



# Invigorating the GP consultation:

## A proposal for a pilot project to engage patients with mental health concerns in Aldershot and their GP surgeries

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### The Problem

Mental health is core business for GPs, and nine out of ten patients with a psychological problem are treated by them. The Five Year Forward View in Mental Health promotes person centred care and parity of esteem between physical and mental health. The increasing complexity and demands placed on GPs to deliver care in the community risks affecting the quality of the GP consultation. Healthwatch Hampshire's report of 2016 confirm this with patients reporting they feel rushed with their physical health being prioritised over their mental health needs. The RCGP goes further recommending that the GPs traditional role of a Gatekeeper should evolve into that of a Navigator whose role it is to co-ordinate and signpost to services beyond mental health such as housing and social care. GPs need the tools to do this. Research adds that many GPs have the skills to provide holistic care, but lack the confidence, time or support to use them. The RCGP suggests these skills may need reviving, refreshing and reinvigorating. The organisation MIND states their belief that 'if we get mental health support in Primary Care right, we can help people stay well'. Aldershot is a deprived community with the area of Ticehurst Meadows being one of the most deprived in the country. It has high levels of mental health morbidity. This pilot project aims to engage patients and GPs to work together to develop solutions to improve the GP experience.

#### Acknowledgements

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### The Goal

A locality of GPs invigorated to improve the quality of consultations with mental health patients, and a locality of patients confident that their GP has listened to their needs and made changes to the way they work in order to improve their patients experience and health.

### Project Description

Five GPs and five receptionists from the five Aldershot practices will be invited to meet with 12 patients with mental health concerns to attend a series of two workshops. These will be facilitated by an external consultant and a lay member of the public experienced in working with service users doing creative writing and an running an acting group.

### Findings to date: Patients and GPs agree that consultations need improving

#### What do patients with mental health concerns say:

- GPs focus on physical health problems
- They feel rushed and would like a GP to really listen and not rush through the appointment. This would enable them to access services before a crisis
- A GP should have more specialist knowledge
- The GP should know about services to signpost to services like the Safehaven and the Wellbeing Centre

#### What the GPs say:

- Patients tend to present with a physical problem
- We need more time
- Not clear what role of existing services is. One experienced GP described the Wellbeing Centre as a 'Safehaven in hours' manned a by 'duty worker'



### Proposed engagement activity

Exploring experiences of Mental Health	Healthwatch Hampshire/NEHFCCG (complete)
Interviews with five Aldershot GPs	Lesley Rosling (complete)
Key Informant interview with voluntary sector Broadhurst Project	Lesley Rosling (complete)
GP Website Survey	Service Users / Healthwatch Hampshire
GP atmosphere survey	Service users/ Healthwatch Hampshire
Facilitated GP / service user workshops	Ali Haydon from Express Yourself
Co-produced solutions agreed	Ali Haydon from Express Yourself
Wider Aldershot locality GP service user event	All GPs, service users, and local providers to attend / service users performances to illustrate solutions
Evaluation	Healthwatch Hampshire / Wessex Voices

### References

- Healthwatch Hampshire 2016. Exploring Experiences of Mental Health
- [http://www.gmc-uk.org/2\\_01\\_The\\_GP\\_consultation\\_in\\_practice\\_May\\_2014.pdf\\_56884483.pdf](http://www.gmc-uk.org/2_01_The_GP_consultation_in_practice_May_2014.pdf_56884483.pdf)
- Five Year Forward View Mental Health
- [www.healthwatchlambeth.org.uk/seeking-mental-health-support-from-a-gp](http://www.healthwatchlambeth.org.uk/seeking-mental-health-support-from-a-gp)
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1872059>

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*Aldershot has enough services for people with mental health problems...it has the Safehaven, the Wellbeing Centre, the Source, Inclusion, Step by Sep and Community Access project...no more new services are needed. GPs need education as to where to signpost and refer...*

Tracy Bowden Community Access Project