



Who we are and what we do?

The 'A Better U' Coaching Team is working across a number of practices in South Tyneside, supporting a shift in care towards a bio-psycho-social approach. We have worked with over 400 individuals so far, encouraging them to access community assets, improve their health and wellbeing, and to make healthier lifestyle choices. The Patient Activation Measure (PAM) is used to identify client needs for intervention and to measure success, with an increase in PAM linked to a decrease in health and social care costs.

The News



Average change in PAM for our most inactivated clients



Reduction in unplanned attendances in primary care



of respondents in GP survey said they'd had enough support to manage their LTC over the last 6 months

The People



The Background

"Hayley" was introduced to our service following her annual COPD review at her GP surgery. Having suffered a stroke whilst out in the community, she was very anxious about being out of the home and as a consequence, rarely left the house. She was isolated and bored, feeling quite low.

The Support

We supported Hayley using a graded exposure approach. Hayley worked with her practitioner to build small goals, understanding the importance of working up to the fear of leaving the house. Initially, the appointments were done at home, to make Hayley feel as comfortable and confident as possible. Conversations focused on small goal setting, whereby Hayley was encouraged to go out for short walks with her son or daughter.

After 3 sessions, Hayley was happy to accompany her practitioner on a short walk.

The Achievements

Hayley has now attended our Mutual Aid group for people managing long term health conditions. This was a big step for her and we hope to see her build on this achievement and become a frequent attender



This month we look at graded exposure.

Anxiety about an event or setting can be consuming and when not faced, can support feelings of loneliness and isolation. An evidence based technique to overcome some anxiety problems is to slowly expose yourself to the situation you fear, allowing you to remain in control. In

the person story this month, graded exposure was used to overcome the fear of being out in public with strangers, starting small with a walk in familiar and enclosed surroundings with loved ones. This kind of technique works really well when you can identify exactly what you're fearful of. The key to this, like with goal setting, is to keep the steps small, simple and effective – the tiniest steps can make a big impact.



Mutual Aid Group



June saw two new members of the group settle in to the growing crowd. A visit from Lifecycle Therapy Services to discuss grief and bereavement reminded us that we often grieve for things, not just people: lifestyles we used to have, things we used to enjoy. Support from external services and our Coaches can help us to manage these big changes with positivity.

Our group facilitators have been working hard to create a friendly, open environment where everyone feels able to share, learn and advise. If you'd like to join a session, please come along to **Centre for Change, every Tuesday, between 9.30 am – 11.30 pm.**