

BetterYou

Jan-Mar 2019

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keeping you out of hospital

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Bristol Community
Health



Deputy mayor Asher Craig

Local people take the lead

Deputy mayor Asher Craig joined people from all around Bristol at The Station café in central Bristol last September. Together they worked on ideas about how local health and wellbeing services can truly meet the needs of everyone who lives and works here.

“It was so refreshing to hear vibrant ideas directly from the people we serve”

“It was so refreshing to hear vibrant ideas directly from the people we serve – and to watch our staff get involved in that process too,” said Matthew Areskog, Bristol Community Health’s head of patient and public empowerment.

“There was a lot of discussion about how we can work more closely with local communities to support people with their wellbeing beyond just the medical – things like keeping people active and better connected to local activities. These ideas and more will shape our People and Communities strategy over the next five years.”

Get involved



Want to be involved in supporting or volunteering with community health services? Join our community:

0117 440 9180 / bricomhealth.feedback@nhs.net

Editor’s letter

Welcome to our new health and wellbeing newsletter, ‘BetterYou’. As your local NHS community services provider, we want to do everything we can to help you and your family get healthier and happier.

So whether it’s advice on how to help your child’s communication skills (p6), hearing from someone who has found a way out of crippling loneliness (p4) or simply learning more about what we do (back page), I hope you’ll find something here that interests you. Enjoy the issue, and all the best for the year ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Julia Clarke'.

Julia Clarke
Chief executive,
Bristol Community
Health



Listening to local communities

Our teams went on a roadtrip around Bristol in September to understand the diverse needs of people from local ethnic groups. Staff visited a mosque, Hindu temple, Sikh gurdwara and found out about other local communities. The event was organised by Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI). "It really opened my eyes to the importance of not thinking about 'patients' as a single group but instead better understanding their lives, beliefs and needs," said Anna Langdon, from Bristol Community Health's HR team. "A highlight was hearing from a representative of the traveller community who gave the most heartfelt and – at times – brutal insight into her background. I felt truly privileged."



The Hindu temple in Easton

Bristol charities get a boost from new grant scheme

This year, for the first time, we are donating grants up to £5,000 to local projects which empower Bristol people to better look after their own health.

"There is so much incredible work being done by local community organisations. Our staff were really keen to give them some extra support to help make a real difference to the health and happiness of local people," said Georgie Davin, chair of our staff

council. Grants are being awarded in January 2019, with our staff voting on the final shortlist. The grant scheme was developed with the help of Voscur, an organisation which supports the volunteering sector.

Learn more

 Follow @briscomhealth on Twitter and Facebook or visit briscomhealth.org.uk to find out about the successful grant applicants.

Health advice in the heart of the city

Our staff volunteered their time to go out and about in the Bearpit underpass in central Bristol last summer.

They were on hand to give some friendly health and wellbeing advice to local homeless people, and gave guidance on where to go for further support.



News in brief

2018 awards round up

Several teams were finalists in the Bristol and Bath Health & Care Awards; our leg wound clinic was shortlisted by the National Association of Primary Care; in partnership, we won *Health Service Journal* and *British Medical Journal* patient safety awards for our work in identifying sepsis.

Supporting more through partnership

We're working with our partners NSCP to offer more services in the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire area, including our Macmillan Rehabilitation and Support service for people with cancer. We're looking at more ways we can work with NSCP in the future.

Our nurses are also joining nurses from NSCP and Sirona care & health to offer flu immunisations to 70,000 children in 300 schools.

We've expanded The Haven, too, which offers specialist health support for refugees. It now covers North Somerset and South Gloucestershire as well as Bristol.

YOUR STORIES

“I’m more myself now”

Spiralling debt and crippling loneliness have made life difficult for Martyn in recent years. He tells **BetterYou** how he has found new contentment

“When you can’t get out of the house, you feel well and truly down. Like a prisoner in a cell. I tried to commit suicide three times.” Martyn shrugs, gives a broad smile and takes a bite of his sandwich. Today, at a Bristol harbourside café, he’s feeling more positive.

Martyn’s sharing a goodbye coffee with Saba James, from Community Navigators Bristol, a free service which provides personalised support to help people over 50 feel less isolated.

While their work together is now coming to an end, Martyn says it’s helped him find new direction and contentment.

How it all began

“I used to have a good social life, when I lived in St Paul’s,” Martyn says. “And I was busy. I loved doing illustrations of animals, birds of prey – that sort of thing. I loved fishing too. Once I pulled a 20lb carp out of the river at Snuff Mills.”

But things spiralled a few years ago when Martyn was moved to Fishponds by the council. He didn’t know anyone, and struggled to get around because of his osteoarthritis. Dyslexia made catching the bus difficult too: “I can read the times but not the destinations,” he says. He felt crippling loneliness, with debts mounting. “I’d have three bills at the end of the month and have to choose which one to pay,” he remembers.

Martyn’s GP referred him to Community Navigators Bristol. Saba met Martyn for several sessions in his home and in local cafés. She got to know what mattered to him and found out what was stopping him getting out.

Together she and Martyn worked out a plan.

“It can just be so hard,” says Saba. “You don’t have access to money. You have



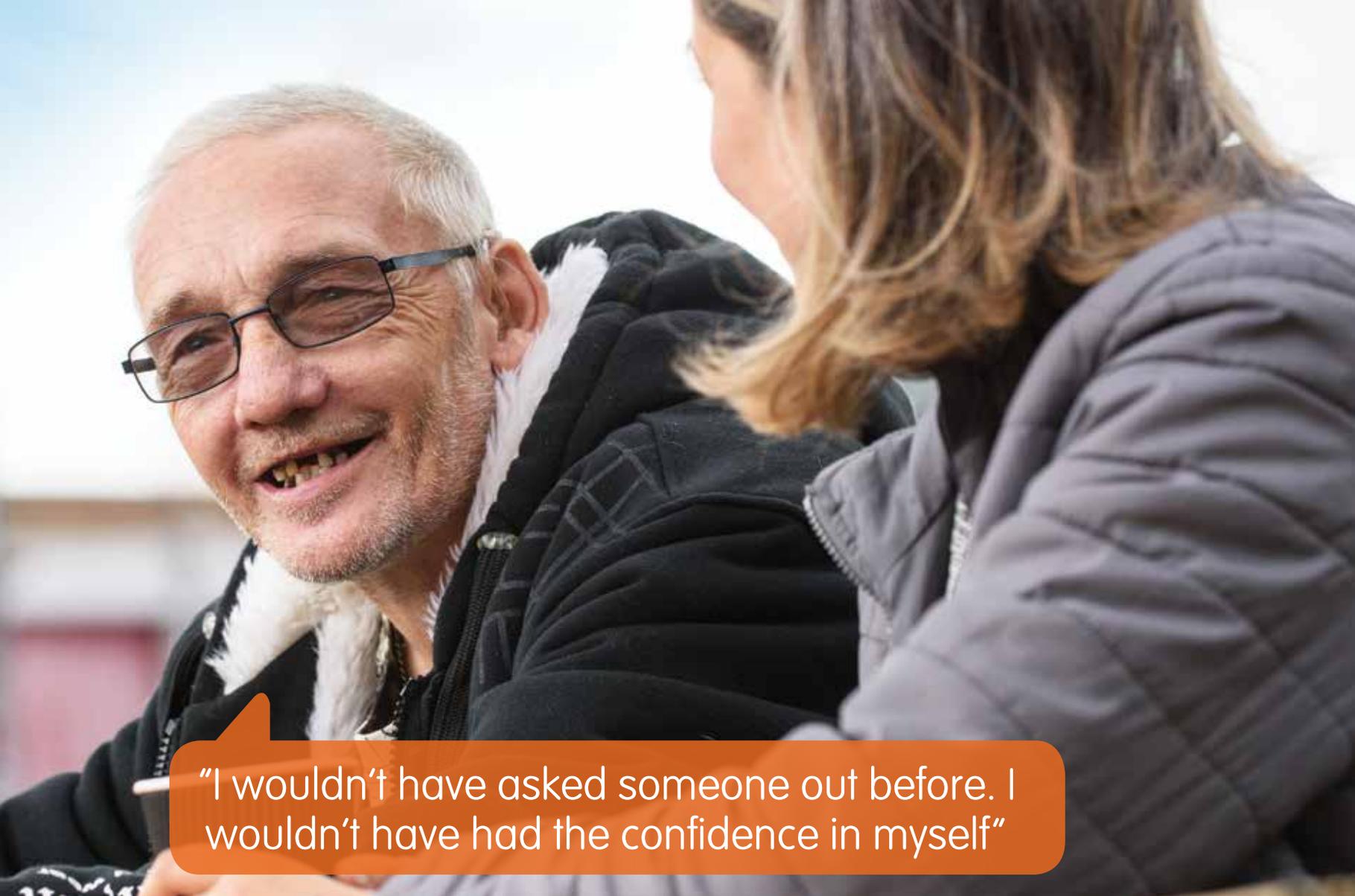
Martyn with Saba

no transport. You have a learning disability. You don’t know what help there is. And no one is listening to you. But once someone helps you start making a few subtle changes it can transform your whole mindset and make a huge difference to your life. It’s amazing to see people start feeling that life is more positive and optimistic. It’s a bit of a domino effect, really.”

A priority was helping Martyn get on top of his finances. Saba discovered that he was eligible for more benefit than he’d been getting, which has made a big difference. He’s even started saving a little each month.

She connected him with a local service called STOP for some practical admin support at home, so now someone comes along every week to help him with things like bills, benefits and sorting out post. “The biggest thing has been getting





“I wouldn't have asked someone out before. I wouldn't have had the confidence in myself”

the money sorted,” says Martyn. “It has been such a huge relief.”

Next was getting Martyn some transport. Once Saba had arranged a free mobility scooter, the outside world was unlocked for him again. She arranged to meet him at cafés to help build his confidence about getting out and about.

What's unique about Community Navigators Bristol is that it is completely personalised, Saba says. “What I did for Martyn I wouldn't necessarily do for anyone else,” says Saba. “There is no ‘care pathway’ in the traditional sense. It's collaborative, dynamic - and changes as we go along.”

Facing the future

And how is Martyn now? “I'm getting out and about – it's more of a social life than I originally had. I'm a lot happier and nowhere near so depressed. I'm more like I used to be.

More myself.” As Martyn scrunches up his empty sandwich wrapper, Saba says: “You do seem more confident. I definitely see you smile more now.”

“I asked someone out last week,” Martyn says. “She said she'd think about it. I wouldn't have done that before. I wouldn't have had the confidence in myself. This service has changed my life in every sense,” he says. A long-term plan is to get fishing again, once Martyn has decided where to go – maybe back to Snuff Mills or St George's Park lake, he reckons.

He's proud of his skills with his scooter, cackling as he tells a story about an unplanned off-road incident in the early days. “Look,” he says, tapping the speedometer on the little dashboard, “316 miles I've done, already.” And with a nifty three-point turn and a jaunty blast of his horn, he's off.

Get support



If you are over 50 and you'd like to feel more connected to your community, get in touch with Community Navigators Bristol, a signposting and support service funded by Bristol Ageing Better. You can also refer someone you know. We're looking for volunteers for the service too:

- Central, east or south Bristol: **0117 440 9100** or **community.navigators@nhs.net**
- North Bristol: **0117 9515751** or **laura.t@northbristoladvice.org.uk**
- Visit **communitynavigators.org.uk**

All referrals are checked for eligibility, as this free service has limited capacity.

Photography by Dave Pratt

Wellness

Health and wellbeing advice from the professionals

8 ways to help your child talk

If you want to give your child some extra support, there's a lot you can do. By **Carly Lines**, speech and language therapist

1 Get face to face

Get down to your child's level by sitting or lying down, or bring them up to your level. It's easier to listen and talk to each other if you are face to face.

2 Use simple language

Use single words or short phrases to talk about what's happening or things your child can see. For example: "Breakfast time!" or "Wow, you're building a tower!"

3 Repeat what you say

Say the same words lots of times in play and routines. For example, repeat "wash" during bathtime, saying "wash your toes", "wash

your belly" etc. This will help your child learn new words.

4 Give them extra time

Help your child to talk more by giving them extra time. When you play together, try waiting a bit longer than usual to see what they say.

5 Comment, don't question

Asking lots of questions can feel like a test. Make talking fun by commenting on what your child is doing. Use a sound, word or short sentence, like "choo choo", "train" or "pushing the train". This will help them learn new words and sentences.

6 Follow their lead

Watch how your child plays and copy them. They are more likely to stay and play if you follow their interests. Children love talking about what they are doing.

7 Copy what they say

Repeat back sounds, words

and sentences. Whether it's "lala" or "I want a banana", it shows that you're interested and that sounds and words are important.

8 Copy and add a word

Add one or two words to what your child says. For example, if your child says "bus", you could say "big bus". This will help your child move on to the next stage of talking.

Get support



We have a range of drop-in sessions where parents can get advice from speech and language therapists. Visit bit.ly/SLT_advice to find out what's on, or call our advice line which is open between 9am-12pm every Wednesday on 07825 016 335.

You can access more support from your local children's centre – find out more at bristol.gov.uk

Aaliyah, Carly and some messy play at Little Hayes & Hillfields Early Years Family Centre.



Photography by Studio Duo

Get moving (and stay moving!)



Been given some physio exercises to help you recover from an injury? Physiotherapist **Georgie Davin** has a few tips

No time like the present

Don't put it off. Start small. Your sense of achievement might motivate you to continue.

Your physio is on your side

If you can't seem to make time for your exercises, just tell your physiotherapist. Be honest. They can help you set some realistic goals that suit your lifestyle and frame of mind.

And about those goals

Break them down into manageable chunks. For example, if you want to walk more comfortably on your injured knee within two months, then start with just a few regular repetitions. Build up to more repetitions or extend the exercise.

Don't overdo it...

Better to do a little every day than blitz it on one day and then do nothing for a while. Our bodies prefer consistency to surprises.

...but do challenge yourself

Don't make it too easy for yourself. You should be working towards a goal that stretches you. You can do more than you think you can.

Reward yourself

Whenever you make some progress, do something that you know will give you a boost. And don't beat yourself up if you go off track. Get back on the horse!

Exercise with someone else

It's harder to back out if someone's expecting you to join them. If you already go to an exercise class, incorporate your exercises in your warm-up at the beginning or cool-down at the end.

Build them into the everyday

Add them onto regular daily tasks, like a quick stretch after you've been to the toilet or some back movements in

the car when you're stuck at a red light.

Don't be scared of soreness

Often when you start your exercises, you'll get some muscle soreness. It's usually completely normal. If you haven't seen a physio already, check in with a health professional to make sure everything is ok. Then start again gradually.

Have faith

Evidence shows that if you do these exercises, little and often, you will gain strength. It really does work!

Learn more

 If you have any concerns talk to your GP. Find out about exercises that can strengthen your body at [nhs.uk/live-well/exercise](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise) or [csp.org.uk](https://www.csp.org.uk)

WINTER WELLNESS

Flu: stop the spread

Flu is spread by germs from coughs and sneezes, which can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours.

- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap
- Use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- Regularly clean surfaces such as your computer keyboard, telephone and door handles to get rid of germs

Learn more

 Find out more about flu symptoms and the flu vaccine at www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu

GETTING TO KNOW...

Rapid and REACT

Find out more about the staff working together to treat people at home rather than in hospital

“We’re a colourful mixture of disciplines, including nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, support workers, mental health nurses and more. Our two teams are known as Rapid and REACT. We’re the only teams in Bristol doing what we do.

Some of us (Rapid) visit people in their homes if they are at risk of being taken to hospital – they’re often referred to us by GPs or ambulance crews. The aim is to treat people at home because we know that’s better for their health and wellbeing. It also makes sure hospital is only used by people who really need to be there.

The other part of the service (REACT) is based in A&E at Bristol Royal Infirmary and Southmead hospitals. That team works closely with emergency staff there to help get people safely home after a trip to A&E, rather than get admitted to hospital.

We’re a practical bunch and enjoy problem-solving using all our combined skills. We work closely with other local services, like social care, to keep patients safe and well in their own homes.

We have advanced skills to handle complicated cases: we can give antibiotics via a drip, prescribe medicines and change dressings. We also put things in place to help people dress themselves or make meals independently, and can arrange things like walking frames, commodes, stair-rails and more.

We provide a 24-hour service, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. We’re always here!”

Louise Whiting, advanced clinical practitioner (pictured, right)
Yvette Parrott, nurse (pictured, left)



Learn more



Fancy joining the team? Find out more about our current roles at briscomhealth.org.uk or call **0117 440 9013**.

And finally... Who are we?

Bristol Community Health is your local provider of NHS-funded community health services, which include diabetes care, physiotherapy, dermatology, community nursing, children’s speech and language therapy, health visiting, tackling loneliness, prison healthcare and much more. We are not for profit and 100% owned by our employees. All of our surpluses are reinvested back into services for the good of our community.



Want to find out more about our services and how to access them? Visit briscomhealth.org.uk/our-services
Need this newsletter in another format or language?
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