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# Big7Tea engagement event

## Social opportunities to boost mental health

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### Introduction

As part of NHS 70 (the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the NHS) celebrations, NHS Bury Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) hosted a 'Big7Tea' (tea party) themed engagement event on the afternoon of 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018. The event focussed on social opportunities to boost mental health.

This report describes the purpose of the event, how the event was designed and promoted. It also highlights the feedback that was received from the group work, along with how this feedback will be used to inform future work.

### What is social prescribing?

'Social prescribing' or 'community referral' are terms used to describe social opportunities that are provided by organisations including voluntary, community and faith sector groups.

Social prescribing opportunities link people with non-medical sources of support within the community. Opportunities might include arts and creativity, physical activity, volunteering, befriending and learning new skills. It can also include support with things like employment, benefits, housing and debt advice.

Supporting people to access and use non-medical sources of support close to home can contribute to improved mental health and wellbeing.

### Purpose of the event

The CCG is exploring new ways to engage with local communities in order to reach out to the local population and seek participation so that communities are better informed about and engaged in its work.

An opportunity arose to hold a tea party themed engagement event linked to NHS70 celebrations. Discussions within the CCG developed into plans to host an event focussed on how social prescribing opportunities can contribute to improved mental health and wellbeing. Social prescribing is an important theme within Bury's plans to transform health and social care services in Bury.

### Shaping the event

Members of the CCG's Patient Cabinet worked with the CCG's Communications and Engagement team to plan the event in terms of format and promotional materials that would encourage people to get involved.

With valued input from the CCG's clinical lead for mental health, the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Alliance along with public health (Bury Council), the event started to take shape.

The event would aim to:

- Bring people together in an informal setting with light refreshments
- Provide an opportunity for people to:
  - hear about social opportunities happening in their community that might benefit them
  - tell us what would help them and make a difference to their life
  - let us know where they would like us to advertise social opportunities in the future, so that they can easily find out about them and join in
- Provide an opportunity to host a market place event to promote existing opportunities

## Promotion

- A press release to promote the event was prepared and issued, published on the CCG website and promoted through social media.
- People who wanted to come along could make a phone call, e-mail, book a place online or express and interest via a Facebook event.
- Information about the opportunity was also promoted through:
  - The [Bury Directory](#)
  - GP practice information screens
  - An issue of the CCG's e-newsletter known as 'Health Matters' ([sign up here](#))
  - Through existing networks including the voluntary, community and faith sector network of organisations, Healthwatch Bury and amongst local GP practices

## Format

### Introduction

Tea, coffee, water, fruit and cakes were available for participants to enjoy at the start of the event. The CCG Chair Dr. Jeff Schryer opened the event and welcomed around 50 attendees. It was really positive to see a range of people from local communities at the event. There was a lot of positivity in the room, commitment from all sides and this event was seen as the beginning of a bigger conversation and more events like this.

After an introduction to the event and its purpose, Dr. Schryer talked about social prescribing, describing what it is and how it can positively impact on mental health and wellbeing. Participants heard about the important role of the voluntary, community and faith sector in Bury and the range of social opportunities that are already available locally.

### Conversation

Moving into a conversation, participants sat in groups which were facilitated to capture feedback using the following questions/prompts:

- What support are you already accessing?

- What else would help you and make a difference to your life?
- Where would you like us to advertise social opportunities in the future, so that you can easily find out about them and join in?

In addition, flip chart stands and paper were available around the room to enable participants to share other thoughts anonymously.

### Market place

Following the group work, participants were invited to have a look around a market place hosted by a range of organisations already providing a range of social opportunities locally.

An invitation to take part in the market place element was shared via the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Alliance, with direct approaches made by the CCG to other known organisations that provide services or support with a focus on mental health.

Market place participants (whether in person or through the provision of information) included:

- A range of Bury Council services (The Bury Directory, Helping Yourself to Wellbeing, Bury Exercise and Therapy Scheme and the Bury Lifestyle Service)
- Age UK Bury
- BIG in Mental Health
- Bury Citizen’s Advice Bureau
- Bury Hospice
- Bury Samaritan’s
- Bury’s Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Alliance
- Creative Living Centre
- Healthwatch Bury
- NHS Bury CCG’s Patient Services team
- Pennine Care’s Healthy Minds service
- Pennine Care’s Patient Advice and Liaison Service
- Prestwich & Whitefield Probus Club
- Rebuild Bury
- Scouting opportunities (volunteering)

### Feedback

Theme	Feedback captured
Existing provision	<p>From the group work it was clear that there was a good awareness of what is already available in Bury in terms of social opportunities (opportunities are extensive).</p> <p>A range of organisations providing opportunities were captured, many of them were taking part in the market place element of the event, with lots of examples of specific activities jotted down on flipcharts, including (but not limited to): incredible edible, sporting opportunities (football, cricket and swimming), dog walking, musical cafes, courses</p>

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(Healthy Minds and adult learning), yoga, arts and walks.

The questions posed from the groups were:

- There are lots of opportunities, but do people know about them?
- How do we link services up and support them to work better together?
- How do we map services so that we know what is available and can identify any gaps?

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**Under the theme of what we may need more of/possible gaps, we heard about:**

What we may need more of/possible gaps

- Advocacy, mentoring and empowerment opportunities.
- Buddy, volunteering and befriending opportunities/services.
- Opportunities for people with a learning disability.
- Opportunities for 16-18 year olds (transition to adulthood).
- Support for people who need debt and benefit advice.
- Support linked to early onset dementia.

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**Under the theme of accessibility, we heard that:**

Accessibility

- Services need to be available outside of working hours (evenings and weekends). Saturday night can be a long evening.
- There can be barriers to accessing support for issues beyond the theme of mental health (i.e. physical conditions).
- We need to consider how we can provide access in a timely way without bureaucracy.
- A buddy system might help to connect people who are interested in activities with organisations that provide them.
- A generic and simple assessment and referral tool to assess needs leading to personalised action plans would be helpful to ensure a smooth approach.
- The quality of life circle can help to identify needs.

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**Under the theme of resources/support, we heard that:**

Resources/support

- Additional services require additional investment.
- Providers are overwhelmed with demand.
- Providers would welcome support to recruit and train volunteers.

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**Under the theme of promotion, we heard that:**

Promotion

- In promoting opportunities we need to focus on them adding value, and highlight that a clinical solution is not necessary the best or only solution.
- Advertising opportunities in supermarkets, churches, libraries, parks, sports venues, on GP information screens, through the Bury Directory, the press and media and social media should be considered.
- Advertising should include opportunities to pitch for monies.
- In terms of printed literature, leaflets in pharmacies and GP practices/other waiting rooms would be helpful.

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- Information should be provided in alternative formats (thinking about age, language etc), and there is a need to consider more traditional formats for people who don't use technology.
  - The vast range of existing networks we have in Bury, for example the voluntary sector, can help to share information and opportunities.
  - Word of mouth is great for advertising (and free).
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## **Next steps**

One of the work streams to support plans to transform health and social care services in Bury is called 'Enabling Local People'. This feedback report will be taken to a future Enabling Local People meeting, so that it can be carefully considered and built in to shaping the delivery of projects such as social prescribing and community engagement, along with any future asset needs assessment.

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