

Did you know?

HALE Community Connectors work with patients across Bradford in a variety of different languages.

Our Eastern European offer includes Romani, Czech, Polish, Hungarian and Slovak.

Community Connectors

Helping you link to your community



How to Refer

How to make a referral to HALE Community Connectors.

The roll out of Care Navigation makes it even easier to make a referral to HALE Community Connectors.

Once patient consent for the referral has been obtained, simply follow the Care Navigation template to make a direct referral under the HALE Community Connector/DQT Social Prescribing template on System One. Please try and include as much relevant information in the referral form, such as language need and home circumstances so we can ensure the referral is allocated to the most appropriate members of the team.

Work is continuing to ensure all referrals from all GP practices are sent through System One. Paper and fax referrals should not be used unless prior agreement has been reached in individual cases.

If there are any concerns or queries, please get in touch with the HALE Community Connector team on 01274 271088.



New faces in the Community Connector Team

Samantha Monk joined the team in late September as Project Co-ordinator and has been busy in her role, supporting colleagues, working with commissioners and developing the project to full capacity.

Sam brings a wealth of professional experience to the role and an enthusiasm and passion that fits perfectly with the ethos of the HALE team. Welcome Sam!

Welcome to the second HALE Community Connector newsletter.

It's been a very busy few months for the team. Since the last edition, HALE Community Connectors have been promoting the work of the project across the district, working directly with GP practices and, most importantly, supporting hundreds of patients on a one-to-one level.

As the size of the project has increased, so too have the areas of support and guidance the Community Connectors have been able to offer. From loneliness, isolation and living with long term medical conditions, right through to debt,

benefits and healthy lifestyles, HALE Community Connectors work to develop a trusting relationship with patients, providing support on the issues most important to them, when and where they decide they need it.

As always, we want to make sure the benefits of social prescribing through HALE Community Connectors are shared widely. If you would like to share a good news story with us about your work with Community Connectors, please get in touch.

Community Connectors - Responding to client needs

The Community Connector project brings together wide experience in supporting clients facing a variety of issues. The nature of this front-line work means Connectors are adept at spotting patterns and responding to the changing needs of clients.

A recent example of this is the development of a group to support men with social anxiety in Shipley. Former and current clients experiencing anxiety and social isolation have come together to arrange a weekly meeting, where they meet for

a coffee and chat. This peer support is welcoming and accessible and was organised by James, one of the HALE Community Connectors.

James said; "We see patients with similar issues, and it can often make sense to bring them together to support each other in their shared experiences. We work to be flexible and are able to set up and support groups. It's very organic, and helps create new friendships and support networks for those who have been lonely and isolated for a long time."

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HALE Community Connectors at BRI

Following a successful pilot last year, HALE Community Connectors are now a fixed presence in Bradford Royal Infirmary, supporting Accident & Emergency staff during the challenging winter period.

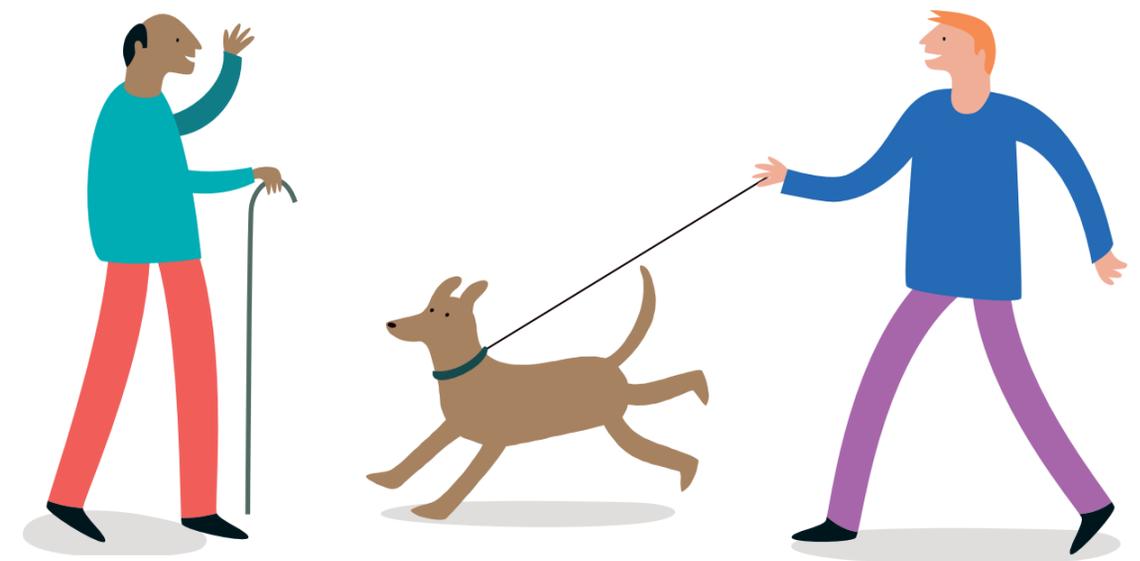
Building on local and national work to ensure the A&E department is able to run effectively, HALE Community Connectors work directly with patients who have been referred and are in need of wider support. Issues may include housing, debt and other welfare issues. This partnership approach between HALE and Bradford Royal Infirmary had a significant positive impact on re-admittance rates during winter 2017-18 and has been designed to have an even stronger impact this year.

Short term support for long term change

HALE Community Connectors work as a team with specialist knowledge, skills and experience in order to provide the best support for patients.

Community Connectors are well networked and can provide short term support and guidance in a number of specialist areas including nutrition, exercise, low level mental health, domestic violence and addiction recovery. Community Connectors can also offer support in a number of South Asian and Eastern European languages.

Please outline any specialist requirements for patients during the referral process.



Patient stories - in their own words

HALE Community Connectors show a really flexible and person-centred approach to working with clients. The very nature of their work means that a Connector may be dealing with people with different backgrounds in very different circumstances, all in need of specialised one to one support. From helping with application forms through to intense family support at a time of crisis, no two days are the same for a Community Connector.

Our work with Mr & Mrs H demonstrates just how valuable a HALE Community Connector can be to the whole family at a time of great difficulty. We are very grateful to them for agreeing to share their story in their own words, supported by Anita, their Community Connector.

"I had lost my way when help came to me through Anita. My wife was seven months pregnant when I found a lump on my arm. I wanted to protect my wife and family, so I didn't tell them anything. Anita helped me with hospital appointments, here in Bradford and with the specialist in Birmingham. My brother took me to the appointments while Anita arranged everything here and chased everything up. I was so scared.

I had been ill and unable to work, which was another pressure on my family. Anita had arranged all my benefit forms and PIP application, so it was one less thing for me to worry about

Anita was with me at my GP Practice while I waited to find out my biopsy results. Eventually we found out the lump was benign. I can't tell you how happy I was to get the news. I was so happy, it was an amazing feeling. But it didn't last for long. One month later I was called back and had to go through the whole process again as my lump had grown. Once again Anita supported me through

everything. On top of all this I was ill and needed additional treatment which caused delays to my biopsy. Eventually we received the news that the lump was benign, and I was able to celebrate with Eid with my family with a happy heart.

Just a few days later, my wife went into labour. We left the children with our neighbour planning to be home in a few hours with our new baby. Sadly that did not happen. Our baby died and our world was turned upside down. Anita was one of the first people I called at 7.20am and she was there by 9am to support us both. So much had happened and we were in shock, Anita helped us to understand more about whether we should have a post-mortem to find out what had happened to our baby. She was here for us. We didn't know what to do or where to turn. She helped us so much.

When we finally got home, Anita arranged for my wife to see the GP and popped in every day to see how we were doing. She helped our children and made sure school understood what was going on and helped us prepare for the funeral, making sure we could get through what had happened together. She came with us when we got the post-mortem results and helped us understand the information we were given.

It's been a difficult eight months, it's been very intense for the whole family but thanks to Anita's support we are getting through it. My wife is a lot more settled and looking after herself, and I've had surgery on my arm and I am back at work.

I just want to say thank you with all my heart. We don't know why these things happened to us but we know the help we got was so important in helping us. My thanks to you at HALE and Anita for everything you did for us."

HALE Community Connectors supporting Care Navigation

HALE Community Connectors welcome the roll out of the Care Navigation system in Bradford and are pleased to be one of the first organisations included on the referral template.

All staff in GP Practices play a key role in supporting the patient community and HALE Community Connectors have developed strong relationships with both clinical and front-line staff in many Bradford practices. These relationships provide many benefits; not least to patients who are experiencing a number of health and social problems - some long-term and complex, others temporary.

HALE Community Connectors have a strong record of working with Practice staff to support patients and their families, as well as promoting healthcare messages and resources. The roll out of Care Navigation is a fantastic opportunity to develop that work further.

Practice front-line staff will be familiar with many of the issues and challenges faced by some patients but may not always have the time and resources to help. Suggesting a referral to HALE Community Connectors can provide an option to patients to gain access to a professional who can provide experienced and knowledgeable one to one support.

HALE Community Connectors have always accepted referrals from all staff in GP Practices, according to practice policy. The roll out of Care Navigation makes that process even easier. With patient consent, a referral can be made easily through the Care Navigation template and a Community Connector will get in touch with the patient directly to arrange an initial appointment.

The HALE Community Connector team have delivered training and information through the CCG information sessions as part of the preparation for the launch of Care Navigation; however support is always on hand for any team in any practice. Simply contact HALE on 01247 271088 to arrange for a member of the Community Connector team to visit.