



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 August and September!

Community Outreach:

The Health Connectors have continued speaking to individuals and families about children and young people's mental health services. We were in the town centre holding a market stall and we have visited venues such as the Dolphin Centre, Darlington College and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College.

Mental Health:

Health Connectors have continued with engagement across Darlington. Some of the team have visited NECA with a Healthwatch staff member to conduct case study interviews with clients giving them an opportunity to share their real life patient story.

The engagement work for the mental health project has finished off within local colleges giving students an opportunity to tell us their views on children and young people's mental health services.



Enter & View:

Enter & View visits have been arranged at Darlington Memorial Hospital. Health Connectors will be visiting 3 wards within the Hospital over the coming weeks with our neighbour Healthwatch County Durham. Three reports will be produced following on from these visits.

Volunteer of the month:

To show our appreciation for our Health Connectors time and commitment we regularly select one volunteer who has stood out through their personal development and enthusiasm to receive our 'Volunteer of the month' award.

We would like to congratulate Lorraine Dunn who has received her award during September 2018.

You can read more about Lorraine and her role as a Health Connector via our website: <http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/news/healthwatch-darlington-volunteer-month-lorraine-dunn>





New Health Connectors:

Our new Health Connectors have settled into their roles as volunteers at Healthwatch Darlington. They have all completed a four-module training course and inductions. They will now begin to take part in community outreach and projects very soon.

Mental Health Project:

Healthwatch Darlington will be producing two mental health reports over the coming weeks which will be sent to providers and commissioners. Health Connectors will be offered the opportunity to support with analysing data in preparation for the reports.

Community Engagement:

Our Health Connectors will continue to talk to the public through our community outreach sessions and events engaging an discussion around Health & Social Care services in Darlington. Don't miss the Health Connectors at the following venues:

- St Andrews Foodbank, Thursday 4th October 2018, 1:30-2:30pm
- Dolphin Centre, Wednesday 10th October 2018, 9:30am - 12:00pm (World Mental Health Day)

We would love to visit new venues or community groups in Darlington. If you know of a venue we could visit please contact us as we are happy to arrange this.

Please keep an eye on our social media pages and website for further outreach dates.

Future training:

Health Connectors have the fantastic opportunity of taking part in two training sessions during October. We have the pleasure of Alzheimer's Society joining us to deliver Dementia Friends training which will increase volunteers understanding and awareness. We are also excited to have a Cancer Link worker from within the NHS delivering Cancer & Screening awareness training.

Youthwatch Darlington launches volunteers drive:

We would like to thank Madi Scott our young volunteer for helping to promote Youthwatch Darlington and our recruitment drive for young volunteers. You can read more about why we are looking for new members here: <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/local/darlington/16837465.youthwatch-darlington-launches-volunteer-drive/>



Youthwatch will be holding their first community outreach session on Wednesday 10th October 2018, 9:30am-12:00pm. As its World Mental Health day our young members will be giving individuals an opportunity to share any advice or inspirational quotes for anyone living with mental health conditions. This will support the national campaign being delivered by Youngminds.

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