



Community Link Worker Programme - Mental Health and Wellbeing Deep Dive 2022:

Response Paper

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Introduction

The Glasgow City Community Link Worker (CLW) Programme staff took part in a Mental Health Deep Dive Exercise as it has been reported that Mental Health and Wellbeing were the top reasons for referral to the programme and the main issues addressed while working with patients.

It was also becoming apparent services CLWs referred their patients to for mental health supports or services where patients were waiting to be seen had increasing waiting times resulting in CLWs supporting patients for longer periods of time than previously.

The CLW supports their patients to the right service at the right time for them dependant on the individuals circumstances. They take into account the complexities of the patient engaging with social supports and having a flexible service where these complexities can be considered and a trusted relationship can be built.

The caseloads for CLW have always been heavily weighted with people who have Mental Health and Wellbeing requirements. This is an ideal programme to support them. However Mental Health and Wellbeing is only part of the reasons for working with a CLW - they will continue to support a person in all other non-medical support requirements identified.

The objectives of the Deep Dive were –

- To understand the types of challenges faced by CLWs
- To understand the scale at which these challenges/issues are being experienced
- To identify perceived gaps in skills mix or resources
- To identify barriers to accessing alternative/more suitable help than CLW service
- To consider solutions identified by CLWs themselves
- To gain a clear understanding of the current responses by CLWs in order to support discussions about the roles/ boundaries with other professional groups.

The data was gathered for one week using questions for each patient seen in the period week commencing the 16th of May 2022 or 23rd of May 2022, dependant on the staff members working pattern.

The questions and findings are highlighted in the “Community Link Worker Programme - Mental Health and Wellbeing Deep Dive Final Report” 30th November 2022 -



Community Link
Workers Deep Dive 20

The findings and conclusions were written up by the NHS Public Health Directorate.

This response paper has taken key areas from the report and will set out remedies to the highlighted areas, this may be in the form of future action or action taken since the data was gathered in May 2022. This makes reference to the main report and they should be read in conjunction.

Summary of Results

It is clear from the results that CLWs are working with high numbers of patients who have mental health support needs. 59% of the referrals received in the period were in relation to the patient’s mental health and wellbeing. During assessment and while working with patients this rises significantly to be 81% of patients who wish to address mental health and wellbeing needs. These figures show that a CLW can start working with a patient for the original referral reason and this can develop to include mental health needs.

The top 10 issues patients wished to address but the CLW took into consideration when supporting the patient (Fig 6) covers a range of mental health and wellbeing needs. Anxiety, Depression, Low Mood and Stress are the highest rated factors. Equally the top 10 issues patients did not wish to address but the CLW took into consideration when supporting the patient (Fig 7) covers a similar range of mental health and wellbeing needs.

As expected high numbers of patients are referred to services and awaiting assessment or awaiting treatment (fig 9). This reflects the reported high waiting times to other services. Further breakdown of the

referrals can be seen in Fig 10 and 11. This means patients are on CLWs caseloads for a longer time than previously. We do accept there are waiting lists/times and this impacts on the support time and demands on CLWs, unfortunately a lot of this is out with our control.

95% of all appointments saw support being carried out relating to mental health and wellbeing of the patient.

Fig 16 reflects the high level of skill and knowledge CLWs have as the majority stated they felt equipped to respond to all issues of mental health and wellbeing raised by a patient, only 1% stated they did not. However, 26% stated they only felt well equipped to respond to some of the mental health and wellbeing issues raised by a patient.

Response to Key Areas

The Deep Dive study highlighted the following areas for thought in terms of supporting the CLW workforce and we set out to action each of the areas for consideration as detailed below -

Highlighted area of consideration	Action
<p>“Personality Disorder is highlighted as an area where CLW may feel they need further training or information in order to support their patients”</p>	<p>Glasgow City HSCP Health Improvement Community Link Worker team (HI CLW Team) to link to the NHSGGC Mental Health Team and provide the patient leaflet ‘Borderline and Beyond’, designed by people with experience of living with Borderline Personality Disorder, in partnership with NHSGGC and the Mental Health Network.</p> <p>There is an identified need for future development of specific Personality Disorder Training sessions for all CLWs.</p>

Trauma and Asylum Seeker supports are also areas identified where there are higher numbers of issues for patients and CLWs face challenges when supporting patients

Vicarious Trauma Training provided to CLWs by HI CLW Team. Vicarious Trauma Training enables staff teams to engage with trauma survivors appropriately and sensitively, finding ways of supporting and protecting themselves as responders and to develop support structures across the Glasgow City CLW team.

The Trauma Services in Glasgow City also provided a service overview specifically looking at service delivery and the right services for the right people along with alternative support services.

Safe to Say Training provided which teaches how to work with Adult Survivors of abuse. The training gives workers the confidence and awareness to enable them to work with adults who may disclose.

CLWs have been provided with Domestic Abuse Training as part of their suite of HSCP provided training.

The Asylum Seeker and Homeless Thematic post holders are a resource for CLWs to contact to gain insight and information from relating to these priority groups.

CLW managers have also been advised to direct CLWs to the NES resources and training related to trauma - [Trauma – national trauma training programme | NHS](#)

	<p>Education (scot.nhs.uk)</p> <p>“What’s on Information for Asylum Seekers” resource developed by HSCP Health Improvement Team and distributed to CLWs for information on city wide supports.</p>
<p>Money Advice is a large part of the CLW role and the findings show the broad range of skills and knowledge about supports that CLWs have in their skillset</p>	<p>The CLW programme in Glasgow City is a deprivation based model and talking health inequalities is at the core of the work CLWs are skilled in providing.</p> <p>A small fund has been established to support patients directly. CLWs can access this fund to gain cash first support for travel, help with funds as a one off or short term funds for basic needs.</p> <p>There are ongoing supports from the Welfare Advice in Health Partnership (WAHP) Teams based in GP practices along with area specific services and sharing up to date information.</p> <p>Sessions being held on Scottish Benefits system changes throughout November 2023 and linkages being made with the Improvement Service Money Guiders Network.</p> <p>All CLW routinely inquire about money worries and have received training on the topic and referral pathways to the appropriate money advice service.</p> <p>This will continue to be a priority area for development.</p>

<p>Request for Anger Management and Physical Health Concerns awareness</p>	<p>There are robust safety process in place from both the GP practice where CLWs are located and partner organisations have their own internal processes.</p> <p>In addition to this CLWs are provided with training in NHS Mandatory Core Training in areas such as Reducing Risks of Violence and Aggression and Security and Threat.</p> <p>There may need to be more explored in terms of awareness of Physical Health Issues.</p> <p>In terms of Anger Management the HI CLW Team will discuss with the CLW provider organisations.</p>
<p>Language communication being problematic at times including language barriers, impairments of hearing or speech and literacy issues</p>	<p>CLWs have access to NHS contracted Interpreting Services as required and translation services for materials.</p> <p>They are connected locally to community supports who can also assist with language barriers and this is utilised well.</p> <p>CLW Managers are encouraged to support staff to access online learning modules from both Virtual Learning Environment (publichealthscotland.scot) and NHS Education for Scotland NES. The HI CLW Team will support and direct to the appropriate modules where required such as Course: Making communication even better - learning hub</p>

	<p>publichealthscotland.scot)</p> <p>Interpreters are accessed to enable BSL users to utilise the CLW service. CLW's have attended Deaf Awareness courses.</p> <p>Those who have a visual impairment have all written information spoken to them during appointments.</p> <p>CLWs also have strong links to Glasgow Life provision within their area (literacy supports, libraries, ESOL classes for example) and these are utilised as required for the patient.</p>
<p>Noted concerns over Safeguarding Procedures was referenced in a small number of responses</p>	<p>There are robust safeguarding process in place in both the GP practice where CLWs are located and partner organisations have their own internal processes.</p> <p>In addition to this CLWs are provided with training in NHS Mandatory Core Training in areas such as Public Protection (Adult and Child).</p> <p>The CLWs also use the routine enquiry process to explore safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>There may need to be further discussion with partners around clarity in what to do in situations.</p>
<p>"CLW wellbeing and peer support requirements to be explored"</p>	<p>The HI CLW Team continue to look at and support the CLWs in their teams, it is also part of the CLW organisational structures to support</p>

	<p>their staff wellbeing.</p> <p>In response to concerns about CLWs wellbeing the NHS Peer Support Training ran in August 2023 and this also gives CLWs access to the associated NHSGGC peer supporter network which will provide continual support for those trained as Peer Supporters.</p>
<p>“Consideration should be given as to how ongoing training needs can be identified, including newly emerging issues, and addressed through the professional development structures for CLWs.”</p>	<p>The HI CLW Team are responsive to emerging needs. There are clear reporting structures where training needs of CLWs are reported and acted on, in particular for groups of CLWs. This practice will continue as training needs arise.</p> <p>CLWs are required to complete NHS Mandatory Core Training as part of their induction but also to keep all training updated as required.</p> <p>There is a responsibility on the CLWs own organisation to provide supervision and appraisals whereby training needs of individuals can be explored and identified in order to keep up their continuous professional development.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for CLWs to voice opportunity for training and development at the CLW Forums organised by the HI CLW Team and held multiple times a year in order to provide a voice to CLW and to feedback on what would be useful training and skills</p>

	development for them to have.
<p>“Clarity on Boundaries of Roles” and “Blurred lines of Remit” were highlighted in a small number of responses</p>	<p>CLWs access peer support and each delivery organisation has clear job roles. There is also a clear induction process when a CLW starts their role and this is mandatory.</p> <p>The CLW is part of the wider primary care multi-disciplinary team within their embedded practice and they are encouraged to be an active part of this team.</p> <p>Their management will be best placed to clarify roles at a local level with the CLW and their team.</p> <p>The CLWs are encouraged to be part of the Scottish CLW Network which is a national network facilitated by Voluntary Health Scotland. It provides a national framework for CLWs to connect, support and develop.</p> <p>At a strategic level the HI CLW Team work within Primary Care developments ensuring the role of the CLW is clear to all partners, including sharing of Case Studies and outcomes.</p>
<p>Regular debriefing with senior colleagues was highlighted as requiring review</p>	<p>Regular Support and Supervision are provided by CLWs own organisations as part of their governance structures and they have clear management structures where debriefing is provided.</p> <p>NHS Peer Support Training tool place in August 2023 and this</p>

	<p>gives CLWs access to the associated NHSGGC peer supporter network.</p> <p>CLW Forums are also held multiple times a year organised by the HI CLW Team and give the opportunity for networking and sharing practice, this helps create a supportive network of CLWs across Glasgow City.</p> <p>It will be useful for the HI CLW Team to discuss with service providers as a regular discussion point.</p>
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Conclusion

The Deep Dive exercise and evaluation of findings has been useful in providing a baseline of current demand and response and highlighting areas for consideration. The findings reflected existing data and issues reported via contract meetings, CLW forums and other anecdotal feedback. Through contract monitoring it can be seen that there continues to be high Mental Health and Wellbeing reasons for referral to the programme and the main issues addressed while working with patients.

Many points identified in the deep dive have been actioned and will continue to be key parts of the programme. It is recognised how these can affect all areas of a patient's life and the CLW plays a crucial non-medical role in supporting people in a true holistic way, taking Mental Health and Wellbeing into consideration at all times.

The teams will continue to work together to support patients and staff along with being responsive to emerging needs.

Authored by: Glasgow City HSCP Health Improvement Community Link Worker team, June 2023