

# Full of Life: Wellbeing in later years

Learning from practical pilots

Anna Shandro

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Full of Life was funded by the Department of Health

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# Background

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## The Local Wellbeing Project

Full of Life was one strand of the Local Wellbeing Project (LWP). LWP was a unique initiative launched in 2006 that aimed to test out practical ways of improving both individual and community wellbeing and resilience in three very different areas of the UK - Hertfordshire, Manchester and South Tyneside. The Project pioneered approaches to the design and delivery of policies and services which could be replicated much more widely – and contribute to public wellbeing and resilience. In addition to the three local authorities, the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics and the Local Government Improvement and Development were project partners.

The Project had five main strands: emotional resilience skills for year 11-13 year olds; improving the wellbeing and emotional resilience of older people; apprenticeships; community empowerment, and positive parenting. There were also two underpinning themes: environmental sustainability and how to measure wellbeing and resilience.

## Full of Life: Wellbeing in later years

This strand of the LWP – Full of Life - aimed to develop a new service to improve the wellbeing and resilience of people aged sixty-five and over who were experiencing isolation, mild anxiety or depression.

As people age they are more likely to face major challenges, from retirement and loss of mobility, illness, to bereavement or moving into sheltered accommodation. An individual's ability to deal with these has much to do with their emotional resilience and wellbeing, and their ability to cope with change.

Initiatives to increase the wellbeing of older people have tended to focus on physical and health needs. Until recent years, comparatively little focus has been placed on mental health disorders such as depression, which have relatively high prevalence in later life. This project aimed to fill this gap.

Full of Life was based on a course of seven booklets developed by Dr Chris Williams, a Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist at the University of Glasgow. The course is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques and has been proven to be effective in treating mild to moderate depression and anxiety as well as enhancing important life skills in adult populations that enable people to deal more effectively with challenges and change.

His materials have been tested rigorously with a range of demographic groups. But the proposed service was innovative not only in using and adapting CBT materials specifically for people aged sixty-five and over, but also in training local volunteers of the same age range to deliver the course.

The aim of this unique peer-support service was to create a 'win-win' situation in which the wellbeing and emotional resilience of both the clients and the trained volunteers increased through using or delivering the service and becoming more active in the community.

We aimed to test two models: eight weeks of group sessions facilitated by two trained volunteers and one-to-one telephone support.

# Summary

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This paper captures the learning from attempts to pilot **non-medical, volunteer-led** models of Full of Life in South Tyneside and Manchester, a service designed to improve the wellbeing and resilience of older people with mild anxiety and depression or suffering from social isolation.

This paper will outline the challenges faced and what has been learned from the experience of the small-scale pilots.<sup>1</sup>

## Key points:

- **Go big:** the small scale of the Full of Life pilots presented challenges. Across both sites there was a total of fifteen trained volunteers and four referrals to the service. Larger scale pilots would potentially ensure a higher level of local authority commitment at the senior level to resource a dedicated and local project manager, alongside increased capacity and resources. Promotional activity could be wider and a larger number of volunteers and participants would increase the likelihood of the project gaining momentum.
- **Get the language right:** challenges faced in recruiting older people to participate highlighted the importance of using language and branding that speaks to older generations. There is a stigma attached to mental health issues amongst older generations, and the language used to describe CBT approaches and thinking styles are often unfamiliar to them. Full of Life is not a mental health service and mental health terms should not be used – the emphasis should be on opportunities to learn and to socialise.
- **Consistency is key:** Full of Life authority staff involved in the project should attend the training along with volunteers to ensure a thorough understanding of the service and the most effective way to explain and promote its aims.
- **Working with volunteers:** recruiting and managing volunteers and maintaining their engagement takes time and dedicated management. When people are volunteering their time it is essential to make it as easy as possible for them to be involved and to recognise their efforts.
- **Volunteers or health professionals?:** the pilots revealed tensions between staff who had confidence in the non-medical, volunteer-led model to address mild mental health issues and those who were keen to ensure that participants who had more severe mental health needs were signposted to more suitable support. This highlighted the importance that all Full of Life authority staff

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<sup>1</sup> The Young Foundation is now carrying out two larger scale pilots of this model with Age Concern Kingston and Lambeth, with funding from Comic Relief. The learning from the pre-pilots in Manchester and South Tyneside has been invaluable in the project design.

involved in the project attend the training along with the volunteers to ensure a thorough understanding of the project's aims, the service, and the materials as well as the competencies and skills of the volunteers.

## What we achieved

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Please see the Appendix for a range of **resources** that were developed for planning, delivering and evaluating the pre-pilots and pilots.

### Pre-pilots

The Project aimed to complete a pre-pilot in Manchester and South Tyneside to test both the suitability of the materials for this older age range and the suitability of the training for volunteers. The aim of the pilot in South Tyneside was then to evaluate the impact of the programme on the wellbeing and resilience of the client group.

A pre-pilot of the individual **telephone support** was completed in South Tyneside with a small number of volunteers and participants. A thirty minute phone interview was conducted with each of the four participants who completed the Full of Life with a trained volunteer. Although the sample size was very small, qualitative feedback was positive.

Two out of the four said they found the booklets 'quite useful' and the other two found them 'very useful'. All of them found the booklets 'very easy' to use on their own outside of the sessions with the volunteers. Two of the four said that they re-read them very frequently.

All four of the participants said that they enjoyed the sessions with the volunteer they had been matched with and that they got on with each other very well. They all stated that the service was tailored to them 'just right' in terms of length, number, and frequency of sessions, as well as the amount of materials provided.

All but one said that there was nothing they would improve about the Full of Life Service. The respondent who thought improvements could be made said that the language of the booklets was too childish and contained too much jargon.

*It really fills a gap in the system, plugs a loophole. For people who may not want to go for therapy, or who cannot leave their homes, the books and telephone support is ideal.*  
Older person, South Tyneside

*The books helped a lot to boost my moral- the conversations with [the volunteer] and having the books to hand anytime made me feel like I wasn't alone. The man who wrote the books really knows exactly how I feel! They are easy to read, and nice and condensed.*  
Older person, South Tyneside

*You can say that this service genuinely helped a 24 hour carer of someone with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's- it really did.*  
Older person, South Tyneside

The pre-pilot of the **group sessions** in Manchester was unable to actually deliver the sessions. Seven volunteers completed the training. However, due to the challenges outlined in the following section, they were not able to recruit enough older people to participate in the group sessions. However, Manchester remains committed to the principles underpinning

Full of Life and the pre-pilots laid the foundations for their 'Be well, Age Well' project, a CBT-based course that is now being run by Clinical Psychologists in collaboration with Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust. With a dedicated Project Manager in place and a large marketing push, the demand for the service is now outstripping supply.

## Volunteer feedback

A total of fifteen volunteers completed the pre-pilot training in both sites: eight in South Tyneside and seven in Manchester. Each volunteer was asked to complete two questionnaires (please see the Appendix): one that focused on the suitability of the training and one that focused on the suitability of the materials for this older age range. The volunteers were also interviewed for half an hour in order to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences.

Feedback from the trained volunteers indicated that the training was an enjoyable and informative experience. Every volunteer demonstrated a high level of understanding of the concepts and techniques of the service and felt prepared for the delivery of the Full of Life materials.

Volunteers would not change anything about the format of the training sessions. They were positive about the balance between theory and practice, and between the time dedicated to presentations from the trained professionals versus time to practice mock sessions.

There were, however, teething problems that one would expect from a pre-pilot. Volunteers were unanimous in saying that, although there was the right number of sessions, the sessions needed to be much closer together. They also felt that the training would be more effective if they were able to go straight into delivery after the last session. This feedback was taken into consideration when carrying out the training for the Pilot stage.

## Piloting Group sessions in South Tyneside

The pilot of group sessions in South Tyneside faced similar challenges to the Manchester pre-pilot. These are outlined in the section below.

Seven volunteers were trained to deliver Full of Life in group sessions for the pilot. Based on feedback from the pre-pilot, the training was condensed to two consecutive days rather than three sessions once every other week. This ensured a higher completion rate.

Although the pilot did not reach evaluation stages, anecdotal evidence indicated that the volunteers' experiences of training was positive and reflected the views of the pre-pilot volunteers. The Full of life trainers felt confident in the volunteers' abilities and were continually impressed by their commitment to the importance and potential of Full of Life.

Following the difficulties experienced during the pre-pilots in recruiting an adequate number of clients, more energy was channeled into promotion and client recruitment at pilot stage. In addition to a promotional event in South Tyneside with speeches from local authority staff, Full of Life trainers and volunteers, staff from South Tyneside MBC and the Young Foundation visited the following organisations to promote the service and collect sign-ups:

Residential care homes:

- Bedewell Grange
- Palmersdene
- Chichester Court
- Garden Hill
- Cheviot Court
- Harton Grange

Sheltered Housing:

- Meetings with Project Developers
- Meetings with staff and residents at Patrick Cain housing and Birch Grove

Day centres:

- Gainsborough Avenue
- Father James Walsh

Health professionals:

- Presentations to two teams of district nurses
- Presentation at the Marsden Practice's 'Happy hour' to promote the service to GPs

Local voluntary organisations:

- Women's Health in South Tyneside (WHIST)
- Age Concern

However, even with increased efforts to establish stronger links with local third sector organisations, sheltered housing, GPs and nurses, there were far fewer referrals than had been hoped. Even where already established groups from day centres or sheltered housing expressed interest and signed up to the course, insufficient numbers attended the first session and it had to be cancelled. As a consequence, over time the volunteers became increasingly disengaged from the project.

# What we have learnt

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## 1. A dedicated and local Project Manager

A key piece of learning from both sites is the importance of having a local, dedicated Full of Life Project Manager. Neither of the authorities had a full-time dedicated Project Manager at pre-pilot or pilot stage, which meant that getting Full of Life off the ground was an add-on to existing busy day jobs. Recruiting, training and managing volunteers, promoting the service and building up links with local stakeholders, and the logistics of organising and supporting the delivery of regular sessions needs dedicated time and resources.

## 2. Bigger and bolder

All of the pilots started small. This presented numerous challenges further down the line.

Firstly, setting out to complete much larger pilots would have ensured that the service had dedicated and adequate allocated resources.

Secondly, local authorities were nervous about promoting the service too widely in case demand for Full of Life outstripped supply, or vice versa. In practice promotional activity was not sufficient to attract the numbers required.

Thirdly, establishing a critical mass is key to ensuring that a project gains momentum. With a dedicated Project Manager in place there would have been the potential to recruit much larger numbers of both volunteers and participants and for local practitioners and older people to eventually learn of Full of Life by word of mouth. Once sessions had been up and running regularly it would have been much easier for referrals to the service to be made, for interested parties to start attending sessions immediately or to drop in for taster sessions.

## 3. Promoting the service

Please see the **Appendix** for a sample of the tailored promotional materials for each site.

### Recruiting volunteers

Both sites were successful in recruiting volunteers, though the numbers were still low. The promotional materials produced for volunteers were effective; other than a small number of volunteers in South Tyneside who had been recruited from existing volunteer pools for a local befriending scheme, volunteers came forward in response to adverts in local newspapers and to leaflets delivered to their door.

However, although both sites started with an adequate number of volunteers to complete small pilots, drop outs post-training were an issue. It is important to advertise widely and to recruit more volunteers than are needed.

### Recruiting participants

In both sites it became clear that the promotional materials produced were effective but not sufficient and that more capacity and resources were needed to build up stronger links with local stakeholders. Stronger links with organisations that work with the older population were needed to ensure local buy-in and an adequate level of referrals to Full of Life.

In addition to arranging an awareness raising day that was well attended, efforts were made in South Tyneside to visit and engage:

- A GP surgery
- Teams of district nurses
- Local day centres and women's centres
- Sheltered housing
- Residential care homes

However, without a dedicated Project Manager to nurture these relationships, follow up on contacts and suggestions, spend time with practitioners and older people who expressed interest, and to provide taster sessions, it was difficult to cultivate these links.

## 4. Working with volunteers

### Time to recruit and to manage

Both sites potentially underestimated the capacity needed to recruit and manage volunteers. Although volunteers are giving up their time for a project, keeping them engaged and committed and monitoring their progress does need to be resourced appropriately.

The local authority adult social care teams had not worked with volunteers before and it took time to familiarise themselves with the procedures and produce the necessary materials. In order to ensure that the volunteers were suited to the Full of Life approach and to working with this older age range, the teams had to produce application forms, conduct interviews and factor in up to three months for the CRB checks to be processed. Certificates had to be produced to mark the end of the training, and regular contact thereafter in order to maintain interest levels. If they had reached delivery stage with the group sessions, refresher training would have to have been arranged in addition to regular catch-ups to support them, to monitor their experiences and the quality of delivery.

### Keep momentum

Following feedback from the volunteers in the pre-pilot, South Tyneside arranged for the training to take place over two consecutive days rather than three sessions over six weeks. This proved to be more effective in securing higher levels of attendance.

However, due to the difficulties in securing client groups, the volunteers were not able to start delivering the course immediately after completing the training. Due to long delays volunteers began to drop out.

An important piece of learning from both sites is that it is essential to have older people signed up, screened and ready to start by the time volunteers finish their training. This will ensure that volunteers are able to put the training into practice straight away and remain confident in the materials and their skills.

### The ask

Full of Life requires a large commitment from volunteers. In order to deliver both the telephone support and the group sessions they must commit to at least two days of training.

For the latter they then have to commit to one and a half hours every week for eight weeks for each group they lead (not including travel time and time to set up the room and equipment). The former is a smaller time commitment, half an hour at a time that suits both the volunteer and the participant. It is important that the volunteers have a thorough understanding of the time commitment Full of Life entails before they embark upon the training in order to minimise drop out rates. It is equally important that time is invested in the volunteers to ensure that they are supported and encouraged and that their significant commitment is recognised by the team.

## 5. Volunteers or health professionals?

In both sites Full of Life was located within Adult Social Care teams. Client screening (please see Annex for the screening questionnaire) was carried out by a member of the Adult Duty Team in South Tyneside and a representative from the Mental Health Trust in Manchester.

Full of Life was targeted at older people with mild to moderate depression and anxiety, or suffering from social isolation. Although it was not, therefore, a mental health service, and all clients were to be screened using the Personal Health Questionnaire to ensure that the course was appropriate for them, the pilots in both sites revealed a nervousness about using community volunteers rather than mental health professionals when dealing with potentially sensitive and personal issues. This led to staff reluctance, in some cases, to promote the service as widely as was required and to refer older people to Full of Life.

Tensions between staff who were comfortable with a 'lay' model, who were involved in the governance of the wider work on wellbeing and the delivery staff, often from specialist mental health backgrounds, hampered the progress of the pilots.

## 6. Branding and language

It was important to ensure that all staff involved had a thorough understanding of the aims of the service and how to tailor the language to the target audience. An effective way of ensuring consistency of language and approach was to ensure that the Project Manager and the screeners attended the Full of Life training along with the volunteers. This was not always possible, however, due to lack of capacity, delays in recruitment, or staff turnover.

As alluded to above, mental health terms should not be used. As volunteer-led sessions designed to improve the wellbeing and resilience of older people with mild depression and anxiety, it is not only misleading but also discourages a large proportion of the older population from trying Full of Life. There is a stigma attached to mental health issues amongst the older age ranges and the language used to describe CBT approaches, new thinking styles, mood and behaviour are often unfamiliar to them.

As a service that enables older people to learn new skills or to hone skills they already have, language that captures the aims of Full of Life and that could be more effective is that of adult education. For example, phrases such as 'keeping the mind active', 'putting a spring back in your step,' or 'it's never too late for an MOT' are easier to understand and potentially less intimidating.

## 7. Generational barriers

There were several challenges to working with this older age range:

- The stigma attached to mental health, hence the importance of avoiding mental health terms and branding

- the unfamiliarity of talking therapies. Although Full of Life is not therapy and was not marketed as such, even the concept of focusing on thinking skills and life skills is potentially new to older generations
- the apparent formality and regularity of the course. Many were hesitant to sign up to a course with booklets and to the same hour and a half each week. Many of the potential clients had not participated in organised activity for a long time or, if they had, it tended to be purely social activities.
- nervousness about participating in a group and the possibility that they would have to share personal information with others.
- frailty and cognitive decline amongst the older old: interested parties in residential care homes, for example, were unable to fill out the screening forms - and would have been unable to follow the booklets in and out of the sessions - due to visual impairments. Staff were also concerned that an hour and a half would be too long for many of them to concentrate.

# Appendix

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This appendix brings together the following guidance and resources:

## Planning

- Getting Started: Quick Quiz
- Model Project Plan: first six months (pre-delivery)
- Budget: suggestions

## Full of Life team

- Project Manager: model job specification
- Steering group: draft terms of reference

## Volunteers

- Model person specification
- Volunteer applications forms

## Promotional materials

- Promotional flyers to recruit potential clients and volunteers
- One page project summaries for potential clients and for frontline professionals who work with older people
- Three page project summary

## Screening referrals

- Registration form and PHQ 9 questionnaire

## Evaluating impact

- Questionnaire for clients about the Full of Life materials and the group/telephone sessions
- Pre and post Full of Life questionnaires to evaluate impact on wellbeing and resilience

## Getting start: Quick Quiz

Try the following quick quiz and brainstorm with the team to challenge some assumptions about older people with mental health problems.

### True or False

1. Older people have some of the highest suicide rates in the UK.
2. 1 in 4 older people living in the community has symptoms of depression severe enough to warrant intervention.
3. One third of older people with depression never discuss their symptoms with their GP.
4. People between 55 and 74 have the highest rates of alcohol-related deaths in the UK.
5. One in ten people aged 80 and over report feeling often or always lonely.
6. The National Service Framework for Mental Health sets standards for the care of older people with mental health problems.

### Answers

1. True
2. True - but poor mental health is not inevitable as we age. In 2020 an estimated 9.4 million (out of 12.5 million) older people will not have depression.
3. False – two thirds never discuss it.
4. True
5. False - one in ten people over 65 report this; one in four people over 80 report feeling often or always lonely
6. False – the NSF sets standards for the care of people with mental health problems aged up to 65

## Model Project Plan – first six months

	Lead	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
<b>Operations</b>							
Recruit Full of Life project manager and screening officer	e.g. Adult Social Care						
Recruit members to Steering Group							
Steering Group monthly meetings							
<b>Marketing</b>							
Produce promotional materials for volunteers and service users							
Disseminate materials, organise promotional visits and events							
<b>Volunteers</b>							
Volunteer policy							
Volunteer recruitment and selection							
Volunteer training							
<b>Referrals</b>							
Develop referral pathways, signposting to mental health services, screening processes							
Recruit and screen participants							

### Check list

- Full of Life Manager [ ]
- Screening Officer [ ]
- Budget [ ]
- Plan [ ]

### Budget: suggestions

In addition to staffing costs your budget will need to cover the costs of:

- Volunteer expenses
- Training fees and expenses
- Admin support
- A set of booklets for each volunteer and each participant
- Publicity
- Room hire if the sessions are held at external venues
- Laptop and projector for volunteers running groups
- Locked cupboard to store laptop and materials
- Refreshments

# The Full of Life team

## Full of Life Manager: Model job description

- build relationships with the voluntary sector and health services
- organise and service the steering group
- recruit and select volunteers including carrying out CRB checks
- write and distribute recruitment and publicity material
- organise and attend the training for volunteers
- work with screening officer to ensure a flow of older people to use the service
- supervise the volunteers
- monitor the quality of the service
- recruit and train more volunteers as needed

## Steering Group- draft terms of reference

### Background

The Steering Group will advise X Council on the development of its Full of Life Service. The group will be responsible for guiding the development of a service of support to older people with mild depression and/or anxiety through group/telephone work led by trained volunteers.

The service will build on the principles underlying Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as developed by Dr Chris Williams in his Living Life to the Full programme. Research has shown there is a dearth of services to older people with mental health problems; research has also demonstrated that CBT is efficacious for mild depression and anxiety.

The steering group's membership will include representatives of XXX Council's Older People's Service and (insert relevant organisations)

### The role of the steering group

- to advise on the development and implementation of the service
- to comment on the draft project plan
- to monitor progress and adherence to the project plan
- to advise on how the new service could fill gaps in provision locally
- to advise on the recruitment of volunteers to the project
- to advise on referral and screening of potential users
- to help effective communication and dissemination of information about the new service to those likely to benefit from the service
- to receive regular reports from the project working group
- to consider and recommend strategies for the continuation and development of the service

### Project outputs, outcomes and evaluation

The detailed outputs and outcomes will be set out in the project plan. The expectation is that around eight volunteer facilitators will be recruited and trained to run groups for eight to twelve end users for up to eight weeks/to run weekly telephone sessions with individuals for four week sessions.

## **Membership**

Members of the Steering Group will normally be of sufficient seniority to be able to take decisions on behalf of their organisations.

Other organisations or individuals may be invited to participate in the work of the partnership on an ad hoc basis.

## **Time commitment**

In the first instance there will be bi-monthly meetings, reducing to quarterly meetings once the service is operational.

# Volunteers

## **Model Person Specification**

We are seeking volunteers to deliver a new self-help service to older people with mild to moderate mental health problems. You will be expected to commitment four days to training and briefings and a regular two to three every fortnight to delivering the service.

This is not a counselling service.

The team of volunteers will be expected to demonstrate the following skills and attributes:

### *Organising skills*

- Ability to motivate (and lead) a group/individual older people
- Ability to plan your time
- A practical approach to problem solving, with a strong dose of common sense
- An ability to support and monitor the progress made by group participants/callers
- An ability to summarise and reflect back to the group/callers as work progresses

### *Communication/people skills*

- Active and patient listening skills
- A warm and sympathetic manner with a good sense of humour
- An ability and willingness to deal with a wide range of people
- An ability to speak clearly without using jargon
- The confidence to manage and deflect problems quickly and sensitively
- A willingness to work as part of a team and to contribute your learning and experience to the evaluation of the pilot

### *Personal attributes*

- A commitment to enabling older people to find solutions to their problems
- A belief in the power of people to make change happen

- Knowledge of the local community and other services available
- A willingness to learn and to be supervised
- A willingness to work to protocols developed by the Council
- The capacity to commit regular time to the training and delivery of Full of Life

*Expenses*

- Reasonable travel and lunch expenses, when appropriate, will be paid in line with the Council's volunteer policy.

# **Full of Life: Wellbeing in later years**

## **Volunteer application form**



**The Local  
Wellbeing  
Project**



**South Tyneside Council**

## PART 1 – CONTACT INFORMATION

(Please complete in BLOCK capitals)

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

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## PART 2 – CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

What is your current employment status?

Paid employment  Volunteer  Unemployed  Retired

Student

Current job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **PART 3 – ABOUT YOU**

Why do you to be a Full of Life volunteer?

Please tell us about any skills or experience you have which you feel would be useful.

## PART 4 – REFEREES

Referees will be contacted as soon as we receive this form. If possible please include a current or ex-employer as one of your referees.

### Referee 1:

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to You: \_\_\_\_\_

### Referee 2:

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to You: \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 5: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This role will require a check to be made on you with the Criminal Records Bureau. Are you in agreement with this? (Please indicate below):

Yes  No

Where did you find out about the Full of Life Project? (Please indicate below):

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Please tick all of the times that you would be available to volunteer. Full of Life sessions usually take an hour and a half:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AM							
PM							
EVE							

## PART 6: DECLARATION

<p><b>I can confirm that the details given on this form are correct.</b></p> <p><b>Signed:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Date:</b> _____</p>
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Please now return this form in the prepaid envelope attached to:

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## **FULL OF LIFE: WELLBEING IN LATER YEARS**

**"I CAN'T BE BOTHERED  
TO GO OUT."**

**"I FEEL USELESS."**

**"I HARDLY SEE  
ANYONE ANYMORE  
THESE DAYS."**

**"I FEEL TIRED ALL THE  
TIME."**

**"I CAN'T SLEEP AT  
NIGHT."**



**SOUND FAMILIAR?**

**IF YOU OFTEN FEEL LIKE  
THIS THEN HELP IS AT HAND**

# **FULL OF LIFE: WELLBEING IN LATER YEARS**

is a new service being set up by South Tyneside Council and the Local Wellbeing Project for older people who are feeling down or unhappy.

Trained volunteers are running a telephone service and group sessions to help people like you. You may be recently bereaved. You may be looking after someone who is unwell. You may have lost some of your independence because of increasing frailty. You may live alone. These can all be reasons for feeling fed up.

**Our new service aims to help you help yourself when you are feeling down.**

## **FIND OUT MORE**

Please contact Yvonne Shanley, Service Developer on 0191 424 7605 or email [yvonne.shanley@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:yvonne.shanley@southtyneside.gov.uk)



**South Tyneside Council**



**Local  
Wellbeing  
Project**

South Tyneside Council in cooperation with the  
Local Wellbeing Project

# **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED...**

## **ARE YOU:**

- **KEEN TO IMPROVE THE EMOTIONAL WELLBEING OF OLDER PEOPLE?**
- **A GOOD COMMUNICATOR?**
- **A GOOD LISTENER?**
- **WELL ORGANISED?**

## **DO YOU:**

- **ENJOY WORKING WITH PEOPLE?**
- **WANT TO LEARN NEW SKILLS?**
- **BELIEVE PEOPLE CAN BE HELPED TO DEAL WITH THE EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES OF GROWING OLDER?**



**FULL OF LIFE:  
WELLBEING IN  
LATER YEARS**

We are looking for enthusiastic people to join our team of volunteers to help us develop and test out a new service for older people.

Anyone can join us – you might be a retired teacher or occupational therapist – or you could have run pub quizzes, have managed a hairdressing salon or have been a taxi driver. You will help provide telephone support or run group sessions for people who are struggling with the emotional challenges of getting older such as bereavement or caring for a family member with a long-term condition.

Once we've agreed this is something suitable for you, you would receive three days training based on a programme developed by Dr Chris Williams, a Glasgow psychiatrist, and ongoing support from our team at South Tyneside Council.

## ***FIND OUT MORE***

For further information and a detailed person specification please contact Yvonne Shanley, Service Developer on 0191 424 7605 or email [yvonne.shanley@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:yvonne.shanley@southtyneside.gov.uk)



**South Tyneside Council**



**Local  
Wellbeing  
Project**

South Tyneside Council in cooperation with the  
Local Wellbeing Project



## Full of Life: wellbeing in later years

Full of Life is a course that aims to improve important life skills that will enable you to feel more able to deal with difficulties and challenges in your life. You might be feeling isolated. You may be looking after someone who is unwell. You may have lost some of your independence because of increasing frailty. Or you may just want to get more involved in activities in the local area and to learn new skills.



Trained volunteers will guide you through a course of seven booklets over seven weeks, which you will be able to keep and read through anytime you want. The booklets will cover the following topics:

- Identifying personal strengths and strategies to increase wellbeing
- An introduction to “self-talk” and how thoughts and beliefs impact on mood and behaviour
- Coping with change



You can choose to go through the booklets with a volunteer over the phone or to participate in group sessions run by two volunteers. The group sessions are a safe and friendly space to talk through the booklets with others and to ask questions- and a great way to expand your network of friends in your local area.

**For more information or to sign up to try the service please contact:**

Anna Shandro, Local Wellbeing Project, Young Foundation on 020 8980 6263 or [anna.shandro@youngfoundation.org](mailto:anna.shandro@youngfoundation.org)

Patricia Lightfoot, Adult Duty Team, on 0191 424 4139 or [patricia.lightfoot@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:patricia.lightfoot@southtyneside.gov.uk)



## Full of Life: Wellbeing in later years

As people age they are more likely to face major challenges, from retirement and loss of mobility, to bereavement or moving into sheltered accommodation. An individual's ability to deal with these has much to do with their emotional resilience and wellbeing, and their ability to cope with change.



Initiatives to increase the wellbeing of older people have tended to focus on physical and health needs. Until recent years, comparatively little focus has been placed on mental health disorders such as depression, which have relatively high prevalence in later life. We are piloting a service in South Tyneside that aims to fill this gap.

Full of Life is a service designed to increase the wellbeing of older people who are suffering from mild depression, anxiety or social isolation. It is based on a course of seven booklets developed and tested rigorously by Dr Chris Williams, a Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist at the University of Glasgow. The course is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques and has been proven to be effective in treating mild to moderate depression and anxiety as well as enhancing important life skills in adult populations that enable people to deal more effectively with challenges and change.

Dr Chris Williams and his team have trained local volunteers over three full days to guide older people through the booklets. The volunteers will run the course either in group sessions (one hour-long session per booklet) or as a one-to-one telephone service. They will cover the following topics:

- Identifying personal strengths and strategies to increase wellbeing
- An introduction to 'self-talk' and how thoughts and beliefs impact on mood and behaviour
- Coping with change

**We want as many people as possible to benefit from the service- and to get as much feedback as possible in order to tailor it to the needs of this specific age range. Please refer people aged sixty-five and over who you work with or care for to us and we can talk with them to see if the service could be of value.**

**For more information or to refer people to the service please contact:**

Anna Shandro, Local Wellbeing Project, Young Foundation on 020 8980 6263 or [anna.shandro@youngfoundation.org](mailto:anna.shandro@youngfoundation.org)

Patricia Lightfoot, Adult Duty Team on 0191 424 4139 or [Patricia.Lightfoot@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:Patricia.Lightfoot@southtyneside.gov.uk)



## Full of Life: Wellbeing in later years

### Overview of the project



This year we have begun to pilot services in South Tyneside that aim to increase the wellbeing of older people. We are collaborating with Dr Chris Williams, a Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist at the University of Glasgow, piloting his 'Living Life to the Full' materials adapted specifically for this population. This service is innovative not only for working with this older group, but also by recruiting and training other older aged volunteers from local communities to deliver the course either as a group or through a one to one telephone service. If this pilot proves successful, this work will be rolled out across both local authorities and wider.

### Why is older people's emotional resilience an important issue?



Older People are an important and fast growing group. This year, for the first time ever, the percentage of the population aged 16 and under fell below the percentage of the population of state pensionable age. The prevalence of mental health issues is relatively high in later life, with depression being the most common. These two factors together mean that finding effective and affordable ways to improve the wellbeing of older people is fast becoming a priority for local government and communities.

## What is the current provision for older people's emotional wellbeing?



Research into older people's wellbeing in the UK is scarce. In 2003, the Office for National Statistics published a report on the mental health of older people; and the largest study on this topic was the UK Inquiry into Mental Health and Wellbeing in Later Life<sup>1</sup>, which sought to highlight and promote understanding of mental health issues faced by older people, and suggest ways to address them. However, interventions to date tend to focus primarily on remedial rather than preventative measures, such as health, participation and independence, and on physical needs.

Yet older people's ability to deal with both physical and emotional stressors will have much to do with their emotional resilience. Although there is increasing emphasis on psychological treatments for older people, there are still too few studies demonstrating their effects in this age group. The provision of psychological therapies to older NHS patients is extremely variable across the country, and the quality of the existing services is often unknown.



## What does this project propose to do?



The course will be delivered either in a group setting or through a one-to-one telephone service, covering the following topics:

- Identifying personal strengths and strategies to increase resilience
- An introduction to 'self-talk' and beliefs related to role change
- The impact of shock on family and relationships
- Coping with change

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<sup>1</sup> Led by Age Concern and Mental Health Foundation from 2003-2007(see [www.mhilli.org](http://www.mhilli.org))

## Evaluation of the project



Small scale pilots have been carried out in earlier this year to test the suitability of the materials for this age range and of the training for volunteers. We are entering a much larger pilot stage now to evaluate the impact the course has made on the participants' wellbeing: did the course help them with any of the issues they are currently facing? Were the changes sustainable over time?

Lessons learnt from this strand of work will be disseminated in a series of reports available from our website:

<http://www.youngfoundation.org/our-work/local-innovation/strands/wellbeing/the-local-wellbeing-project/more-info/the-big-initiativ-2>

## The Local Wellbeing Project



Our project tackling emotional resilience in older people is part of the Local Wellbeing Project, a unique initiative testing out practical ways of improving public wellbeing in three very different areas of the UK (Hertfordshire, Manchester and South Tyneside), by enhancing existing services and providing or planning new services. The project brings together the three local authorities with the Young Foundation, a leading centre for social innovation; Professor Lord Richard Layard from LSE, an expert in promoting happiness in public policy; and the Improvement and Development Agency, leaders in local government innovation, as well as key government departments. 'Increasing emotional resilience in older people' is one of the three big initiatives undertaken by the Local Wellbeing Project.

### For more information contact:

**Marcia Brophy**, Wellbeing and Resilience Programme Leader at the Young Foundation:  
marcia.brophy@youngfoundation.org or phone 0208 980 6263

The Local Wellbeing Project is funded by Manchester City Council, South Tyneside MBC, Hertfordshire County Council, the IDeA, CLG, Defra, DH, DIUS, DCSF and the Audit Commission.

## Full of Life: Registration form

How did you hear about this course?

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Have you ever participated in a similar kind of course? If yes, which one?

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What would you most like to get from the course?

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Before starting Full of Life we ask everyone to fill in the questionnaire overleaf in order to ensure that the service is suitable for you. The questions encourage you to reflect on how you have been feeling over the last couple of weeks and are designed to capture a wide array of issues- some of which you may never have experienced.

# Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**Over the *last 2 weeks*, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?**

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day	Score
	0	1	2	3	
1 Little interest or pleasure in doing things.					
2 Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.					
3 Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much.					
4 Feeling tired or having little energy.					
5 Poor appetite or overeating.					
6 Feeling bad about yourself—or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down.					
7 Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television.					
8 Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed. Or the opposite—being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual.					
9 Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself in some way.					
				<b>Total</b>	

If you checked off *any* problems, how *difficult* have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

**Not difficult at  
all**  
0

**Somewhat  
difficult**  
0

**Very difficult**  
0

**Extremely  
difficult**  
0

Total number of issues:

Total score:

## Evaluation of the pilot service 'Full of Life'

We would be grateful if you could fill out this questionnaire about the telephone service. This will help us improve the service in the future. Please tick the appropriate boxes, or write on the lines. Tick only one box per question.

### Q.1. Was the purpose of each session clear?

Very clear  Clear most of time  Often unclear  Not clear at all

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Q.2. Did you find the booklets useful?

Very useful  Quite useful  Not really useful  Not at all useful

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Q.3. Have you found the booklets easy to use on your own outside of the sessions?

Very easy  Quite easy  Not very easy  Very difficult

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q.4. How did you find the language used in the booklets?**

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**Q.5. How did you find the language used by the facilitator?**

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**Q.6. Was the service tailored appropriately to your needs in terms of the:**

- a. length of sessions:                      Too long       Just right       Too short
- b. number of sessions:                      Too many       Just enough       Not enough
- c. frequency of sessions:                      Too often       Just right       Too far apart
- e. amount of materials handed out:      Too many       Just enough       Not enough

**Q.7. What did you like MOST about the service?**

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**Q.8. What did you like LEAST about the service?**

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**Q.9. How can we improve this service?**

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*Thank you very much for your help*

## Evaluation of the pilot service 'Full of Life'

We would be grateful if you could fill out this questionnaire about the service. This will help us improve it in the future. Please tick the appropriate boxes, or write on the lines. Tick only one box per question.

### Q.1. Was the purpose of each session clear?

Very clear  Clear most of time  Often unclear  Not clear at all

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Q.2. How much were you asked to participate in the sessions?

Too much  Just enough  Not enough

### Q.3. How much time was there for questions?

Enough time  Not enough time

### Q.4. Were the booklets useful?

Very useful  Quite useful  Not really useful  Not at all   
useful

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Q.5. Have you found the booklets easy to use on your own outside of the sessions?

Very easy  Quite easy  Not very easy  Not at all   
easy

**If not, why not?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.6. How did you find the language used in the booklets?**

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**Q.7. Please rate the following aspects of the service:**

- a. pace of the sessions:                      Too fast       Just right       Too slow
- b. length of sessions:                      Too long       Just right       Too short
- c. number of sessions:                      Too many       Just enough       Not enough
- d. frequency of sessions:                      Too often       Just right       Too far apart
- e. amount of materials handed out:      Too many       Just enough       Not enough

**Q.8. What did you like MOST about the service? (Was it the group sessions? The booklets? Something else?)**

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**Q.9. What did you like LEAST about the course? (Was it the group sessions? The booklets? Something else?)**

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**Q.10. How can we improve this course? (other comments about the course, are there any other topics that you would like to see included?)**

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*Thank you very much for your help*

## Pre- Full of Life questionnaires

Feedback is vital to help us improve the training for the volunteers that run the course as well as the quality of the service.

Responses to these questions will remain fully anonymised and only be reported on a group basis, not as individual responses.

Please sign below if you agree to your responses being used for purely research and evaluation purposes.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer all of the questions- thank you!**

**Gender:** Male Female

**Age:** 60-64  65-69  70-74  75+

**What is your ethnic group?**

**White**

- British
- Irish
- Any other White Background

Please write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Mixed**

Please write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian Black British, Black Scottish or Black British**

- Indian
- Pakistan
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian Background

Please write in \_\_\_\_\_

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other black background

Please write in \_\_\_\_\_

Other ethnic background

Please write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you registered disabled?**

Yes  No

**Are you:** Working  Unemployed  Employed  Retired

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your understanding about stress and low mood**

Please answer the following questions to summarise how you see your current level of knowledge

1. Your ability to understand how low mood and stress affect you

Very poor  Poor  Okay  Good  Very good

2. Your ability to plan activities to boost how you feel

Very poor  Poor  Okay  Good  Very good

3. Your ability to respond positively to your negative thinking

Very poor  Poor  Okay  Good  Very good

4. Your ability to plan ways to boost your confidence

Very poor  Poor  Okay  Good  Very good

5. Your ability to overcome practical problems in your life

Very poor  Poor  Okay  Good  Very good

6. Your ability to do things that make you feel happier and healthier

Very poor  Poor  Okay  Good  Very good

## Strengths questionnaire

Please read the following statements. To the right of each you will find seven numbers, ranging from "1" (Strongly Disagree) on the left to "7" (Strongly Agree) on the right. Circle the number which best indicates your feelings about that statement.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree		
1. I usually manage one way or another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I usually take things in stride.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I am friends with myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I feel that I can handle many things at a time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I am determined.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I have self-discipline.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I keep interested in things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I can usually find something to laugh about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. My belief in myself gets me through hard times.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. In an emergency, I'm someone people can generally rely on.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. My life has meaning.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. When I'm in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## Confidence questionnaire

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you **strongly disagree**, circle **1**. If you **disagree** with the statement, circle **2**. If you **agree**, circle **3**. If you **strongly agree**, circle **4**.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

1 -2 -3 -4

2. At times, I think I am no good at all.

1 -2 -3 -4

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

1 -2 -3 -4

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

1 -2 -3 -4

5. \* I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

1 -2 -3 -4

6. I certainly feel useless at times.

1 -2 -3 -4

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

1 -2 -3 -4

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

1 -2 -3 -4

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

1 -2 -3 -4

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

1 -2 -3 -4

***Thank you!***

# Acknowledgments

The Young Foundation's work on wellbeing, resilience and ageing has been made possible through the work and contributions of a number of people. In particular, the Young Foundation would like to thank the staff and volunteers in Manchester and South Tyneside who gave so much energy to the project.

We would like to thank Diana Whitworth for all of her time and invaluable insights throughout the project.

And, finally, we would like to thank Dr Chris Williams, Catriona Kent and Ann McCreath for being such inspiring trainers.