



Final Report

Social Value Evaluation

The Patient experience of onward referral
by a Community Link Worker

Craigmillar Medical Group

Durham Road Medical Practice

Milton Medical Practice

Niddrie Medical Practice

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Executive Summary

Following the successful social value pilot evaluation of the Community Link Worker service at Southfield Medical Practice between October 2020 and May 2021, it was agreed that the remaining four Craigmillar practices should also be evaluated using broadly the same methodology.

This was undertaken between October and December 2021 with 647 patients contacted and around 1700 texts sent.

Key findings across all four practices:

It has been encouraging to see that patients have largely benefitted from the input from their Community Link Worker (CLW).

- **90%** of patients felt that being referred was right for them and helped them
- **84%** of patients felt that the CLW had got it right when referring them on to these specific destinations
- **79%** of patients said the organisation where they were referred to was what they were expecting
- **36%** of patients were referred on elsewhere by that organisation
- **29%** started attending another group or started volunteering at the organisation they were referred on to
- On a scale of 1 – 10, patients on average rated the process of being referred on by their CLW as **7.5**

Conclusion:

Patients who responded to the questionnaires at their practices found the referring on process to be largely constructive and helpful. They benefited from contact with the CLW and from the organisations they were referred to and felt that it was right for them. We received some extremely positive and insightful comments which demonstrated the value patients attached to the service they'd received.



Methodology

The methodology for this study has remained largely the same since the pilot, when the questionnaire was drafted, checked for GDPR compliance, tested and adjusted.

During the pilot phase, the questionnaire was sent manually by text, with two follow-up texts being sent at intervals of approximately three to four weeks.

However, as this study involved significantly greater numbers of patients, it was agreed that texting technology would be used, which allowed for the bulk sending of messages to patients at each practice, using practice-specific links in order to keep data separate for better quality analysis.

Owing to the cost of purchasing SMS credits, two texts were sent to each patient, each containing a link to the relevant practice questionnaire. As data was available from the company on numbers which had rejected the text / which were unobtainable, these were able to be removed from the second text, thus saving SMS credits.

This time, the initial texts were sent on the 20th and 22nd October, with a follow up being sent on either 8th or 9th November.

Further texts were sent to newly closed cases in December 2021 in all practices.

Following the experience of the pilot, only patients on the “Closed” list were contacted as it was agreed that the return from “Closed-Disengaged” did not warrant the investment in time/money.

Return statistics:

Craigmillar Medical Group: 223 patients – 19 returned = 8.5%

Durham Rd Medical Practice: 68 patients – 10 returned = 14.7%

Milton Medical Practice: 148 patients – 34 returned = 22.9%

Niddrie Medical Practice: 208 patients – 49 returned = 23.5%

Total patients contacted: **647**

Total questionnaires returned: **112**

This led to an overall return rate of 17% which is a little on the low side for this kind of work, 25% being about standard.

Question 9 includes an analysis of a range of data which then uses the mean (average) and median (middle) scores for each practice. The standard deviation is a measure of how dispersed the data is in relation to the mean. Lower standard deviation indicates data are more consistent, and higher standard deviations indicates data are more spread out.



Some interesting questions are raised here as to why the return rates should be so different across the practices when, for example, demographics are similar in Craigmillar and Niddrie and in Milton and Durham Rd practices. Possible reasons are discussed later on.

Notes:

- Any patient who replied by text requesting a paper form was dealt with on an individual basis (by text) with any questions being answered and additional information gained.
- Twelve patients requested paper forms, which were sent out. Nine were returned.
- Two patients asked to be removed from the list as they had left their practices, which was done.
- Due to the constant change in status of patients, a handful of patients were re-referred during the time between my running the report and sending out questionnaires, so therefore answered them as an “Engaged” status patient. Their information was included as it was still relevant, having worked with the CLW before.



Results

Results are being addressed question by question and practice by practice and then as a cohort.

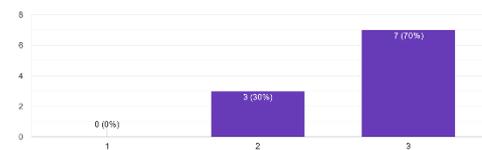
Question 2, "Was it right for you / did it help you?" (i.e. the place you were referred on to)

Durham Road Medical Practice

Seven out of 10 patients felt their CLW had got it right and that the referral on helped them, with three feeling it was OK.

Overall, this is 100% helpful.

2. Was it right for you / did it help you?
10 responses

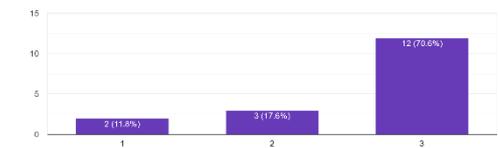


Craigmillar Medical Group

Twelve out of 17 patients felt their CLW got their referral on right and that it was helpful. Three thought it was OK and two didn't find it helpful.

Overall, 88% found it helpful

2. Was it right for you / did it help you?
17 responses

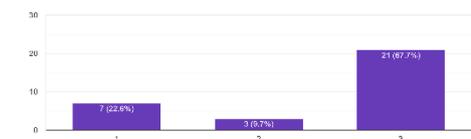


Milton Medical Practice

21 patients felt the referral on from their CLW was helpful, 3 OK and 7 not helpful.

Overall, 77.4% found it helpful

2. Was it right for you / did it help you?
31 responses

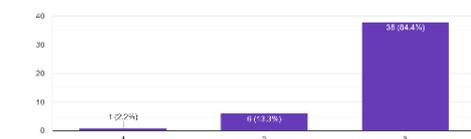


Niddrie Medical Practice

38 patients found the referral on by their CLW helpful, and another 6 thought it was OK. Just 1 patient didn't find it helpful.

Overall, 97.7% of Niddrie patients found the referral helpful

2. Was it right for you / did it help you?
45 responses



All practice summary

Out of all the patients who answered this question, **90.3%** were happy with the referral on to the group or agency by their CLW.



Question 3: “How did it help you?” (i.e. the referral on to the organisation)

This appears to be a key question, with responses giving a clear picture of how patients value the CLW intervention and the difference it has made to them. Patients talk about their support, which falls into seven key themes. A few quotes are given under each heading below:

- **Employability**

- “It’s helping me find a new job and with my anxiety” (Milton Patient)
- “Gave me the confidence to get into the world of work” (Niddrie Patient)

- **Benefits**

- “Assisted in claim for P.I.P.” (Durham Rd Patient)
- “I got help filling in a review for PIP” (Milton Patient)
- “It made me aware of the benefits I was entitled to which then resulted in a successful claim” (Niddrie Patient)

- **Mental and physical health**

- “Helped a lot with my mental health especially my anxiety” (Milton Patient)
- “Physical pain was getting me down and isolation due to physical mobility and pandemic. Helped mental health improvement” (Milton Patient)

- **Housing**

- “She helped me to get my rent sorted out” (Milton Patient)
- “Ypeople helped me get my Edindex number” (Niddrie Patient)
- “3 months after talking to Mark I had my own property” (Niddrie Patient)

- **Confidence and self-esteem**

- “Confidence and support still ongoing” (Craigmillar Patient)
- “It helped me with my depression and my mental health problems and my self-confidence” (Niddrie Patient)

- **Isolation and community connectedness**

- “Gave me a sense of connection with others taking part; calming; sense of community; lunch was nourishing; at a time of difficulty in my life” (Durham Rd Patient)
- “I had never heard of it before, was new & wish I'd have known about it before!” (Craigmillar Patient)
- “Gave me advice & put me in touch with people that were going through same things (drugs) & hobbies groups. I see my worker or phone on a regular basis which is reassuring.” (Craigmillar Patient)
- “Helped relax and connect to people again” (Niddrie Patient)

- **Involvement in activities**

- “Have gradually got very involved with community groups / activities” (Durham Rd Patient)
- “Involved me in useful workshops and introduced me to welcoming community” (Craigmillar Patient)
- “It helped me by putting me on a cookery course, and on a mindfulness class. It also gave me confidence to volunteer for Edinburgh Cyrenians” (Milton Patient)



- “He opened my eyes to what is available to do the area. I hated the place at the beginning and I was feeling pretty down but we are settled now. And we engage with gardens, events and toddler groups” (Niddrie Patient)

All practice summary

These are all important issues for patients, who are sometimes all too aware of what they need but don't know what's out there for them or where to go to find it. Consequently their CLW has often pointed them in the right direction or helped them make sense of what has been going on for them at the time. Some patients took the opportunity in the questionnaire to express their deep sense of gratitude for being supported at what for many was a very difficult time in their lives. The following quote is a good example:

“I gained so much weight and was so depressed during shielding, unable to go to a standard gym. I didn't know the Thistle existed before he suggested it. I am forever grateful for him to helping me pull through such a dark place.” Niddrie Patient

Question 4: So what had patients wanted to get out of the CLW relationship?

As in question 3, what patients wanted fell into broadly the same main categories (and which are seen in most practices across Edinburgh). Again, I have included quotes from across the practices:

- **Employment**
 - “To find a new job and to learn to manage my anxiety” (Milton Patient)
 - “To have work and be a part of community volunteer group” (Niddrie Patient)
 - “Employment” (Craigmillar Patient)
- **Socialising**
 - “Find some new activities to stop staying at home” (Milton Practice)
 - “Attend social groups and improve my English” (Niddrie Practice)
 - “Meet for a walk and then a chat and coffee” (Milton Practice)
- **Confidence and self esteem**
 - “More confidence and help to help myself with going forward” (Durham Rd Patient)
 - “Reconnect with my art” (Durham Rd Patient)
 - “Confidence” (Niddrie Patient)
- **Health and wellbeing**
 - “Help with chronic pain” (Craigmillar Patient)
 - “To eat better to be healthy” (Niddrie Patient)
 - “Physical and mental health improvement over time” (Durham Rd Patient)
- **Mental health**
 - “Some sense of connection with others when I was experiencing high stress and anxiety about changes in my circumstances” (Durham Rd Patient)
 - “A little bit piece of mind” (Craigmillar Patient)



- “To not let my anxiety and depression keep hold of me so I can do more things without it controlling me” (Milton Practice)
- **Housing**
 - “To get my rent back on track” (Milton Patient)
 - “A home” (Milton Patient)
 - “Moved out horrible place I live rather be DEAD” (Niddrie Patient)
- **Benefits / income maximisation support**
 - “Success in claiming P.I.P. D.W.P. Benefit” (Durham Rd Patient)
 - “To get a bank account” (Craigmillar Patient)
 - “Sort out my bills” (Milton Patient)

Several patients also specifically mentioned needing English and cookery classes

All practice summary

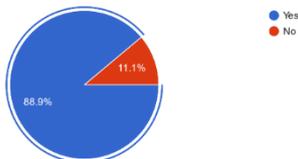
It is encouraging that the categories in these two questions largely match up. Patients wanted support and on the whole, received it where it was required. A few patients said they didn’t know what they needed: “I was not sure” (Craigmillar Patient) / “Just needed help” (Niddrie Patient). Some gave a range of areas where they wanted support: “to be fed and clothed” (Milton Patient) / “To meet like-minded people, come down on my drugs, build on my confidence” (Craigmillar Patient), whilst others were very specific about their needs: “Play an instrument” (Niddrie Patient). However, what is encouraging is that patients, through their ratings, give feedback that their CLWs were willing and able to look for solutions for their support needs, and that the destinations they found were suitable.

The following four questions show the percentages of patients who answered the questions yes / no for each practice, with an overall total at the end for all patients.

Question 5: Was the organisation what you expected?

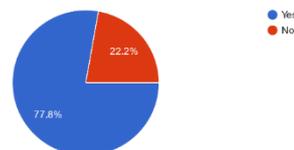
Durham Road Medical Practice

5. Was the organisation what you expected?
9 responses



Craigmillar Medical Group

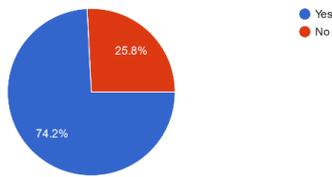
5. Was the organisation what you expected?
18 responses





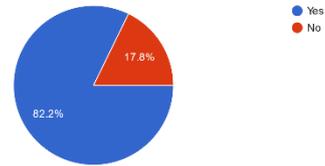
Milton Medical Practice

5. Was the organisation what you expected?
31 responses



Niddrie Medical Practice

5. Was the organisation what you expected?
45 responses



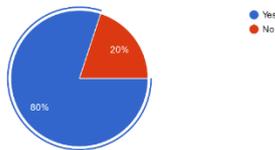
All practice summary

Overall, 82 = **79.6%** of respondents said the organisation where they were referred was what they expected. This suggests that the CLWs did some good groundwork, preparing the patients for what to expect at their (appropriate) destination agency and that the referring on process worked for them. This is backed up by the next question.

Question 6: Did your link worker get it right when they referred you to this organisation?

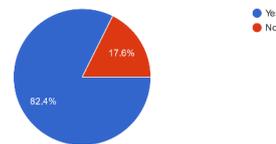
Durham Road Medical Practice

6. Did your link worker get it right when they referred you to this organisation?
10 responses



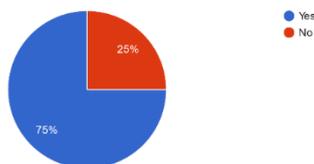
Craigmillar Medical Group

6. Did your link worker get it right when they referred you to this organisation?
17 responses



Milton Medical Practice

6. Did your link worker get it right when they referred you to this organisation?
32 responses



Niddrie Medical Practice

6. Did your link worker get it right when they referred you to this organisation?
44 responses



All practice summary

The overall figure for the four practices is **84.5%** for satisfaction in terms of destination. However, there is quite a spread, ranging from 75% to 93.2%. Milton's rate of 75%, is a little lower than the others, meaning that one in every four patients who answered the question weren't happy with their referral on destination. A few of the reasons are given, and whilst one or two are quite reasonable, some seem quite inconsistent with the support which has been offered and several people have put that the destination

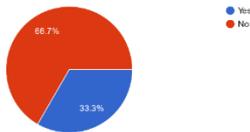


didn't help when they also said they weren't referred on anywhere, which may explain why. Niddrie's rate of 93.2% is higher than the others which brings the average up.

Question 7: Did this organisation refer you on anywhere else?

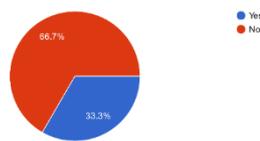
Durham Road Medical Practice

7. Did this organisation refer you on anywhere else?
9 responses



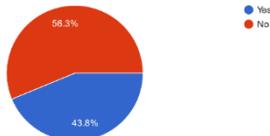
Craigmillar Medical Group

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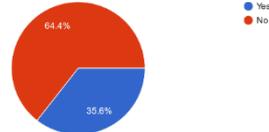
Milton Medical Practice

7. Did this organisation refer you on anywhere else?
32 responses



Niddrie Medical Practice

7. Did this organisation refer you on anywhere else?
45 responses



All practice summary

37.5% of patients – just over a third, were referred on elsewhere by that organisation. We didn't ask where to or what that experience was like, only whether or not this happened. But it shows that for some patients, having a CLW refer them on can be the start of a journey.

A few people did comment that it was a positive experience however, for example:

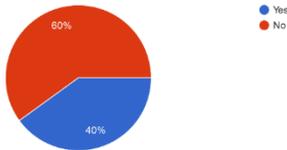
“Resulted in employment with the organisation I was referred to” (Milton Patient)



Question 8: Did you join another group/activity at this organisation, or start volunteering there?

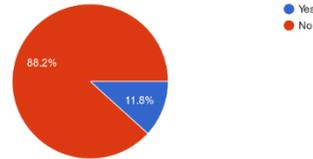
Durham Road Medical Practice

8. Did you join another group/activity at this organisation, or start volunteering there?
10 responses



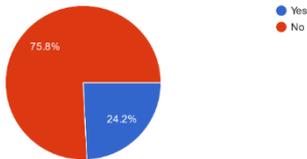
Craigmillar Medical Group

8. Did you join another group/activity at this organisation, or start volunteering there?
17 responses



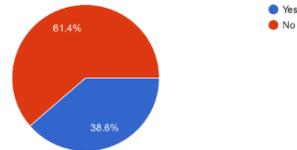
Milton Medical Practice

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33 responses



Niddrie Medical Practice

8. Did you join another group/activity at this organisation, or start volunteering there?
44 responses



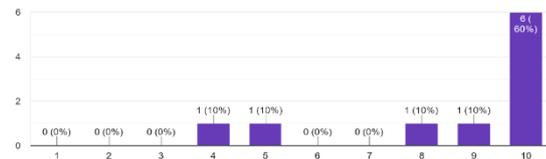
All practice summary

Overall, **29.8%** - that's nearly one in three people started attending another group or started volunteering at the organisation they were referred to. Whilst this is only a relatively small number, for these people it could have meant a significant step into sustainable community activity, although it should be made clear that only a few patients specifically mentioned this positive attribution.

Question 9: On a scale of 1 to 10, how did you find the process of being referred on by your link worker?

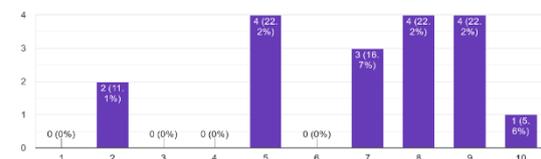
Durham Road Medical Practice

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how did you find the process of being referred on by your link worker?
10 responses



Craigmillar Medical Group

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how did you find the process of being referred on by your link worker?
18 responses



Mean: 8.6

Median: 10

Standard deviation: 2.4

Mean: 6.8

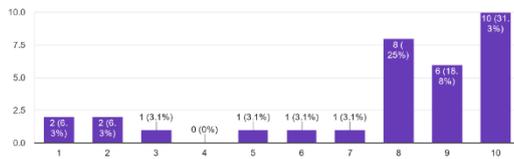
Median: 7.5

Standard deviation: 2.3



Milton Medical Practice

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how did you find the process of being referred on by your link worker?
32 responses



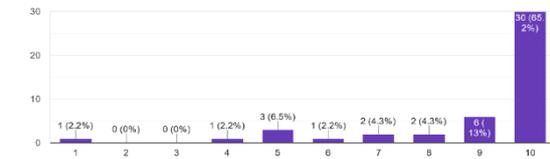
Mean: 7.7

Median: 9

Standard deviation: 2.8

Niddrie Medical Practice

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how did you find the process of being referred on by your link worker?
46 responses



Mean: 8.9

Median: 10

Standard deviation: 2

It is interesting to compare the standard deviations of Milton Medical Practice and Niddrie Medical Practice. These are the two practices with the largest returns, making them more statistically significant. Niddrie, with a return of 49, has the lower standard deviation and a higher mean. Milton, with 32 responses, has a much wider split, with a lower mean and greater spread of numbers returned, including 5 in the lowest categories. This leads to a much higher standard deviation of 2.8. Of course, with a confidential survey, it's not possible to go back to respondents to find out more about why they gave these scores, although a few comments did show dissatisfaction. These are shown in question 11 under Other Comments.

All practice summary

Overall, the mean score was 7.6

Question 10: Has working with your link worker changed your relationship with your GP practice, e.g. how often you go to see your GP or other members of the practice team?

Durham Rd Medical Practice:

- “Yes it helped me understand more about my illness”
- “Yes I see my GP very regularly as I know when to seek help.”

Craigmillar Medical Group:

- Yes - I rarely if ever see my G.P. now
- I have needed fewer emergency visits to the mental health team
- Yes, for the better. I see my drug worker every 6 wks & the nurse & doctor in between or when I need to
- Positive difference
- Every few months for a phone call check up



Milton Medical Practice

- Yes, need GP less due to having outside support that is easier to access
- I am very happy with this outcome
- Yes. My presenting troubled mental state is not as all consuming and can be worked through
- Made it feel more accessible
- Not very often as I keep very well
- Yes it has
- Yes it showed me I have other option than contacting GP
- Yes, it's helped. I've ongoing treatment plans with one department. I had a check-up with the nurse in 2021 and a few phone consultations with my GP about pain management

Niddrie Medical Practice

- Yes totally
- I'm hardly in the GP with migraines and pains I used to get. Because the pains were linked to poor sleep/stress etc
- Yes x 5
- Yes, I go to the service of the Clinical Psychology / chronic pain specialists
- He spoke to the GP team about me, and this helped us to get along well.
- Yes. Well done Mark helped me through a lot at the time
- Yes, seen them less
- Yes I hardly come in. And I'm not depressed or as isolated as much as before.

The comments above are from those who felt that the CLW intervention did make a difference to their relationship with their practice. This is a small but positive contribution to reducing practice workload, or to supporting patients to use their practice more appropriately. However, as this is one of the aims of the CLW programme, it should be seen that it is doing its job.

Question 11: Has your work with your link worker resulted in positive outcomes you did not expect?

Durham Rd Medical Practice: 60% said yes

- Yes! Did not expect to be successful in benefit claim
- It gave me a sense of community I had not connected with before despite living not far from my home. A positive experience. Elaine was proactive in assessing my situation and possible sources of support. In the time of my transition from living in private accommodation to supported housing, she was very understanding about the stress I was experiencing
- Yes - involvement in art groups, photography archive volunteering gardening table tennis and badminton. Started with once a week 14 months ago.
- Yes I now know there is help out there you just need the help like I've had
- Yeah a few different ways
- Yes



Craigmillar Medical Group: 53.3% of those who answered the question said yes

- Hope with housing and managing my needs
- In part yes
- Yes x 6

Milton Medical Practice: 57.1% of those who answered the question said yes

- Resulted in employment with the organisation I was referred to.
- Yes, I've been directed to organisations that I would not have known about if I hadn't been directed there by my link worker.
- Yes my situation is far better and I'm grateful to Elaine for her help
- Yes - I have been able to adapt many of these skills to a wide range of 'life' events.
- Yes, meeting all like minded people, being part of the Thistle and Craigmillar Now and the Craigmillar festival
- I find that I sometimes meet people from the courses I have been on.
- Got me started on a new hobby with woodwork that I now follow on Pinterest and Facebook
- The worker was very supportive.
- Yes x 9

Niddrie Medical Practice: 68.8% of those who answered the question said yes

- Yes at the time
- Very much so
- Yes. Mark is excellent. I had no idea about link workers but also thought they were for helping "troubled people" or people with drug issues.
- Being made aware of such an amazing community resource
- I'm more confident
- Indeed very positive result. Really excellent and beautiful feeling.
- Yeah it did. I learnt to respect my limit and never to push it above if I cannot
- Yes, especially knowing there was help
- Yes he is awesome
- Yes Mark was very easy to talk to and had some great ideas for other classes I may want to take
- Yes x 21

All practice summary

Overall this amounted to **62.9%** of patients experiencing positive outcomes which they did not expect. There are some great examples given, including a sense of belonging; knowledge of what is going on in the community; increased confidence; success in benefits claims; ability to self-manage; hope for the future. What isn't made clear is whether the patients didn't expect the outcomes from the CLW service in the first place, or whether they were in addition to what they expected from the service when first referred.



Other comments

Durham Rd Medical Practice:

Positive

- She is an amazing person and really good at her job and it help me more than she knows
- Extremely engaging
- I believe I would not have been successful in my claim for P.I.P. if I had not had the assistance of Elaine, my Link Worker.
- Elaine accompanied me on 4 occasions to new groups: walking group, photography course, archive volunteering group and sketching activity. I maintain contact thru community network.
- My link worker has been fantastic in the help she has done for me in every way from the very start sorting my difficulty's out introducing me to other people who also helped so 10 out of 10 for Elaine thank you very much.

Other

- She said she'd call back on more than one occasion but didn't. I've moved house away from the area, so I don't expect any other help. Thanks
- Just some heads are so broken here is no help put there for me

Craigmillar Medical Group:

Positive

- It's appreciated for my family especially my kids
- It's a valuable service that is really needed, not just for now but for the long term.
- Good helpful people who try and help you
- Was nice to just see her and speak to her
- Is keen to understand my issues and needs and guide me in the future.
- She is very kind and understanding
- Wendy was very helpful she could not do enough
- Really helpful and honest no bullshit

Other

- Ruth Appleby was great. She was perfect for the job. It was the organisation that was very poor

Milton Medical Practice:

Positive

- Did assist me in acquiring art material very grateful
- I think have link works is a very good for people that need pointed in the right direction and someone you can trust
- Elaine is really lovely and has contributed greatly to my overall experience and mental health
- Had a big impact in mental and physical health. Gave me a more positive outlook, and able to deal with issues better
- Thank you



- I am very grateful for this service and Elaine's help at a time where I could gladly have kept my head buried in the sand she helped me see light at end of the tunnel a fabulous service to have thank you
- I think this is Great service and would recommend it to anybody who was in same shoes as me
- Very helpful and was able to help with most situations
- She was a great help
- My link worker was very easy to communicate with and has helped me a great deal
- Elaine was very helpful, she asked about other aspects of life like mental health/ financials to check what may be causing low moods etc
- I have learnt the skill and pleasure of listening and engaging rather than letting my mind wander and thinking ahead. To stay present and focused. Thank you
- Very satisfied
- Very supportive, helpful and caring
- Very grateful to GP and link worker, Elaine done a great job and kept me up to date on each process and explained the process to me
- Met a lot of nice people pity they changed the time of the walk felt I did not need a link worker but have stayed in touch with some of the people that I met tried different classes some I enjoyed

Other

- I didn't manage to go to the place I went, therefore, I didn't get anything out of it
- Think the worker could have shown more interest or knowledge about the community
- I was not referred to the right person she couldn't help
- She was very lovely but it was not the correct pathway for me. I told her about my eating patterns where the response I got was "we all like a bit of chocolate sometimes and can over indulge" I felt there was no understanding of binge eating disorder or bulimia. This was really difficult to hear considering I was only just beginning to talk to people about this and was reaching out for help
- It's a good idea but not for everyone some people find it hard to talk
- I think covid got in the way of any help
- Elaine was very good she tried so hard to get me fixed up with an organisation. It was the time I had available which was the stumbling block. Thank everybody for all their help
- Needs improvement

Niddrie Medical Practice:

Positive

- I appreciate his help immensely.
- Would recommend Mark to anyone that needs advice and would use him myself if needed again
- Very glad I got the help needed from a very special individual
- I received an incredible experience
- FANTASTIC guy Mark is always there so full of knowledge and a great listener
- Mark was easy to talk and very helpful
- Yes he helped me very much when I was going through distress & anxiety
- Mark is helpful but not intrusive. All I can say is he was very, very helpful with me
- I love and admire the team and I have my Huge respect with them. I highly appreciate the services I got from them, and the whole NHS. Saluting to each and every one of you. I really fascinated that's



one of the reasons why I love to remain here in this country. I have had bad experience someway I other people, but matters me most is the good ones. God Bless and thank I for this opportunity of giving me the right to say about my experience.

- Yes Mark my worker is fantastic in our community he helps lots of us patients in Niddrie, Craigmillar most vulnerable people, some of us wouldn't leave our homes before. We got help from link worker, we depend on the help we get from our community link workers and need to keep them in our doctors surgeries
- Mark was knowledgeable of what was going on in the community. Listened to what I was saying and always gave me time
- I found Mark easy to chat to & very willing to try & get what I needed. He helped me a great deal
- Well done Mark for follow up what we discussed
- Thank you 🙏 I appreciate the work the link worker does. It's underrated and I think it should be a band 5 or band 6 job
- It was long awaited and feel I need it to prompt me in life
- Wouldn't want to change him
- Would love to volunteer also one day!
- No comments we are satisfied
- I'm glad they have Mark at the surgery and I hope more people will take advantage of his services
- He was very supportive
- All good!
- He's a great guy
- I can't put into words how much help and support Mark gave me. Excellent service
- All I want to say is a massive thank you to Mark. He probably doesn't remember me because he helps so many people BUT we are very happy with the help he gave us as a family and we wish him all the best. He is an exceptionally good person who is genuinely interested in what he does for the people. Thank you for this opportunity to complete this form.
- I couldn't have done it without him, keep him!
- He was very calming and came up with lots of alternatives once he had fully listened to my worries
- Yes there should be more like him as he goes out of his way to help sometimes beyond the call of duty
- Mark was an enormous help to me and my situation. Marvellous man
- Mark was very knowledgeable in regards to housing. Unfortunately, I still have the problem with social work which I don't think Mark can solve
- I am so grateful to have met Mark and I am using this means to thank him
- Yes, I appreciate all the work he put in to help not only me but my family too, always be grateful for all the help
- Very helpful
- He was a good guy and it was a pleasure to have him help me he is really good at what he does

Other

- Just disappointed
- Do not have a clw
- The outcome would have been different if not for Covid



Further interpretation of the data

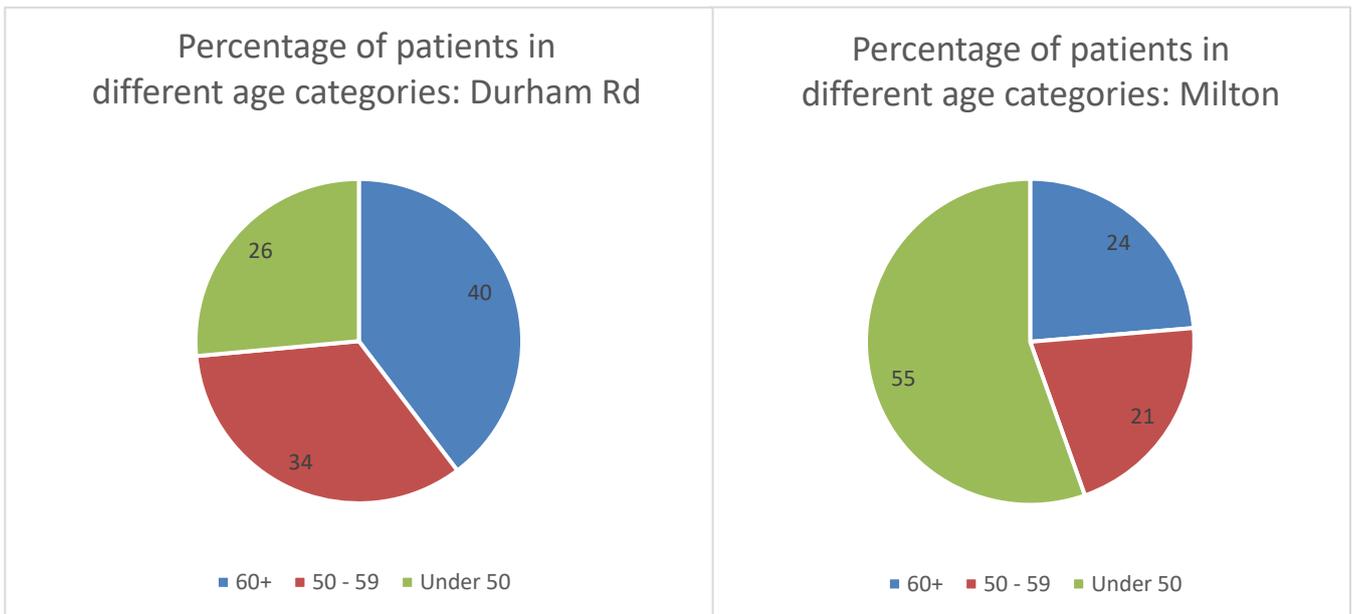
Return rates

There was a considerable variation in return rate between the four practices:

- Craigmillar: 223 patients – 19 returned = 8.5%
- Durham Rd: 68 patients – 10 returned = 14.7%
- Milton: 148 patients – 34 returned = 22.9%
- Niddrie: 208 patients – 49 returned = 23.7%

It is interesting to consider that the biggest difference is between the two Deep end practices: Craigmillar and Niddrie. Both have had CLWs for similar lengths of time. However, Craigmillar has had several different CLWs over the last few years with a relatively high turnover of staff, whereas Niddrie has had consistency, with just the one worker in post for the duration since the National Programme came into being (both were involved in Carr Gomm’s Community Compass project before this). This lack of consistency for Craigmillar could possibly explain some lack of buy-in from Craigmillar patients.

However, why should Durham Rd be so much lower than both Milton and Niddrie? This practice does not have the Deep End label, but only ten responses were received. It shares a CLW with Milton, so has much in common here, in not having a full-time worker. On further investigation of the list which was used, 27 patients were 60+, with quite a few over 70, 80 and even 90, totalling **40%**, and 23 between 50 and 59, totalling **34%**. This only left 18 patients under 50 (**26%**) – so was age a factor in the use of technology? If we compare this to Milton, where there were 35 patients aged 60+ which was **24%** of the total and 31 aged 50 – 59, adding another **21%**. The under 50s made up **55%** of the patient cohort of this practice, this being a much lower percentage than at Durham Rd. So, it is possible that this could have affected the return rate.



However, it should be noted that this study is still using a relatively small data sample. If more practices are to be considered for evaluation using this methodology, then factors such as turnover of CLWs and the demographic profile of the practice could be examined for trends to avoid mere speculation regarding age. This would all add to the body of evidence and help to determine what factors do actually make a



difference to patients in terms of response rate. They could then have a significant impact when looking at what we could do differently in the future to further improve the experience of the patient or make a difference to more patients and reach those who we haven't thus managed to engage with.

Context of the work

This evaluation was undertaken in the autumn of 2021. As with the pilot evaluation, we knew that undertaking it with the background of Covid would affect the responses some patients would give, as their valued connections to organisations would have ended because of the lockdown. Furthermore, some support would possibly not have happened at all due to a lack of places to refer on to. We were also mindful of the possibility that some patients would not respond at all. Nevertheless, to delay would have meant a very long time before any results could be gained, particularly as the Covid-19 pandemic seems to be continuing with little sign of a return to normality as we knew it beforehand.

Following the very poor return rate from patients with "Closed-Disengaged" status in the pilot, only those with "Closed" status were contacted. This was:

Durham Rd: 68 patients

Craigmillar: 223 patients

Milton: 148 patients

Niddrie: 208 patients

Total of 647 patients

Approximately 1,700 texts were sent. Due to the texting software used, efficiency was achieved, with numbers which rejected the initial texts or which were no longer in use being filtered out of the system for subsequent mailings.

Thirteen paper copies were sent out to twelve patients who requested them. Nine were returned. This was clearly more labour intensive as each one had to be dealt with individually and manually entered. Also, there was quite often a dialogue (by text) to be entered into with each patient and in some cases, some further reassurance to be offered around who I was or concerning confidentiality. However, it helped increase the return rate and mitigate against digital exclusion, which is a very real issue in this community.

Recommendations for the future

1. Digital exclusion is a factor to bear in mind if using this method in the future and paper copies should continue to be offered. Some patients do not have smart phones or are uncomfortable using this kind of technology for a questionnaire. If a paper copy is to be used, it's important to offer a pre-paid envelope to return it in so there is no cost to the patient.
2. It would be worth using similar methodologies to get information from the receiving Third Sector / community organisations in order to obtain their perspective on the experience as this is still missing



Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Please think about the organisation(s) your link worker connected you to.

1. Which organisation(s) did your link worker connect you to? _____

2. Was it right for you? / Did it help you? 😊 😐 ☹️

3. How did it help you? _____

4. What did you want to achieve? _____

5. Was the organisation what you expected? **Yes / No**

6. Did your link worker get it right when they referred you to this organisation? **Yes / No**

7. Did this organisation refer you on anywhere else? **Yes / No**

8. Did you join another group/activity at this organisation, or start volunteering there? **Yes / No**

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how did you find the process of being referred on by your link worker?



1

2

3

4

5



6

7

8

9



10

10. Has working with your link worker changed your relationship with your GP practice, e.g. how often you go to see your GP or other members of the practice team? _____

11. Has your work with your link worker resulted in positive outcomes you did not expect?

Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about your experience of working with your Community Link Worker? _____



Appendix 2: Texts

Text 1:

Dear Patient, I'm sending you a confidential questionnaire as you've worked with the Link Worker at your GPs: <https://bit.ly/2YZ93\JK> Please fill it in & return it if you can (submit button at end). If you'd prefer a paper copy posting to you let me know.

Helena Richards

CLW Manager

Text 2:

Dear Patient. If you've not filled in our confidential CLW questionnaire, it's not too late.

<https://bit.ly/2YZ93\JK> Thanks if you've already done it - each one helps us keep the service going for more people! Yours, Helena, CLW Manager