



**Healthworks**  
the community health charity

# IMPACT REPORT

2022 - 2023





## Welcome from our Chair

Healthworks has built on the success of previous years to expand our services and raise our profile as an innovative organisation tackling growing health inequalities. Highlights from the last year include developing our relationship with local universities involved in much needed research, rapidly rolling out a cost of living helpline, and continuing to collaborate closely with the NHS to expand our pre-op services.

I would like to express my greatest thanks to our volunteers and staff who continue to dedicate themselves to Healthworks, working flexibly to meet the needs of our service users in an ever-changing landscape intensified by the current cost of living crisis. Paul continues to lead the organisation with an energy and dedication which has proved instrumental in expanding our presence across the North East. I would also like to extend my thanks to the Healthworks Board who came together earlier this year to work on a strategic paper which will determine the direction of our organisation for the next 3-5 years. We have also established a 'Risk and Audit Committee' to ensure valuable support to the Board in strengthening our governance and mitigating any future risks we may face.

Healthworks continues to be in a very strong position to support our service users with the health and social challenges they are likely to encounter as a consequence of rising inflation and the impact of higher interest rates. Over the coming year we will do our best to give much needed support to those who need it. Stability is key for the sustainability of any organisation, and with this in mind, we look towards securing longer term contracts with a wider variety of stakeholders to provide security and longevity. I am looking forward to 2023/24 being another year of growth, progress, and innovation to meet the needs of those most in need across our region.

**Joel Marks**  
**Chair**

## A message from our Chief Executive

I am delighted to welcome you all to our annual Impact Report.

As Chief Executive, I am immensely proud of our work and the transformative impact we have achieved. Healthworks commitment to innovation and excellence and integrated working between the NHS, local authorities and voluntary sector makes a huge difference to reducing health inequalities and improves health, wellbeing and life outcomes across the North East. Our success has enabled us to tell our Healthworks story at national events and conferences, sharing our work and demonstrating how, through partnership, we have been able to address the unique health challenges faced by our communities.

We were delighted to welcome Dr Bola Owolabi, Director of the National Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme, to see the amazing work we deliver for the NHS to help narrow healthcare inequalities and improve access, experience and outcomes for people in the region.

In response to the changing landscape of public health, we have delivered proactive programmes to combat emerging issues and promote preventive care. Our dedicated team, including our volunteers, has played a pivotal role in driving community engagement and health education programs.

Healthworks' continued commitment to developing new innovative work through research with our universities and leveraging technology is ensuring that health support is available to those who need it most, regardless of their location or circumstances.

This Impact Report is a testament to the collective dedication and determination of each member of the Healthworks team, including our valued partners and supporters. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your unwavering support and trust in our vision. Together, we have made a difference in countless lives, and I am confident that our impact will only continue to grow in the years ahead.

**Paul Court**  
**Chief Executive**



# Healthworks is an award-winning charity, working across the North East region with people of all ages to enable them to lead longer, happier and healthier lives.

From the antenatal period onwards, we offer a range of services that help and support people to; reduce the risk of preventable ill-health, become more active, eat more healthily, give up smoking, improve mobility, reduce the risk of a fall, improve mental wellbeing, have a healthier lifestyle and manage existing medical conditions.

## NORTH EAST REGION HEALTH CHALLENGES\*

**2.6m**

people live in the North East of England

**34%**

of people live in places classified as being in the 20% most deprived areas in England

**7**

out of 12 local authorities are within the 25% LA's with the highest deprivation score overall

**59 years**

Healthy Life Expectancy for males is 59.1 and 59.7 for females (the England average is over 63 (for male and female))

**16%**

of adults in the North East smoke which is almost 2% higher than the England average

**15.7%**

of pregnant women smoke compared to only 10.6% across England

**59%**

breastfeeding initiation compared with 74.5% in England

**63.5%**

of adults do the recommended 150 mins of weekly physical activity compared with 65.9% in England

**69.7%**

of adults are classified as overweight or obese, compared to 63.5% in England

**43%**

of adults are living with chronic pain in the North East. This is the highest prevalence across the nine regions. London is lowest with 29%.

**15.6%**

Of adults report a mental health problem in North East and North Cumbria compared with 12.7% in England.

**7%**

above the England average for emergency hospital admissions in 65+ year olds due to falls. The North East is second highest in England with a rate of 2320 per 100,000 compared to the England rate of 2170 per 100,000.

\*according to most recent figures available for this period

# Healthworks offers a range of health and wellbeing services

Our Health Improvement Practitioners support community lifestyle changes and deliver change behaviour interventions, including NHS Health Checks, to reduce obesity, smoking and tobacco dependency with hospital in-patients and support healthy nutrition (including Type 2 Diabetes)

In addition, the team work with the NHS to support cardiac rehab, rehab for people with chronic joint pain, cancer awareness, reducing falls, long covid, peripheral arterial disease and a range of physical activity opportunities for those with an existing or ongoing condition.

We also deliver Waiting Well across the North East, a programme offering targeted support to certain groups of patients waiting for surgery in the North East.

The Health Promotion Team deliver a range of activities and training including;

- Accredited Royal Society For Public Health training,
- Cancer Awareness sessions and activities,
- Community Cancer Champion training,
- Healthy eating information and activities,
- Healthy cooking sessions,
- Activities for parents/carers and their children,
- Holiday activities for families.

Healthworks is supporting Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and surgeries across Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside and Northumberland to help address health inequalities and improve cancer outcomes, in line with The Northern Cancer Alliance workplan and the DES guidelines.

Working with parents and families, we provide antenatal and breastfeeding information and support through a team of trained staff and volunteers. The team are trained to provide practical and emotional support to women from conception to birth and we offer information to enable people to make informed choices about how to feed their baby.

Our Pre-school in Lemington offers nursery places for two, three and four year-olds

We have two fully equipped gyms in Benwell and Lemington, and a weekly programme of exercise classes. We also have activity spaces and meeting rooms for hire

Zoneworks (inc Zone West) is a support programme to enable children to flourish in life for outcomes in education, health and community settings. The child is at the centre of a network of relationships and resources, and we work hard to make the organisation of resources reflect this core priority.

As well as realising improvements associated with specific conditions, these programmes showed cost savings and benefits to a healthcare and societal perspective.

Northumbria University evaluated the return on investment (ROI) for the key programmes run by Healthworks. This showed that our programmes have delayed the onset of diabetes cases, led to fewer inpatient admissions thus freeing up hospital beds, reduced the burden on GPs, A&E departments and ambulance services, reduced falls, weight loss and reduced anxiety and loneliness and improved mental wellbeing.

# OUR PRIORITIES



Increase recognition and understanding of the wider determinants of health



Reduce health inequalities and enable people to overcome challenges and barriers to good health



Achieve a wide reach into underserved communities in the North East



Deliver high quality and responsive, cost effective services to improve health and reduce health inequalities, working in collaboration with our partners



Continue to play a key role in supporting the NHS by improving the health and wellbeing of the people in our region, in line with core20PLUS5



Develop initiatives, test and pilot new interventions and explore data driven solutions



Reduce our climate impact and carbon footprint



Increase our focus on impact, evaluation, research and innovation with University partners



Explore new funding and income generation opportunities to develop and expand our service delivery



**54,991**

Total service attendances

An increase of 19,140 compared to 21-22



**11,416**

Unique individuals attended activities

An increase of 4,952 compared to 21-22



**5822**

of people using our services live in <30% IMD areas

An increase of 1879 from 21-22



**41%**

Identified as male  
An increase of 6% from 21-22



**29%**

of people engaged were ethnically diverse



Our turnover for the financial year was

**£2,148,443**



**32**

Amazing volunteers supported us  
An increase of 6 from 21-22



Giving a yearly total of **2,525 hours**

An increase of 1384 from 21-22



Which has an economic value of **£27,210.16**

An increase of £13,655 from 21-22

Ref:ONS figure for 2015

# Our year in numbers

**Making a difference to the health and wellbeing of people in the region**



**11416** people accessed our services and **3188** were referred to our targeted programmes, ranging from Cardiac Rehab to Lifestyle interventions



**2,448** support telephone and video support calls were made to individuals, equating to **1,022 hours** of remote lifestyle support



**395** individual NHS Health Checks completed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia



**262** individual Health MOTs completed providing information about overall health & wellbeing



**78%** improved their Timed-up-&-Go test with an average improvement of **26.2%**



**30%** of Staying Steady completers improved their Sit-to-Stand test by an average of **38%**.



**1.24 average** improvement in 4 point balance test



**96%** of clients reported they had achieved their Goals, across a range of Health and Wellbeing projects



**85%** of completers of Long Covid rehab significantly reduced reported fatigue



Diabetes management clients reduced their HbA1c reading by an **Average loss on 11.25mmol** per client



**98%** of clients asked would recommend the programmes to friends and family





We participated in **116 Awareness events** attended by **3,232 people**.  
**57%** of those attending resided in the lowest 30% areas of deprivation



**37** people completed the Cancer Champion Courses  
**78%** found the course informative and useful.



**91%** of those that attended Cancer Awareness events reported that they are now likely to attend a screening appointment and **96%** found the presentation informative and useful



**268** meetings with local businesses to promote key Cancer awareness messages.  
**164** businesses are displaying cancer awareness materials



**466** individuals accessed our Stop Smoking service and were given 1-2-1 support to set their Quit date

Of the people accessing our Stop Smoking service, **55% of all clients successfully quit smoking**

of the above:

- 60% were male
- 56% resided in the most deprived areas quit and
- 50% had Mental Health conditions



**67%** of those that quit smoking continued to be smoke free at 12 weeks



**65%** of clients employed in 'Routine and Manual' occupations setting a quit date quit smoking

*Around 1 in 4 people in this group smokes, compared with 1 in 10 people in managerial and professional occupations*



**52%** of clients have increased their physical activity levels

*based on on GPPAQ*



A total of **744kg (117.2st)** weight loss was reported between 197 clients



A total of **480cm lost from waist measurements** with an average loss of 5.58cm per client



**106** unique people reduced their BMI to a healthy range  
Average reduction of 1.82

## Making a difference to children and families



Our Amazing Start Team made contact with **1456 new breastfeeding women and families**



'Breastfeeding Mams' has **3,299 followers on Facebook and 621 Instagram**



Our 'Breastfeeding Mams Newcastle' dedicated social media support pages and Facebook groups provide real-time support, information and guidance to families and enable ongoing interaction with peers.



**45 families** were provided with antenatal support from practitioners and/or volunteers



**4 Breastfeeding Social sessions** per week across Newcastle.  
Accessed by **295 unique people 1,086 times**



**51 children** attended our Pre-school **3,740 times** between them.



Our Zoneworks Social Prescribing team were active in **9 Schools** and engaged with **180 families**



**189 children** accessing our Zoneworks social prescribing service **3,594 times** between them.



Prepared and supplied **1,407 individual healthy packed lunches** to our partners in line with the current school meal guidelines.



We engaged **251 unique children** and worked with **8 different partners** during the Summer Holiday Activities and Food programme (**HAF**)



We continue to develop a range of **digital family resources** which are accessible to families and workers for free - these included family activity eBooks, play and learn videos and family cooking activities

# Digital Engagement



14139 new website users  
up by 3469 this year

69766 website page views up  
by 16,546 this year

24,000 website sessions  
up 35% this year



51% of visitors found us  
organically using a search  
engine, 31% were from a direct  
referral in a search and 13%  
came through our Social Media

Over 1000 service self-referrals,  
contacts and gym sign-ups made  
through the website



620 active digital  
newsletter and email  
subscriptions



41,866

Facebook organic reach:  
up 27% from last year

2,471 Facebook followers  
up by 54% from last year

Organic Facebook visits up  
by 62% from last year

Instagram reach up by 67%  
from last year



'Breastfeeding Mams' has  
3,299 followers on  
Facebook and  
621 on Instagram

2009 people visited our  
online Breastfeeding  
Support resource page



1,093,812  
YouTube impressions  
and  
39,427 video views



Over 1200  
Twitter followers  
and 54.800 Twitter  
Impressions



Our Community Cancer  
Champion facebook group  
supported 82 active  
members

# Some highlights of our year...

## Dr Bola Owalabi the Director of Health Inequalities at NHS England and Health Improvement visited Healthworks to see how we are helping to reduce health inequalities

We were delighted to host a full-day visit from Dr Owalabi which gave an opportunity for her to see first hand the impact of the work we do with the NHS and how it is making a difference. The video and other publicity from the day was shared widely by NHS England, including with other NHS Trusts in England, as an example of how integrated working between the NHS and voluntary sector makes a huge difference to reducing health inequalities and improves health, wellbeing and life outcomes for people in the North East.

[Watch the film from the day here.](#)



## Our work with the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals Trust as Collaborative Newcastle to improve outcomes for pre-op patients with diabetes won an award for innovation.

This fantastic example of partnership working was recognised when we won in the Innovation category at the Newcastle Hospitals Trust Celebrative Excellence awards.

This award recognised the work undertaken to support patients with uncontrolled diabetes well before their operations by engaging them in a Healthworks social prescribing intervention to improve diabetic control and improve outcomes for them.





## We were finalists at the Patient Experience Network National Awards as part of the Northern Cancer Alliance “Busting Cancer Myths in the Community” team

The Patient Experience Network National Awards are the first and only awards programme to recognise best practice in patient experience across all facets of health and social care in the UK.



## Launch of the Health and Life Sciences pledge

We are working alongside other key partners to collectively address challenges within the sector; gain recognition for our exemplary infrastructure and assets nationally and internationally; identify opportunities and attract investment to the region.



## Our targeted physical activity classes made news

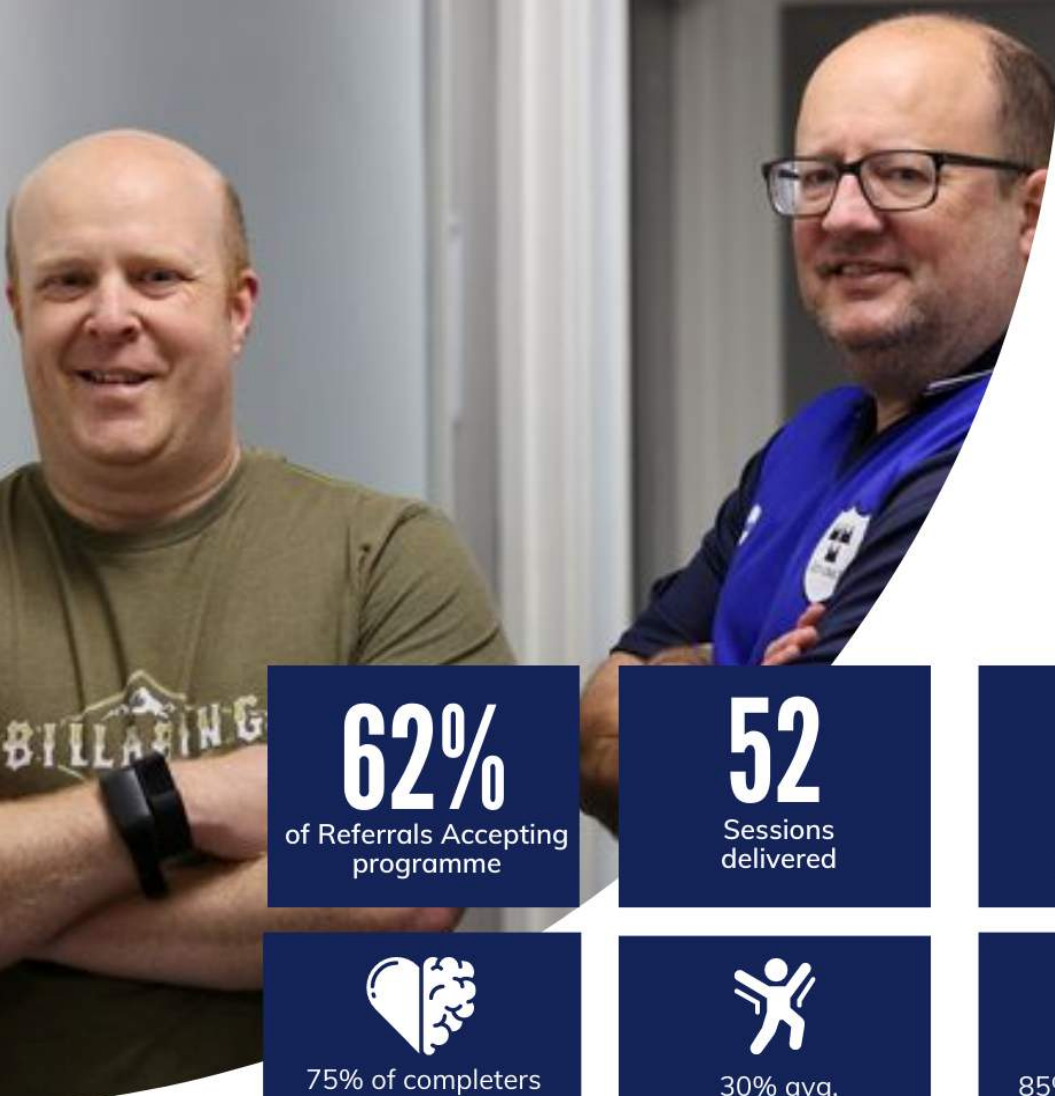
Our Staying Steady programme featured in the local press highlighting how coming to the classes helped transform Norma's life.

The positive impact that our Long Covid Programme on Michael and Russ was also featured.



## We developed a new partnership with Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals to deliver Tobacco Dependency Treatment Services

Healthworks were successful in securing the tender to lead on the Tobacco Dependency Treatment Service in Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals (NUTH). This resulted in a team of trained advisors from Healthworks working within the Trust to deliver the service to patients across Acute and Maternity Settings. After successfully piloting the service, it is now being delivered at capacity. The team of Healthworks advisors' support patients with tobacco dependence, offering them bespoke behavioural support and prescribed Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT). To the end of March 23 they supported 700 patients and provided various interventions and support to help them stay smoke free once discharged from hospital.



# Spotlight on Long Covid

## a community-based rehabilitation programme

Healthworks Long COVID Programme is a free six week service which includes appropriate exercise and healthy lifestyle advice and support and aims to;

- Decrease fatigue
- Decrease social isolation by inclusion in group activities
- Increase and maintain Physical Activity levels
- Increase mobility
- Increase lung functionality
- Improve Quality of Life

**62%**  
of Referrals Accepting  
programme

**52**  
Sessions  
delivered


**74%**  
Completing  
programme


  
40% are now attending  
Healthworks  
Mainstream gyms

  
30% avg. improvement  
of Physical Activity  
Levels

  
75% of completers  
improved their  
perceived State of  
Health

  
30% avg.  
improvement in  
mobility

  
85% of completers  
significantly reduced  
reported fatigue

  
58% of completers  
improved reported  
lung functions

  
100% of completers  
improved their  
perceived QoL

Mandy struggled with long Covid in the middle of 2022. She struggled a lot with fatigue, having no strength and being unable to move her arms and legs and issues with her breathing.

“

“Healthworks has turned my life around. It has completely changed my outlook on life.”

”

“Every instructor at Healthworks is very motivating and supportive. They have helped me to improve my mental and physical health and my wellbeing.”

# Spotlight on Staying Steady

## a community-based falls prevention programme

Staying Steady is a 28 week specialist physical activity programme for people who have recently fallen or are afraid they might fall.

Sessions are delivered in 4 community venues across Newcastle and aim to:

- improve balance and strength
- increase social engagement
- increase confidence
- improve health literacy

350

referrals  
received

30%

reside in areas  
<30% IMD

46%

clients  
completed

2083

attendances

99%

of clients would  
recommend the  
programme



1.24 average  
improvement in 4  
point balance test



98% plan to continue  
to exercise at home



89% found the  
educational sessions  
beneficial



66% participants fully  
achieved their goals



92% of participants  
felt they benefitted  
from the programme

**Susan Davison - Physiotherapist at Newcastle Hospitals NHS Trust - is also involved in the sessions. She explained how having this sort of help available in the community had huge benefits. She said:**

*"It's trying to improve people's lives - the risk of falling can have a huge impact on quality of life. This is a way of keeping people out of hospital and ensure they can live safely at home as long as possible. We know that some people are just never the same after a fall and a stay in hospital, so it's about preventing that."*



# Spotlight on Cancer Awareness

## a community-based approach

Through our cancer awareness work, we are helping communities across the North East become more informed about the signs and symptoms of cancer and the importance of screening in reducing risk.

Our sessions are available to people, workplaces or community group based in Newcastle or Gateshead and other parts of the North East.

With information learnt through Cancer Research UK's training programme, Talk Cancer these sessions can help equip people to have impactful cancer conversations with others.

1,174

Attendances at events

63%

of the attended reside in lowest 30% IMD

110

Cancer Champions trained

153

unique business supporting with promotion

299

meetings with local businesses



91% report now likely to attend a screening appointment



96% found the awareness talk informative and useful



94% found the Champion course informative and useful



knowledge of the screening process improved by 60%



awareness of signs & symptoms increased by 54%

Did you know that every two minutes someone in the UK is diagnosed with cancer? That's a pretty shocking statistic and illustrates why our awareness raising work is so important in helping reduce people's risk of developing cancer!



"Fantastic and informative session - it was incredibly interesting and engaging and I feel so much more confident in my knowledge on Cancer!"





# How we are reducing our climate impact and carbon footprint



**Monitoring resources and review methods of reducing consumption**



**Implementing a waste/recycling policy**



**Reducing paper waste**



**Minimising transport through the development of a travel plan**



**Achieving Net Zero by 2050**



**Publishing and sharing our annual organisational sustainability report**

At Healthworks, we are committed to protecting the planet and reducing our levels of waste and emissions. We believe this is fundamental to the long-term success of our business and the well-being of our communities.

In the past year, we launched our Investors in the Environment Award and have made significant progress integrating sustainability into our operations.

We have started measuring our carbon footprint and implementing energy-efficient measures at our sites.

At the same time we are focused on making a positive impact in all our buildings and the local communities surrounding them.

We have identified activities that represented the largest sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for Healthworks, and implemented an action plan to reduce GHG emissions.

**As a result our tCO<sub>2</sub>e\* from 1110 in 20-21 to 83 by the end of March 2023.**

\*tCO<sub>2</sub>e means the amount of greenhouse gasses emitted during a given period, measured in metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, determined substantially in accordance with the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's Greenhouse Gas Protocols (March 2004).

# We are committed to recruiting, training and developing a diverse workforce



86: Total number of Staff  
70.25 : FTE



78% Female  
13% Male

100% identify their Gender the same assigned at Birth



54% reside in the lowest 30% IMD\*\*

\*\*English indices of deprivation 2019



10% of our team identify themselves as ethnically diverse



23% consider themselves to have a disability or impairment



10% define themselves as LGBTQ+

# People's Stories

# Rob's Story: Support from our Long COVID Programme

Rob self-referred into Healthworks Long COVID Programme in January 2023 after seeing our article in the Newcastle chronicle. Rob had been experiencing symptoms of Long COVID, consisting of tiredness and fatigue following recovery from COVID-19, previous to Rob's diagnosis he was extremely active and would regularly participate in long-distance cycling.

Rob was also eligible for an NHS Health Check and attended an appointment which is a 30min screening programme to offer bespoke lifestyle advice to people aged 40-74 years, who have no long medical conditions and are not part of an NHS care pathway.



“

*The service has really supported me in my recovery from Long Covid. I registered for the program on quite a low, having started the new year having to take time off sick. I started the exercise classes having not done any more exercise for some time, other than some walks and small jobs around the house and garden. I took time to build up my effort in classes, guided, supported and encouraged by instructors. There was no push to over-exert and regular checks were made to ask those in the class if they were OK. Regular breaks and rehydration was factored in.*

*The aim of just increasing heart rate and lung activity was met each session, with appropriate duty of care. I am a keen cyclist and was strong for my age (prior to Long Covid) but was not able to do much cycling (on the road or on my trainer) for most of 16 months. I can now regularly cycle for hour long sessions and have managed a 30 mile ride in the last few weeks. The classes have given me confidence that I can get back on the bike and stretch myself further to get back to my previous fitness. In addition, the classes have built up my core and upper body strength; not having exercised much in that regard previously.*

*I feel healthier, fitter, happier and more confident to do more exercise thanks to the class. I would like to thank all of the instructors for their support, guidance and encouragement to get me into this much better place. The improvement in my physical health has led to huge improvements in my overall wellbeing. I would recommend the classes to anyone who feels able to start the course and to persevere to hopefully get the results that I have achieved.*

”

## Vicky's Story: Support with breastfeeding

When Vicky was discharged from hospital Claire from the Amazing Start team called to offer breastfeeding support. Vicky made contact with the team when her baby was a few weeks old as she was experiencing some difficulties with breastfeeding. The team supported Vicky over the next few weeks by telephone and video call, to help her improve her baby's position and attachment and the team shared useful resource links by text message.

Vicky attended our virtual breastfeeding social group and she attended her local social group on numerous occasions. With the team's support, feeds became more comfortable and Vicky was able to continue breastfeeding.

This success increased Vicky's confidence and she signed up to complete the Amazing Start Antenatal and Breastfeeding Support Volunteer training. Vicky attended the course and completed her training in July 2022.

Since completing her training, Vicky regularly volunteers at one of our weekly breastfeeding social groups. She is very active within our closed breastfeeding peer support group offering other breastfeeding mothers guidance and support.



”

*Having my first baby in the midst of a pandemic where most face to face support had stopped was quite scary. Luckily Claire supported me in my breastfeeding journey, showing me different feeding positions, and giving me the reassurance that my milk was enough. Being able to join the virtual social group for breastfeeding support each week through the lockdowns, and then face to face groups has been invaluable.*

“

# Jen's Story: Accessing the Staying Steady Programme

After completing our Escape Pain programme, Jen self-referred into the Staying Steady (Falls Prevention) Programme. Upon triage by our Physiotherapist issues identified were; Chronic obstructive lung disease, Non-diabetic hyperglycaemia, Chronic kidney disease stage 3 (without proteinuria), Anxiety disorder, Osteoarthritis of the knees and struggling to leave her home.

Staying Steady is a free 28 week programme that is scientifically proven to improve strength and balance and aims to reduce falls and enable people to live independently at home for longer.

After successfully completing the programme our instructor supported Jen to find a community based Tai Chi class to continue to develop her fitness, balance and confidence.

There were many noticeable Improvement in Jen's functional tests and self perception:

- Increase in completion of 4-point balance test by 1 point to 3, visual improvement of gait
- Improvement of 13 seconds (43%) completing Timed Up and Go (TUG)
- Improvement of 1 repetition (33%) of completing 30 Seconds Sit to Stand Test
- 20% improvement of perceived confidence of walking outside (PROMS proxy)
- 40% improvement of perceived fear of falling (PROMS proxy)
- 40% improvement of Social networks (PROMS proxy)
- 'Fully Achieved' what she wanted to achieve at Baseline

*I really the Staying Steady classes and looked forward to going each week. They've given me better knowledge, built up my confidence and fitness - and taught me how to get up safely after kneeling or if I had a fall!*

“

”



# Patricia's Story: Taking part in Waiting Well

Waiting Well is a regional programme that helps patients waiting for planned surgery to improve their overall health and wellbeing. This means when the time comes for their surgery they can be well enough for it to go ahead, as well as improving their healing and recovery, reducing the length of hospital stays..

Having been referred to the Freeman Hospital for surgery. Patricia was given the bad news that she was too unwell to go ahead with the procedure. The pre-op assessment, showed that her diabetes was out of control and her anaesthetist felt it was too risky to put Patricia under general anaesthetic for her surgery. It was at this point Patricia was introduced to Waiting Well and met a Health Improvement Practitioner. The practitioner talked through the ways Patricia could better manage her diabetes, including suitable exercises, and agreed an achievable plan to make these improvements over a 12 week period. Patricia was also referred to a respiratory nurse at the hospital for support to improve her breathing.

After completing the 12 week programme, Patricia's sugar levels were back under control, and she had dropped over a stone in weight. Her breathing also improved significantly thanks to the breathing exercises she was given. Patricia's general health improved so much that she felt she no longer needed the operation and was able to manage her symptoms.



“

*The practitioner was so helpful and knowledgeable about my condition and gave me lots of guidance on how to eat better and what to avoid. She helped me understand the traffic light labels on food packages, and I was so surprised that lots of foods labelled as diet foods could actually be worse for me than full fat foods!*

”

*Thanks to the support from Waiting Well, I've been able to make a number of small changes which have added up to making a huge difference to my health. I just needed the guidance to help me do it.*

# Albert's Story: Accessing 1:1 Stop Smoking Support

Albert, 74, decided to quit smoking after 50 years to improve his health. After several unsuccessful quit attempts, Albert has now been smoke-free for a year and is more determined than ever to stop for good.

Albert's initial CO reading was 23ppm, our practitioner explained the range of products he could use to quit, he was then provided with a code to pick them up at the pharmacy. Albert met our practitioner weekly for the first four weeks either in person or by telephone. Then fortnightly after that, until his 12-week follow up appointment. With our support, Albert reached his 4-week and 12-week target dates without smoking and his CO reading came down to 3ppm (normal non-smoking range). We held ongoing catch-ups every 12 weeks to review his progress, and have continued supporting him which has helped him reach a full year without smoking.

*The last time I quit was about three years ago, unfortunately, we then went through a difficult family situation, so I started smoking again to help alleviate some of the stress. I knew I needed support to quit this time so I contacted Healthworks and spoke to one of their advisors, who was brilliant. Following our initial session, he recommended I used nicotine patches and a Oral spray to help with the cravings and offered ongoing support to help me.*

*Since I quit and I feel great. It hasn't been easy as I still get the odd pang, but I just get up and do something to distract myself and it is getting easier. I have definitely noticed the benefits of quitting as my sense of smell has returned and my taste has come back too. I have noticed a difference in my breathing and my blood pressure has come down too, which is great. Quitting smoking was always about improving my health and the benefits far outweigh any monetary gain. However, since quitting I have saved £500 and I'm going to use the money to treat my wife and daughter!*





# Helen's Story: Volunteering with our Amazing Start Team

Helen came to us asking about volunteering opportunities, she had breastfed her first daughter and had been supported by the Amazing Start Team and this positive experience led to her wanting to support other women. Our Volunteer Co-ordinator contacted Helen for a chat about the volunteer role and what it involved.

Helen was offered a place on the Amazing Start Antenatal and Breastfeeding volunteer training in September 2021. After completing her training, Helen became an active Amazing Start volunteer and offers support to breastfeeding mothers in Newcastle. Helen has used her personal and professional experience to support local families through their pregnancy and breastfeeding journey and the volunteering experience has given Helen some great experience to help further her career.

“

*Volunteering for the service has exceeded my expectations. I particularly enjoy attending the breastfeeding social groups and I feel that I add value within my community by offering emotional support and reassurance to women who are facing feeding challenges. My favourite part of volunteering is seeing women tackle and overcome feeding challenges and continue to feed even longer than they ever imagined!*

*Volunteering for the service has helped me to further develop my transferrable skills which will help for future job opportunities. It has also enabled me to give back to my community and help 'payback' some of the infant feeding support I received during my own feeding journey.*

”



## Final thoughts from our Patron, Professor Sir Michael Marmot

"Health inequalities continue to be a pressing challenge, further impacted by the cost of living crisis, and it is heartening to see Healthworks leading the charge in addressing these disparities in their local context.

Poor population health leads to overuse of NHS services and increases pressure on primary and social care, resulting in a system over-focussed on the treatment of ill health at the expense of preventing it. It also reduces productivity and hampers economic growth, embedding the income inequalities which again contribute to poor health.

Healthworks's commitment to tackling the social determinants of health aligns perfectly with the core principles of my research, which emphasize the pivotal role of social and economic determinants in shaping health outcomes.

Charities such as Healthworks have a vital contribution to make in helping local authorities and the NHS save money and deliver place based, cost effective services.

Healthworks is able to deliver important preventative services that keep people away from expensive hospital stays or frequent GP visits while improving the health and life outcomes of those it works with."

Professor Sir Michael Marmot is Professor of Epidemiology at University College London, Director of the UCL Institute of Health Equity.

He has led research on health inequalities for over 40 years and is known worldwide for his research and policy advice to the World Health Organization and has advised many local and national governments and organisations throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

He is the author of *Fair Society, Healthy Lives* (The Marmot Review 2010), *Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On* (2020) and *The Health Gap: The Challenge of an Unequal World* (2015).



We believe in partnerships that make a difference. By working collaboratively with our partners, we can reach and have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of more people in the North East.

We'd like to thank the following organisations and businesses:





**Healthworks**  
the community health charity

[www.healthworksnewcastle.org.uk](http://www.healthworksnewcastle.org.uk)

0191 272 4244

[enquiries@hwn.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hwn.org.uk)

