



Making a difference to patients, families and your local health and social care services in Darlington every day!

What the Health Connectors have been up to during October/November 2018

Mental Health Report:

Some of our Health Connector volunteers have been busy helping to analyse the findings from our Children & Young People Mental Health survey. These findings have been used in our report which is just about to be sent to providers and commissioners.

Community Outreach:

During October our volunteers have been very active in the community, conducting outreach activities in a number of locations around Darlington.

These included:

- Wesley Court BME social group
- Darlington Memorial Hospital
- Salvation Army
- Dolphin Centre (World Mental Health day)

Training:

Our Health Connector volunteers have been invited to attend two training courses which have been a great opportunity for them to develop their knowledge and skills. We were lucky enough to take part in Cancer Awareness training (kindly delivered by Susan Lee, Cancer Link worker) and Dementia Friends training (kindly delivered by Kathryn Hardwick, Alzheimer's Society).

Youthwatch Darlington:

Our Youthwatch volunteers have taken part in an NHS England focus group which was delivered by Chris from TFM Radio. The group looked at the introduction of a new health app for adults and shared their views. Youthwatch invited other young members from Queen Elizabeth Sixth from College and the YMCA.



Youthwatch also supported World Mental Health day using the theme 'Hello Yellow' from the Youngminds campaign. They encouraged individuals to share their positive tips, advice and inspirational quotes for anyone living with a mental health condition.





Our Future Plans

Hospital Discharge and Continuing Health Care:

Healthwatch Darlington will be beginning their next piece of work across the winter months which will be focusing on Hospital Discharge and NHS Continuing Healthcare. Our Health Connector volunteers will be invited to support staff members in conducting engagement, surveys and speaking to service users.

Cancer Awareness and Social Isolation:

We are very pleased to welcome a new volunteer to our team. Our new volunteer will be assisting with our social media campaigns for Cancer Awareness raising and Social Isolation. Please watch and share our social media post in the coming weeks.

Outreach sessions in November 2018:

We will be out and about across Darlington in November. Don't miss this opportunity to share your views. You can talk to the Health Connectors on the following dates:

- Broom Tree Café and Care & Share group, Monday 12th November 2018, 12.00pm-3.00pm
- Living with and Beyond Cancer event, Northern Echo Arena, Friday 16th November 2018, 10.00am-3.00pm
- Crown Street Library, Friday 23rd November 2018, 10.00am-12.00pm

Youthwatch Darlington:

Youthwatch Darlington launched a poster at the beginning of November 2018 to support Stress Awareness Week. They wanted to raise awareness about stress, self help tips and services for supporting young people. We are really pleased with the magnificent support that their poster has received. The poster has been shared in GP surgeries, pharmacies, colleges and on social media. We reached 4000 people on Facebook which is fantastic.



Our Youthwatch members have recently had a meeting with the practice manager at Denmark Street surgery to explore ideas on how the surgery can make improvements for young patients who attend. We are really excited about this project and we are looking forward to working with the surgery.

To find out more about Youthwatch Darlington please contact Jemma Austin, Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator using the contact details below.

You can find more information about our Health Connector volunteering programme via our website where you will find our application packs and role descriptions: <http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/content/volunteering> or alternatively you can contact Jemma our Volunteer and Outreach coordinator via j.austin@healthwatchdarlington.co.uk