Commissioning Group







# Let's talk numbers!

## VOLUNTEERS



48 Activities delivered in these surgeries every week across Hackney . All led by volunteers sharing their skills

91 volunteers active right now in the surgeries.

1 Community Engagement Coordinator in each surgery, three days a week.

25 different activities from walking groups to dance classes

437 new participants engaged in these activities since January 2022



# Let's talk numbers! VOLUNTEER LED ACTIVITIES

15  
boxing  
sessions

38  
Acupressure  
sessions

78 Gardening  
Group Sessions

17 men's  
mental health  
peer support  
groups

50 Yoga  
Classes

14 Mother  
& Baby  
Clubs

87 Arts &  
Craft Classes

18 Tai Chi  
classes

30 Swing  
Dance Fitness  
classes

10 women's  
support groups

38  
Qigong  
classes

102 Seated  
Fitness  
Classes

6 creative  
writing  
classes

161 Coffee  
Mornings

8  
Empowering  
women's  
workshops

140  
Walking  
Sessions

12  
women's  
self defence  
classes

30 advice and  
information  
workshops

11 Cooking  
classes





# PROJECT IMPACT What do the patients say?

"I went through a rough period with my health, but being part of the programme has improved it now, I'm more active and focused".

"This has helped my walking so much; I feel like I could run now!"

"I feel much better since I've got involved in this project and I especially like doing physical activities. It really benefits my mental health and I would like to say thank you to everyone who has been involved".

"So pleased to be involved in many activities as part of this project which has greatly improved my well-being and happiness. I've enjoyed getting to know people supporting and working with the local community.

"It makes me feel better just to know someone cares and checks in on me".

"I felt respected, valued, empowered and supported".

"I love getting out and about meeting and chatting with new people. This has helped reduce my anxiety. My mental health has improved, my confidence has grown and I've even lost weight!"

"Since starting this project I have lost weight, my knees are stronger, from walking all the time. I volunteer at the coffee morning and I really love the people I've met".



# What do the surgery staff say?

22 GPs and Practice Managers completed the survey from three surgeries.

• **75%** of staff surveyed, said they had referred a patient to TB.

• **68%** of staff surveyed, said it was an easy process to refer patients to TB.

• **68%** of staff surveyed said they had had positive feedback from their patients about the programme.

• **100%** of staff surveyed, said they feel the TB programme has benefited patients at their surgery.

• **100%** of staff surveyed, said they feel that the TB programme has had a positive impact on the surgery.

• **100%** of staff surveyed said they would recommend this programme to other GP practices.

“Patients are taking ownership of their health and well-being. They are helping each other to stay well. There is social connection and a sense of community. Patients are doing something positive for themselves, each other and the practice”.

“Lovely to see patients working in and around the surgery - feels inclusive, new way to interact with patients. Gardening group has improved the surroundings of the practice and is a really positive focus around reception”.

“Great programme - so nice to have groups of patients coming in for a coffee and a chat - taking part in activities and volunteering to help the practice, absolutely recommend this to all practices”.

“It has been amazing! The practice is a better place due to our volunteers. It is adding social value to what we do. We feel more connected to our patients and hopefully they feel more connected to the practice. The gardening project has transformed the outside of our building-it is beautiful. We have somewhere very positive to refer our patients to which enhances their physical and mental health”.

“The programme has changed some people's lives by making new friends and getting active”.

“My patient has found it a lovely group, found it has helped her with isolation and she has presented less to the surgery”, Dr Angel.

“I have two patients with mental health issues. One attends the gardening group and has spent less time focusing on contacting medical services. The group provides him with a focus and support network beyond his medical issue. The second patient was suffering with social isolation and often doesn't like to attend. However, she is engaging with the arts group and is therefore better connected and less isolated”, Dr Khan.

# PROJECT IMPACT STORIES



- ▶ *Because of the excellent working relationship between the Together Better team and surgeries, when a text message was received from a suicidal patient stating they were going to end their life, police and ambulance were able to get to this patient before injuries became life-threatening.*
- ▶ *Housing issues - many patients face difficulties with their housing which in turn negatively impacts their health. One of the TB staff has improved housing conditions for six patients - all of whom are now actively engaged in projects & volunteering. More recently a colleague held a housing surgery at R/Rd practice which 21 patients benefitted from.*
- ▶ *Personal issues - some patients have complex mental health and personal issues and are not ready to engage, when we first meet them. We have worked in depth with patients to ensure they are not isolated & feel included in activities. This could range from dealing with hygiene issues to simply taking the time to work with someone one-on-one until they are ready to join in. We found out that one patient has had no hot water at home for two years, is disabled and has no support or social care. We signposted to social prescriber, patient now has a social worker and hot water was back on within two weeks.*
- ▶ *Patient with history of mental health issues. Has been regularly attending Walking Group and Coffee Morning for 6 months. In a consultation with Dr Angel said that he feels 'happiest he has been in years' due to the groups.*
- ▶ *Estate garden group member - had mental health crisis on day of session - talked to the TB staff and a volunteer, who were able to calm her down from crisis, signposted her for more support, with a follow-up session next day.*
- ▶ *Patient with limited English - had been isolating for 3 weeks as did not understand Covid restrictions. TB staff let her know she didn't need to stay at home anymore and was able to come back out into the community.*
- ▶ *Women's refuge resident - attended Qigong sessions - broke down crying with gratitude for opportunity to be with other people and feel welcomed.*
- ▶ *86 year old - lives alone and has found the walks have strengthened her limbs and maintained her confidence with walking. Signposted to additional independent living support programme.*
- ▶ *Homeless patient attended Walking Group - signposted to social prescriber and onto homelessness services.*





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If you would like a copy of this presentation or more information about any of Volunteer Centre Hackney's programmes please share your email address with us.