

# **'A Healthier Me'**

## **Final Report 2013-2015**

## Contents

Acknowledgements .....	3
Forward .....	4
Report Summary .....	5
Project Overview .....	7
2013-2014 Activity and Statistics .....	7
The Pathway Development .....	10
2015.....	10
Project Outcomes.....	12
Evaluation.....	17
An Overview from the Joint Improvement Team .....	18
Financials .....	19
Learning and Recommendations.....	20
Individual and Family Support.....	20
The Pathway.....	20
Key Leads.....	21
Continued development and evaluation.....	22
Appendix 1 - Case Studies .....	23

## Acknowledgements

This project and report would not have been possible without the involvement and support of the following people and organisations:

Specific thanks also goes to all individuals with a learning disability and their families for their participation. The project group is indebted for their support without which this project would not have been possible.

## Forward

It is a fact that people with learning disabilities are more likely to have poorer health than other people, but this is not inevitable and there are things we can do to change that. The challenges of reducing health inequalities for people with learning disabilities requires a long term commitment to achieve change, improve how we care for and support people and ensure that those with learning disabilities can enjoy the best possible health. 'A Healthier Me' was developed to help tackle this. Although it was a time limited project, the 'A Healthier Me' Pathway is a long term resource.

'A Healthier Me' seeks to tackle the lifestyle issues which can lead to poor health in order to improve the health and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities. The Pathway provides tools and resources for these individuals, their families, carers and support services. It is important that this is seen as one part of the wider work in Scottish Borders to promote health and wellbeing for everyone, through healthy eating and active living, and to create environments where everyone can enjoy good health. The Pathway has also created new opportunities for a range of services to work together differently and to better support people with a learning disability, their families and carers. We recognise that this work needs to continue and are committed to supporting that.

'A Healthier Me' would not have been possible without funding from the Scottish Government Health Inequalities Fund and we are grateful to all individuals and stakeholders involved in the project whose input has been invaluable in the creation of this resource.

**Dr Allyson McCollam, Joint Head of Health Improvement, NHS Borders**

**Simon Burt, Joint Manager, Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service.**

## Report Summary

This report provides a summary of activity from the 'A Healthier Me' Project from 2013-2015. It has been written by the Project Officer and will be presented to the Learning Disability Partnership Board in December 2015. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and protect confidentiality in the writing of this report.

This document, in addition to providing detailed information about the project, highlights any learning and makes a number of recommendations to ensure continued support with the aim of reducing health inequalities experienced by people with learning disabilities locally.

The aim of the Project was to create a Pathway to meet the following outcomes:

- **To ensure individuals will experience improved health through lifestyle change**
- **Carers will have a better understanding of their influence when engaging with individuals with a learning disability**
- **Support staff and family of people with a learning disability will experience improved health behaviours as a result of their improved knowledge and how this affects the people they care for**
- **A more streamlined service approach to positive changes in lifestyle and weight management as a result of the implementation of an easy to follow Pathway**
- **The Pathway will effectively bring together the varying streams of work underway across services to optimise behaviour changes in the management of weight and healthy living.**

This report clearly demonstrates the success of this project. The Pathway was created within the lifetime of this project and is being used. Evaluation of the project also identifies the following recommendations:

1. **Peer Group events need to be part of an annual programme of activity organised by the Key Lead Group.**
2. **Individuals and families continue to be supported to improve lifestyle.**
3. **An easy read version of The Pathway is made available for individuals.**
4. **The Pathway is to be reviewed and revised every 2 years.**
5. **The Pathway is actively promoted.**
6. **The Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service and NHS Borders Public Health continue to provide training to support organisations with the delivery of The Pathway.**
7. **A role with defined responsibilities is created to support the Key Leads individually and collectively within statutory services.**

- 8. A communication strategy is developed with the Key Lead Group**
- 9. NHS Borders Public Health and Learning Disability Service Social Work nominate a person to support the Key Lead Group.**
- 10. An agenda for the Key lead Group is agreed with a co-produced action plan for 3 years.**
- 11. The Key Lead Group define an outcomes measuring system and reporting structure based on the above action plan linked to the communication strategy in recommendation 8.**
- 12. The Learning Disability Partnership Board provide overarching Governance to the work of The Pathway.**
- 13. Add The Pathway to contracts when commissioning services and review during monitoring meetings.**

The aims of the project will continue to be met with commitment to The Pathway and the recommendations being supported.

## Project Overview

The 'A Healthier Me' project was funded by the Scottish Government's Health Inequalities Fund from 2013-2015. The project was set up to produce a pathway to provide lifestyle support for adults with learning disabilities in the Scottish Borders.

The aim of The Pathway was to meet the following outcomes:

- To ensure individuals will experience improved health through lifestyle change
- Carers will have a better understanding of their influence when engaging with individuals with a learning disability
- Support staff and family of people with a learning disability will experience improved health behaviours as a result of their improved knowledge and how this affects the people they care for
- A more streamlined service approach to positive changes in lifestyle and weight management as a result of the implementation of an easy to follow Pathway
- The Pathway will effectively bring together the varying streams of work underway across services to optimise behaviour changes in the management of weight and healthy living.

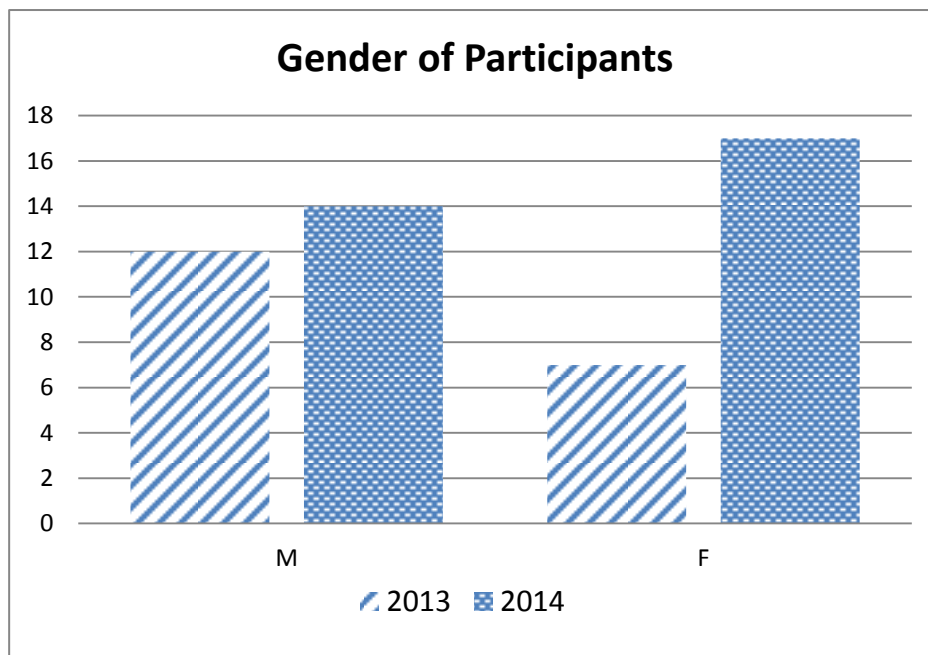
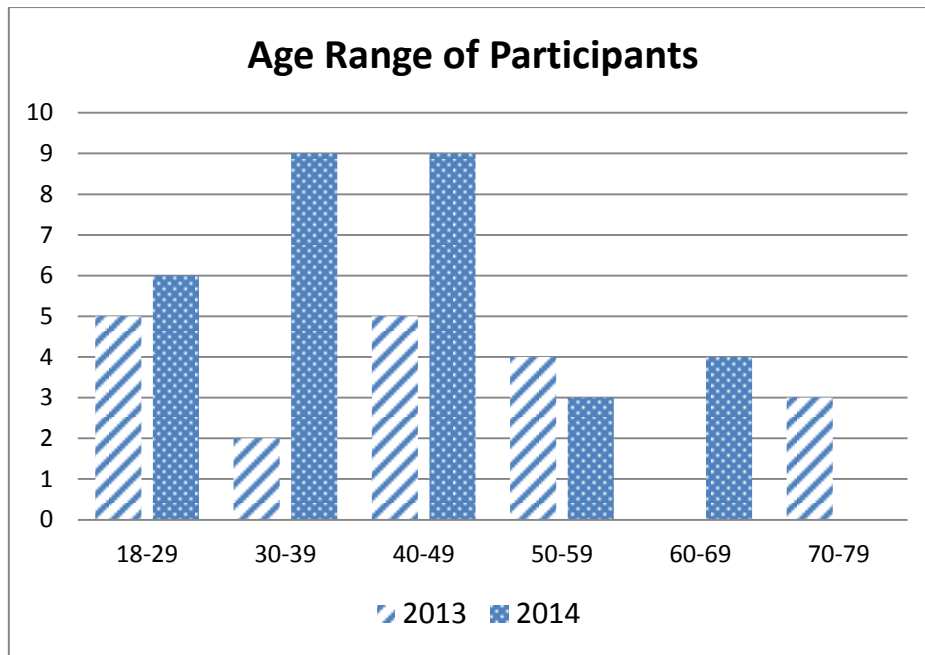
The Project was hosted by Brothers of Charity Services (Scotland), working in partnership with the Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service and NHS Borders Public Health.

## 2013-2014 Activity and Statistics

In 2013 a Project Officer was recruited into post to lead the 'A Healthier Me' Project. This person was supported by a Public Health Specialist and a Learning Disability Liaison Nurse with the overall project governed by the Learning Disability Partnership Board. A structured project plan was created.

In 2013 the project worked with 20 individuals in the Galashiels area supported by Brothers of Charity Services (Scotland) who were offered a programme of support to improve their lifestyle. The project has always recognised the importance of the health behaviour change model and as such initially supported individuals who expressed an interest themselves. This programme included physical health checks, information sessions, 1-to-1s, and peer group events. Support staff and families were included in all communication and activity. In addition, training was provided for staff who supported these individuals.

In 2014, as well as continuing involvement with the initial pilot group, the Project Officer worked with an additional 30 individuals who were supported by a range of services in three other localities. These were Garvald and Garvald Home Farm at West Linton, Lanark Lodge (a Scottish Borders Council Day Service in Duns) and Cornerstone Day Opportunity Service in Galashiels. The following graphs show the demographics of the individuals involved in the pilot groups.



Throughout the first 2 years significant evaluation and consultation with individuals, their families and support staff during individual sessions and events took place. A consultation event early in 2014 for stakeholders was held to capture reflections on the whole programme of support. Support staff were also asked to evaluate their training immediately and the impact of this training after 6 months. The detailed evaluation and findings were reported at the end of 2013 and 2014 and these reports are available through the Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service.



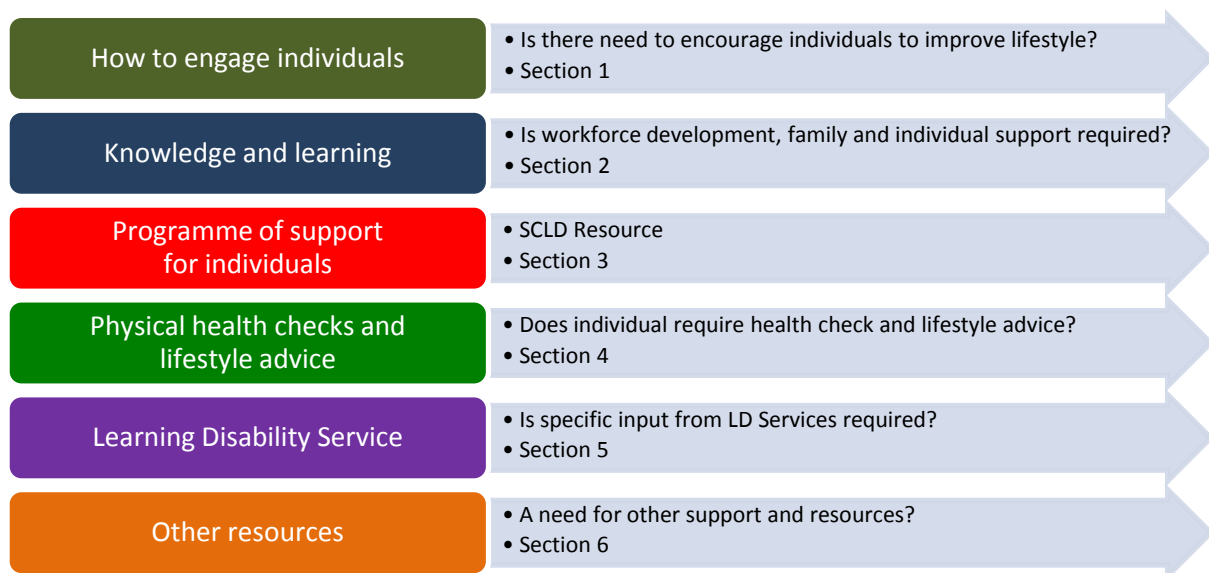
The following diagram outlines the way the project developed.



## The Pathway Development

From June 2014 the Project Officer commenced work on developing The Pathway. This process was completed collaboratively, seeking information and support from key stakeholders. The final Pathway was developed providing a practical toolkit of resources which any organisation could access and use to support individuals with a variety of lifestyle needs. The pilot groups within this project identified that no single approach would work in all situations or address all content satisfactorily and that the range of abilities of individuals supported and the variety of services which exist to support individuals was significant. It was determined that the provision of a resource pack which could be used flexibly would be the most useful approach. The Pathway, which was endorsed through the Project Group and Learning Disability Partnership Board, can be found on the Scottish Borders Council website.

The following diagram outlines the different sections within The Pathway.



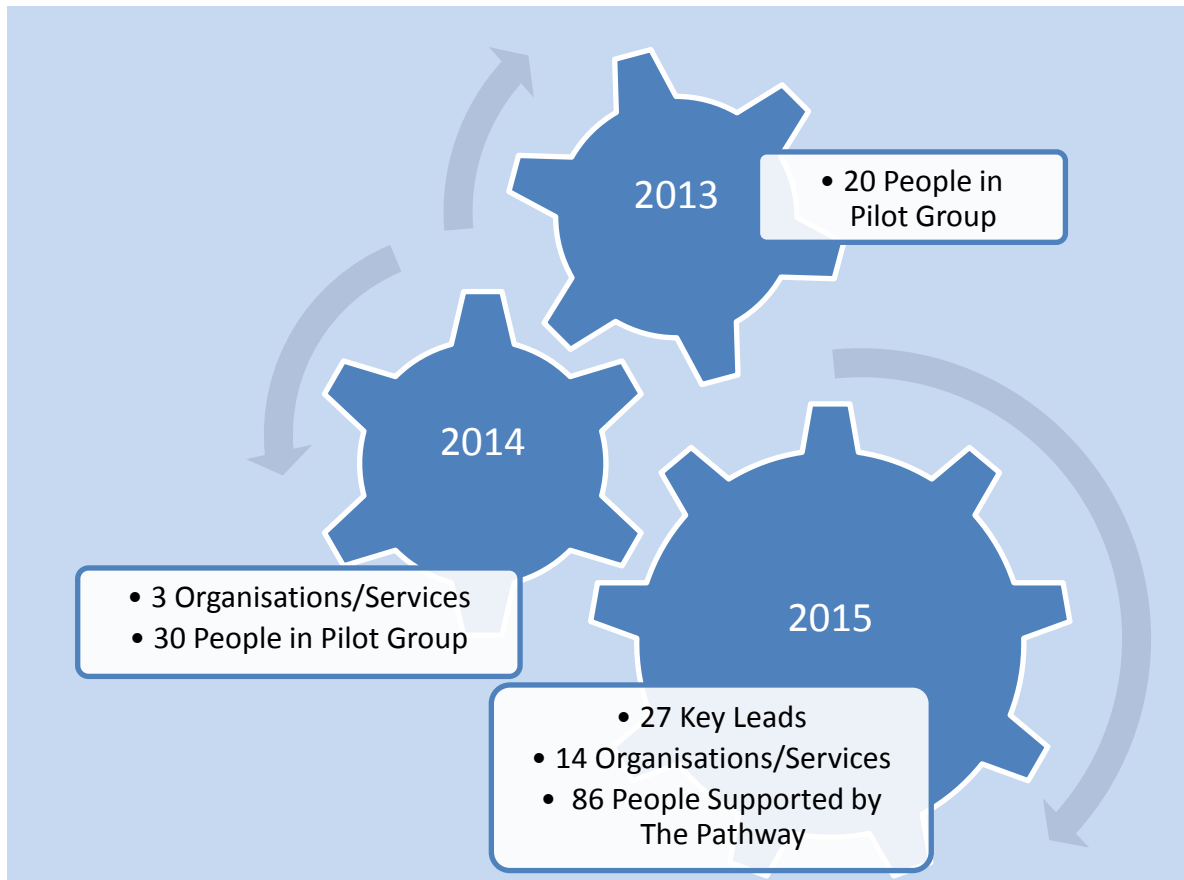
The Pathway acknowledges the wealth of knowledge which already exists within individuals and organisations by recognising that they will know best what works for them. It also offers some advice and recommendations when using The Pathway based on the learning from the pilot groups.

In November 2014 a conference was held to share the learning from the project and The Pathway. At this conference all stakeholder organisations were asked to commit to the use of The Pathway and to nominate a Key Lead to enable the embedding of The Pathway into practice. The conference was well attended by 59 individuals from both statutory and service provider organisations. There was also representation from other stakeholders such as Borders College.

## 2015

During 2015 the Project Officer supported 27 Key Leads within the stakeholder groups. This created a new network which met every 2 months to discuss how they are using The Pathway and highlighted successes and challenges. The Project Officer role also provided mentoring and peer support to Key Leads within their own organisations. This Key Lead Group has supported the agenda well and has facilitated 4 peer group events during the year which were open to all. The Key Leads

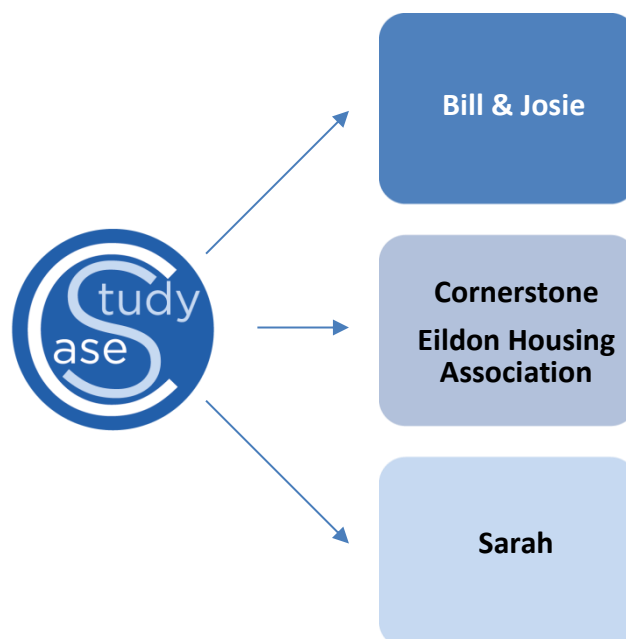
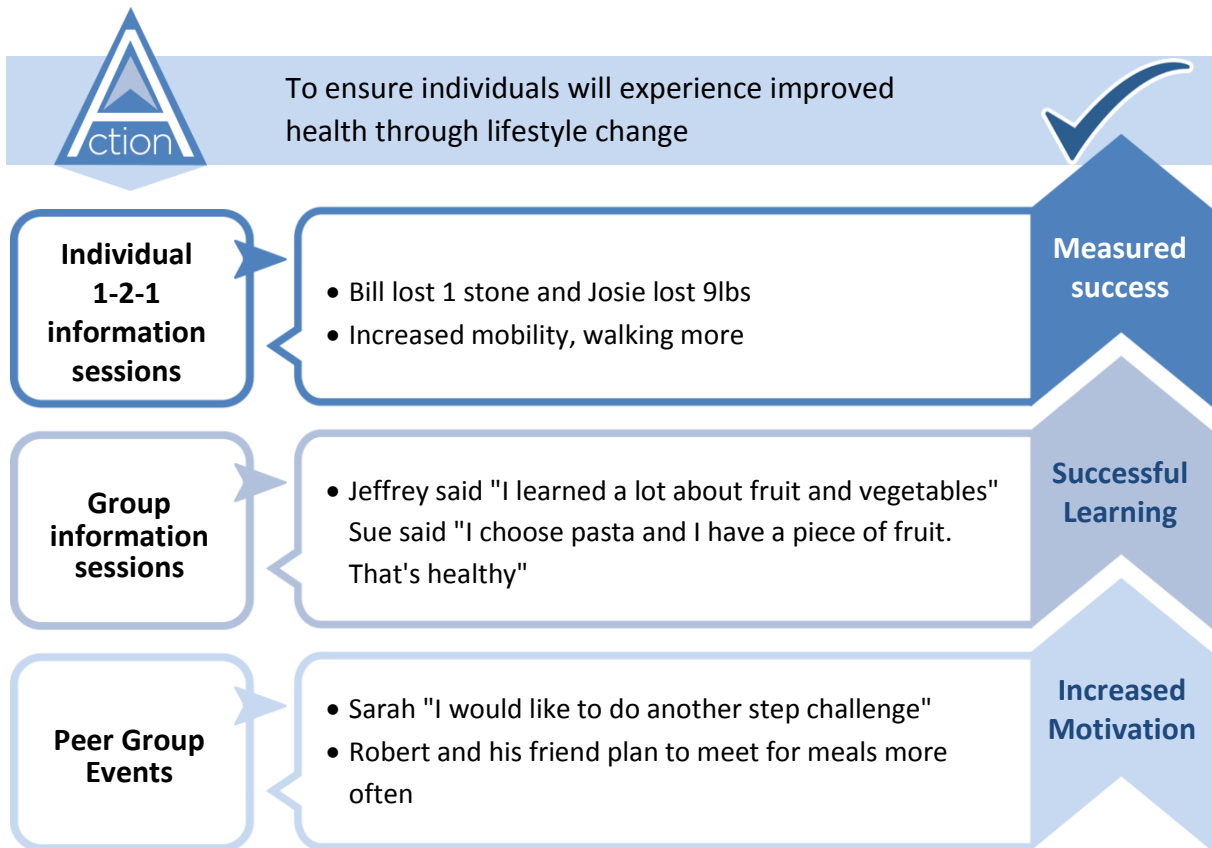
have led 'A Healthier Me' work streams within their own organisations. The following diagram demonstrates the impact of this asset based approach.



Reporting of numbers of people supported by The Pathway in 2015 is based on attendance at peer group events and service user groups reported by Key Leads to the Project Officer. Actual numbers of people supported by The Pathway is likely to be much higher as people adopt the lifestyle changes supported by all areas of The Pathway and share the learning and knowledge with others.

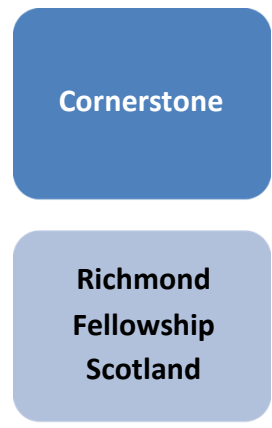
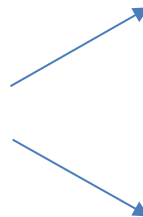
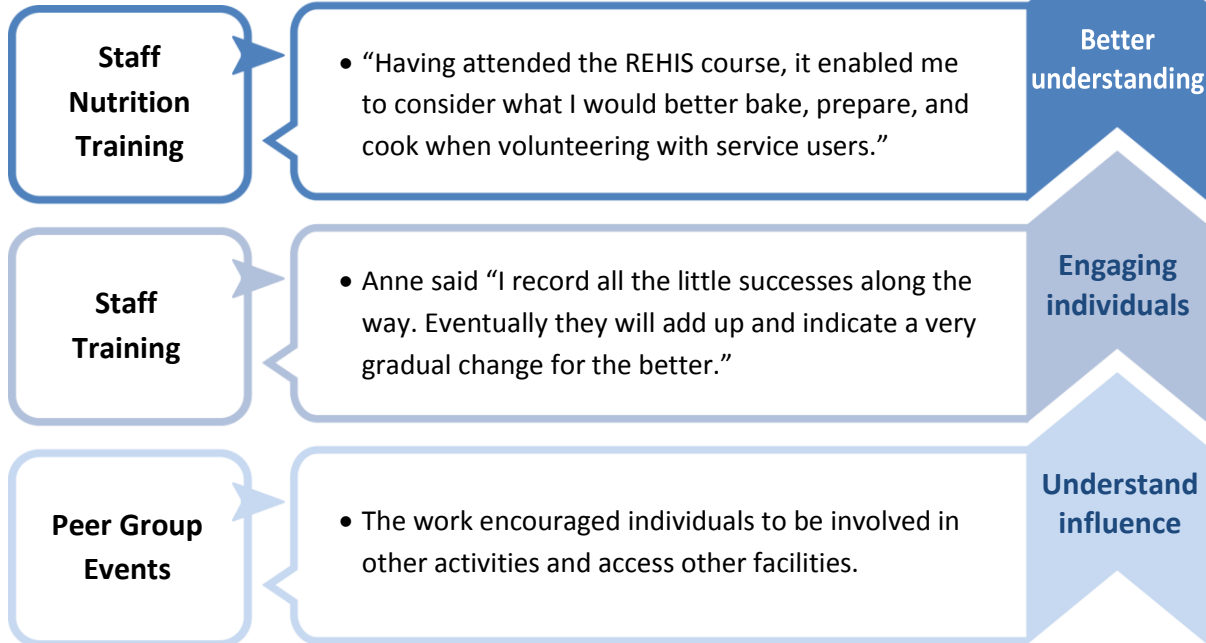
## Project Outcomes

A number of detailed case studies have been produced to evidence the work of the project. These can be found in Appendix 1. Some case studies show evidence of achieving multiple outcomes. Examples of outcomes being met can also be found below.



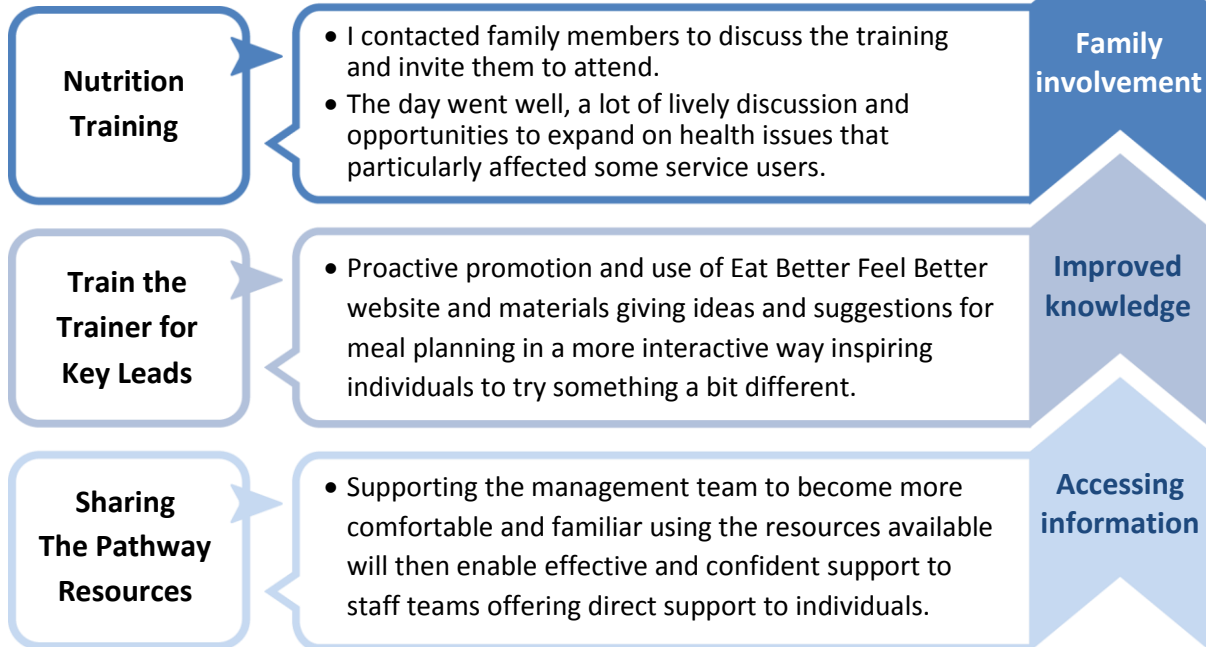


Carers will have a better understanding of their influence when engaging with individuals with a learning disability





Support staff and family of people with a learning disability will experience improved health behaviours as a result of their improved knowledge and how this affects the people they care for

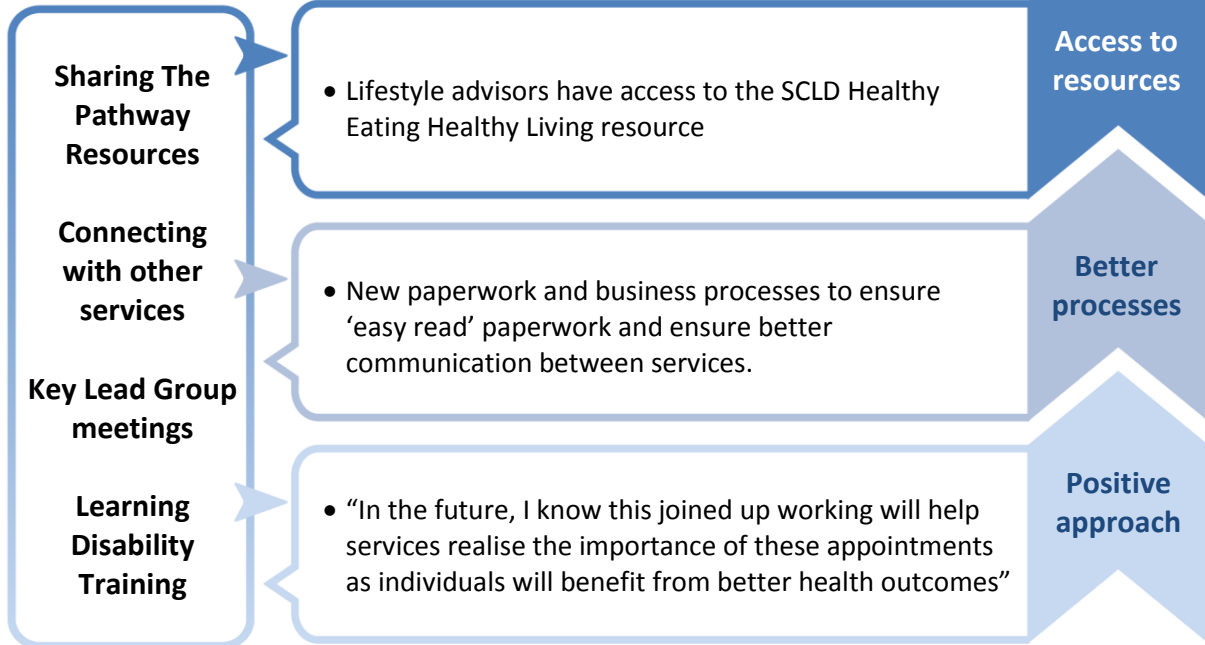


**Eildon Housing Association**

**Brothers of Charity Services (Scotland)**



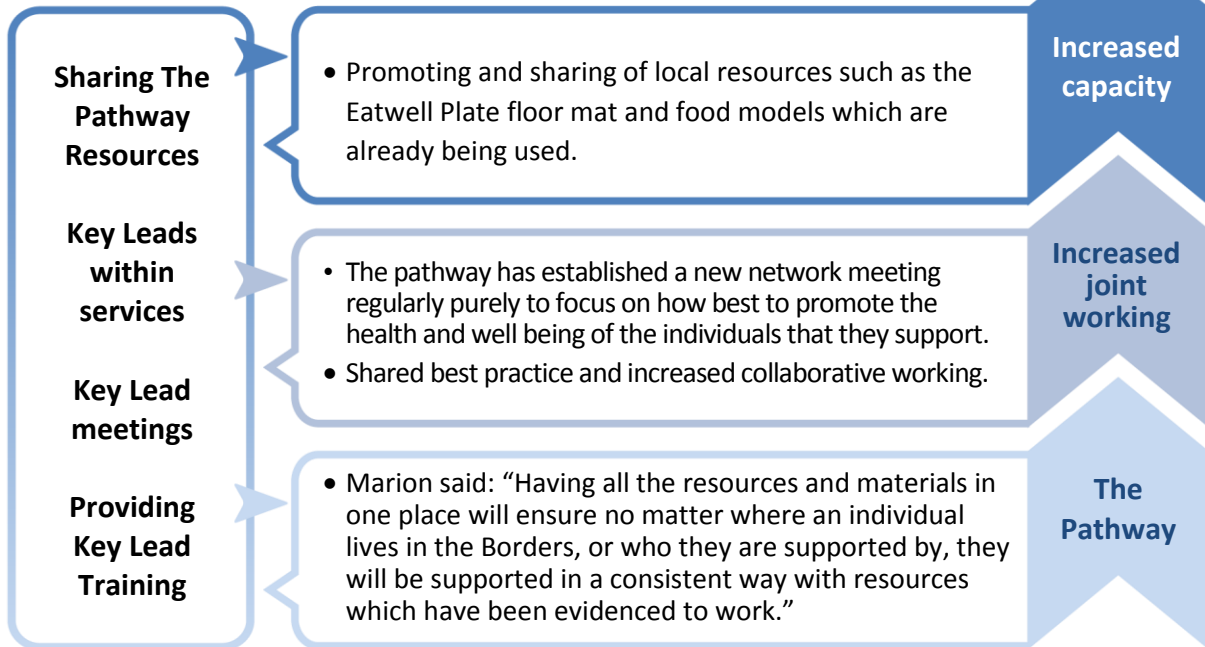
A more streamlined service approach to positive changes in lifestyle and weight management as result of the implementation of an easy to follow Pathway



**NHS Borders**  
**Lifestyle**  
**Adviser**  
**and**  
**Support**  
**Service**



The Pathway will effectively bring together the varying streams of work underway across services to optimise behaviour changes in the management of weight and healthy living.



**'A Healthier Me':  
The Pathway**  
*(Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service and NHS Borders Public Health)*



## Evaluation

In 2015, evaluation continued with individuals, their families and carers as part of the Key Lead role. The focus of the Project Officer was significantly different and moved from that of supporting individuals to supporting Key Leads to embed The Pathway within organisations.

A comprehensive review of the 'A Healthier Me' Project was organised. The aim of was to focus on The Pathway, gathering additional information and evidence for the final reporting of the project, and making recommendations to support sustainability of The Pathway approach.

During the planning of the workshop, evaluation data already obtained from individuals, their families and carers supported during the project was reviewed and case studies were produced. This evidences the work of the project from a range of perspectives. They are a fair reflection on the work of the project and highlight the work of The Pathway. The case studies demonstrate the impact small changes can make. Some of these case studies were used during the workshop as a basis for discussion and outcomes review.

The workshop was structured into two sections. The first section reviewed and captured evidence from the project to date and the second concentrated on the future. It attracted 32 attendees from a range of stakeholder groups including NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Learning Disability Services, local service providers, and other agencies.

The Joint Improvement Team provided support to the Project Officer in planning and facilitation. This was important as an independent overview and to ensure no opportunities were missed in the learning that linked to other core strategies and work streams out-with the remit of this project.

The development of The Pathway, learning from the pilot groups, was highlighted as a critical success factor. It was felt that this approach could be replicated and adapted in other community groups. The review of evidence from the evaluation of how The Pathway is working, especially from Key Leads, is consistent with the findings from the first two years of the project. These consistent messages were used during the development of The Pathway and validates that it is able to meet the needs of individuals and organisations.

Challenges reported were around access to physical activity opportunities and access to staff support. For example, timing and level of physical activity classes, shared support arrangements and availability of support hours to make lifestyle changes.

Explicit commitment at the outset from NHS Borders Public Health and the Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service was an example of good collaborative working. The role of the Project Officer was also regarded as a key success factor as the project was well managed and a significant piece of work had been delivered. The importance of enthusiasm and motivation to deliver, ability to move past challenges and share across all levels in all organisations are essential skills for Key Leads and have already been documented in The Pathway.

The themes arising from the evaluation workshop have been reviewed by the project group and used to build the recommendations within this report.

## An Overview from the Joint Improvement Team

The Joint Improvement Team (JIT) were invited to provide an objective and reflective view of the 'A Healthier Me' programme and to facilitate the final review session. Both in preparing for this review session and in facilitating it, there were certain key messages which we would suggest are most important to note and to preserve. These points are already well captured but we would emphasise the following:

- Co-produced multi-agency programmes need a focal point to provide all stakeholders a single point of reference and this requires an identified lead officer. It is important that this person is a skilled leader rather than manager and that they are highly effective in communicating across the broad range of roles involved in delivering the whole programme (from CEOs to front line staff and people using services). It is important also that anyone providing this leadership role has clear capacity to do the work rather than it being added to an existing full-time post.
- The Key-Lead structure seems to be of vital importance to the achievements of this programme. In a similar way to the above point, this structure means that each stakeholder organisation has a clearly identified focal point for the programme and therefore shows a commitment to participation.

In addition to points already raised in this report JIT would also emphasise:

- That this programme fits well with the Self-directed Support and Integration agendas in providing real asset based support to individuals and promotes independence and a preventative approach to meeting people's care and support needs. This adds strength to the argument that it is a model that could be adopted across other client group types within the Borders area to good effect. Furthermore, it is a model that can be promoted to be used in other areas of Scotland.
- In line with this it is vital that 'A Healthier Me' is a programme which is recognised within Partnership strategic commissioning plans. It should be regarded as a key preventative measure that serves the partnership in meeting its strategic objectives. This means that resources (financial and human) need to be clearly identified to support the programme going forward.
- This programme is a good fit with the national priorities set out in 'The keys to life' – in particular A Healthy Life – leading to sustained lifestyle changes to maintain health and wellbeing.

All of these elements are supportive of the wider Health and Social Care Integration agenda, the 9 Health and Wellbeing outcomes and promoting a multi-agency and asset based approach. On this basis the work evidenced in this pilot is likely to resonate with other Integration Partnerships and be of keen interest to them.

**Des McCart, Katie McWilliam – Joint Improvement Team**

## Financials

The following financial information covers the costs of the project from 2013-2015 inclusive.

Financial Year	Total Spend to Dec 2014	Actual Costs Jan-Aug 2015	Est* Costs Sept-Dec 2015	Est Jan-Dec 2015
	£	£	£	£
Office Expenditure (accommodation and expenses)	6,343	2,859	943	10,145
Staff Costs	25,505	8,286	4,535	38,326
Volunteer Costs	2,006	638	429	3,073
Other:				
Travel	1,208	161	350	1,719
Recruitment	925			925
Training	439			439
Backfill of staff	3,087			3,087
Equipment and Resources	808		3,500	4,308
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,321</b>	<b>11,944</b>	<b>9,757</b>	<b>62,022</b>

\*Final costs will be submitted to the Learning Disability Partnership Board in February 2016.

**Total Funding received 2013-2015**                                  **£        62,022**

During 2013 and 2014 the Project Officer also secured 2 grants from Community Food and Health Scotland (£627) and The Postcode Lottery – Communities 2014 Fund (£909) to support activities and provide resources for the individuals involved in the pilot groups of this project.

## Learning and Recommendations

### Individual and Family Support.

Group sessions for individuals and their families proved highly successful throughout this project. There is a strong argument for recognising and harnessing the value of peer support as a means of encouraging learning and change.

Organisations benefit from working together to share resources. Evidence gathered highlights the importance of peer support. Additional learning when working in groups was significant. Peer group events using resources contained in The Pathway will be a fundamental part of encouraging and motivating individuals to make lifestyle change for themselves, but they will need support to do so. Evidence has shown that families are more likely to attend peer group events than other forms of activity so it is likely to be useful to include focus on family involvement as part of any action plans.

All future work must continue to consider those who are isolated due to the nature of their disability or location to ensure their lifestyle needs are considered. There was a request for representation from a Social Worker to support the Key Leads Group.

With the evidence there is some anecdotal reporting that The Pathway has contributed to significant mental well-being outcomes such as increased self-esteem and feeling happier. This may link to other agendas that highlights those who are able to have a healthy lifestyle will also have improved mental health. It is recommended that these outcomes are also considered as part of the continued work.

**Recommendation 1: Peer group events need to be part of an annual programme of activity organised by the Key Lead Group.**

**Recommendation 2: Individuals and families continue to be supported to improve lifestyles.**

### The Pathway.

This resource is being used within a wide range of settings leading to consistency and continuity across services. A key indicator of the success of The Pathway approach was acknowledgement that working together was a shared responsibility.

There were reports of people feeling more empowered, demonstrated through increased confidence, feeling more in control and being more involved. Much of the evidence was also consistent with the learning from the pilot groups in 2013 and 2014 with people able to identify the importance of being creative, enthusiastic, fun and informal all supporting the individual to make lifestyle change.

It was confirmed that knowledge and learning and the associated training of staff is critical to the future success of The Pathway.

Barriers to The Pathway being successful were a lack of easy to understand food portion size resources, physical health checks not being completed often enough and Key Leads not being adequately supported in their roles. It was also noted that an easy read version of The Pathway was a missing resource for individuals.

Further promotion of The Pathway to ensure more people know about and use it was highlighted as a gap. Some of these gaps are within services who support people with a learning disability but have not been involved with the project to date such as some homecare support organisations and voluntary sector services.

**Recommendation 3: An easy read version of The Pathway is made available for individuals.**

**Recommendation 4: The Pathway is to be reviewed and revised every 2 years.**

**Recommendation 5: The Pathway is actively promoted.**

**Recommendation 6: The Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service and NHS Borders Public Health continue to provide training to support organisations with the delivery of The Pathway.**

## Key Leads

There was recognition of the importance of the Key Lead Role and that having a dedicated person in organisations responsible for the 'A Healthier Me' agenda was a positive one. It is clear that this role needs to be recognised and supported. A Key Lead with the right skills and time resource was determined as critical success factors.

The Key Lead Group needs:

- Someone who has the responsibility to lead the group. This role to include support to the Key Leads – both administration and organisational perspective and to offer support and development to the individual Key Leads and Key Lead Group. This may involve financial resources.
- A clear action plan with agreed reporting into the Learning Disability Partnership Board. This action plan should include gathering of evidence including statistics.
- Commitment from individual organisations to support them in their role including opportunities to meet and work with other Key Leads, time to develop the agenda within their own organisation and support from other professionals where needed.
- An agreed communication strategy including reporting on shared best practice and ideas.
- Continued access to training support, information and knowledge as required.
- Representatives from NHS Borders Public Health and Learning Disability Services Social Work to support the Key Lead Group.

**Recommendation 7: A role with defined responsibilities is created to support the Key Leads individually and collectively within statutory services.**

**Recommendation 8: A communication strategy is developed with the Key Lead Group.**

**Recommendation 9: NHS Borders Public Health and Learning Disability Service Social Work nominate a person to support the Key Lead Group.**

## Continued development and evaluation

Whilst the project has been successful, there are opportunities for further development of the agenda. The Pathway has instigated a cultural change but it is still early days and there are opportunities for development. The Key Lead Group need to develop an action plan, with priorities set for the next 3 years. This should include a reporting structure into the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

There are currently no systems which formally capture improvements made by The Pathway. Any developed action plan by the Key Lead group should consider statistical reporting such as how many individuals are being supported by The Pathway, improved health, independent living skills and mental well-being outcomes. Some of these outcomes are documented in case studies and project evidence to date.

There is a need to revisit The Pathway in the future to ensure it is updated and refreshed as required. It is likely that NHS Borders Public Health are an essential part of this process to ensure nutritional guidelines and other health and lifestyle resources are kept current.

There are gaps in learning about how to successfully involve families in 'A Healthier Me'. The use of The Pathway resources within Children's Services was given as one example of an early intervention to ensure families were brought on board.

There are opportunities to identify use of technology such as forums for communication purposes e.g. Yammer for Key Lead Group, Facebook Group for individuals etc.

Commissioning services to deliver support incorporating the 'A Healthier Me' Pathway as part of contractual responsibilities will ensure the agenda remains a high priority. This will also enable the Learning Disability Partnership Board to deliver their responsibilities to meet 'The keys to life' outcomes.

**Recommendation 10: An agenda for the Key Lead Group is agreed with a co-produced action plan for 3 years.**

**Recommendation 11: The Key Lead Group define an outcomes measuring system and reporting structure based on the above action plan linked to the communication strategy in recommendation 8.**

**Recommendation 12: The Learning Disability Partnership Board provide overarching Governance to the work of The Pathway.**

**Recommendation 13: Add The Pathway to contracts when commissioning services and review during monitoring meetings.**

## Appendix 1 - Case Studies



## Sarah and 'A Healthier Me'

\*Names changed for confidentiality

Sarah is a 63-year-old lady who lives in a large town in the Scottish Borders. Sarah is supported at home by a supported living service, and attends a day opportunities service three days a week. Sarah has poor eyesight which sometimes affects her mobility but she likes to keep as fit as possible although she finds it difficult to keep motivated.

In 2014 Sarah attended the 'A Healthier Me' group held at her day opportunity service. This shows how important health is to Sarah as it was held on a day she would not normally attend this service. In addition, she did not always have support staff with her on the day of the group but willingly came on her own in a taxi.

Around the same time, staff who support Sarah at home began to notice changes in Sarah. She became more motivated to attend local groups and started going to a Zumba class. Staff had offered support for fitness classes previously but she had declined. Sarah also greatly enjoyed joining in some of the group activities like the Big Lunch and Pedometer Challenge which she was able to do from home. This made links between the supports she received at home to the support she was receiving from her day service.

Sarah says:

- **She is now helping at the healthy lunch group in her day opportunity service**
- **She would like to start another step challenge and this is being supported by her staff at home**
- **She would like support to go to the gym**

Kevin, one of Sarah's Support Workers said:

- **The training we had as staff (REHIS) was good and helps keep staff focussed on nutrition in relation to shopping, menu planning and cooking.**
- **Sarah's increased motivation means we feel more empowered to help Sarah plan her own activities as Sarah is asking us regularly to help. This was not the case before.**
- **It has made me realise the importance of a consistent team approach.**

Alison, the Support Manager of Sarah's Supported Living Service says:

- **I used to work with Sarah a number of years ago. I can recognise a huge change in Sarah's feelings towards keeping active in particular. It is now about using this increased motivation in a structured way to keep this momentum going. There will always be challenges to this in terms of staff rotas, individual support hours (Sarah lives in her home with another lady) and availability of hours but we need to respond creatively to enable Sarah to work on her own fitness and physical activity and to attend the fitness classes she wants to.**





## 'A Healthier Me' and Bill and Josie

In June 2014 concerns were raised about the increasing weight of two individuals on my caseload, Bill and Josie, both aged 63, with learning disabilities and living together in supported accommodation. At that time Bill was sleeping a lot, not engaging, giving one word answers, and had a distended stomach. Josie was feeding Bill more due to receiving an emotional reaction from Bill, and Josie herself was eating more junk food, food high in fat, sugar and salt to compensate.

Having been part of the 'A Healthier Me' project and as a Learning Disability Nurse I decided to use the SCLD Pack to deliver little sessions of support in their own home. The SCLD pack was the best resource to engage Bill and Josie. I delivered 7 sessions during the course of 5 months; these were focussed around fruit and vegetables, fat, sugar, fibre, bones, salt and food labels.



Using these sessions, I set small achievable goals with Bill and Josie, these were:

- Walk to main dining area in building twice a day increasing to 3 times to help with mobility
- Have fruit with breakfast
- Have a side salad with main meal
- Look at labels in supermarket buying less red food and more green and amber.

I also had help from their support organisation to support and encourage Bill and Josie to make home cooked meals and freeze instead of always using ready meals, also using recipes from SCLD Pack. The pack helped Josie understand the importance of looking at labels while shopping and buying with green or amber colours more and less red.

Bill and Josie required minimal support and encouragement to engage in the tasks. This was helped by many motivating factors such as:

- Praise
- Certificates
- Mini ceremonies and awarding medals

It helped them make informed choices about food and exercise. They also enjoyed having incentives and were able to make more informed choices round how often and what these were and which for them were 'chippy nights' and coffee out. The outcomes for this couple were that Josie lost just less than 1 stone and Bill lost around 9 -10lbs. During this intervention they were able to engage in meaningful activities with each other, responding to questions and retaining information with small or no prompts.

In addition to weight loss, other outcomes for Bill were increased mobility, sleeping less, engaging more, using more than 1 word answers, retaining information, only requiring small prompts on more difficult information, eating less, wanting to eat more fruit and vegetables, engaging in cooking tasks, walking more, and stomach less distended. For Josie other outcomes were feeling healthier, retaining lots of information, not snacking or feeding Bill to gain an emotional response, reading labels in shops and walking more.

**“I found the SCLD pack a useful and supportive tool to use within my role; I was able to combine the sessions with physical health checks and my normal visits every 2-3 weeks. I required about 30 minutes per session as preparation time. “**

Community Learning Disability Nurse, NHS Borders



## 'A Healthier Me' and Cornerstone



### Background in 2014:

Cornerstone Connect is a day opportunity service which started in February 2014. At the start of this venture, Aileen Knox the Manager, met with the Project Officer to discuss 'A Healthier Me'. Aileen realised that there were shared visions and priorities with the 'A Healthier Me' work and Cornerstone Connect. It was possible then to work jointly planning activities which fitted into Cornerstone Connect. There was also support from the Project to provide resources and training. Initial steps included training staff in nutrition to a REHIS standard. Open sessions were held to ascertain interest from service users after which people began attending sessions within the service.

### Initial Positives Outcomes:

- Knowledge and enthusiasm to focus on health
- Staff are trained to use the resources in The Pathway (This is a toolkit resource developed as part of the 'A Healthier Me' Project)
- People Cornerstone support clearly learned a lot about health and enjoyed the project.
- The work encouraged individuals to be involved in other activities such as a pedometer challenge and access other facilities like local community sports centres. (Photos below)



- The objectives of The Pathway tie into positive outcomes of many of the individuals Cornerstone support
- The Pathway provided a wide range of accessible materials.
- The Pathway supports Cornerstone to focus on improving the quality of life for the people they support in line with 'Keys to life' strategy.
- Cornerstone has been able to talk positively to families about these health priorities and families have been included in some of the activities and attended celebration events.
- The Pathway has enabled Cornerstone to work jointly with other specialists to improve services Cornerstone can offer to the people it supports.

## **2015 and beyond:**

During 2015 Aileen has worked further to embed use of The Pathway into the future of the service that Cornerstone offer. This meant being able to:

- Independently deliver 'A Healthier Me' sessions
- Develop a garden and using fresh produce
- Offer further access to opportunities for physical activity
- Have their own 'Health Champion'
- Work with a Learning Disability Nurse to hold regular 'Health Checks'.

Jeffrey, a service user, when asked about his thoughts said:

**"I learned a lot about fruit and vegetables. I enjoyed it very much. I also liked doing the exercises and walking. I would like to do more things."**

Liz, a volunteer member of staff with Cornerstone, comments:

**"Having attended a REHIS course, it enabled me to consider what I would bake, prepare or cook when I was volunteering with service users at Cornerstone. Knowing the ingredients allows us to know exactly what goes into what we make and the quantities as well as us being able to limit the adding of unnecessary extras, salt, sugar for example. The Eatwell Plate allows us to see what is allowed and how much is acceptable. Has been a learning curve and is ongoing."**

Aileen reports:

**"We now have a 'Walk It' group at Abbotsford House which is going well and also outdoor sports group on a Monday afternoon. We've also started a healthy cafe on a Wednesday and Thursday morning - Wednesday is soup and a sandwich, and Thursday a world cuisine meal. We've got 2 swimming groups, and a yoga class. We have also started Scottish music and dancing where guest musicians will come along and one of the staff teaches people country dancing. The therapet dog visits regularly and is a good stress relief and boccia is very popular. Stablelife, another local charity, are also supporting us by providing opportunities for individuals to have the opportunity to work with horses. Petting and grooming horses works really well for some people. I have also just applied for a £2000 grant to develop a vegetable garden so fingers crossed!"**



## 'A Healthier Me' and Brothers of Charity Services (Scotland)



### Background, Key Lead role:

The Brothers of Charity Services Scotland are a Support Provider in Central Borders offering support to individuals in their own homes, individuals living with family and individuals within a Care Home setting. At the start of this venture, we were privileged to host the Project Officer within our central office base so became very familiar with the Pathway from the outset. In 2014, I became a Key Lead for our Organisation to work alongside the Project Officer and other Key Leads from Organisations across the Scottish Borders to look at how we can ensure the Pathway is firmly embedded into our support delivery. Some members of staff and people who receive support had already been heavily involved in the pilot project work, attending sessions/groups and had 1:1 time. Some of our support staff and managers had undertaken the REHIS training which was hugely advantageous and had been of great benefit in promoting awareness of healthier lifestyle promotion. I felt that my role initially was to look at how this good practice could be more widely spread across our services so spoke with the Project Officer about resources and information sharing. A plan was then made for how we at The Brothers of Charity Services could embrace the Pathway and embed it firmly within our strategic development and day to day practices.

### Initial Positives Actions/Outcomes:

- A workshop for managers was held where we discussed the Pathway and resources
- A survey was done within the Supported Living service about current lifestyle choices of individuals
- A commitment was made to have focus agenda items at every support team and management meetings around Health to create interest, enthusiasm and motivation

Work to share knowledge, information and resources with individuals receiving support was undertaken. Examples of this include the proactive promotion and use of the Eat Better Feel Better website and materials giving ideas and suggestions for meal planning in a more interactive way inspiring individuals to try something a bit different.

Sourcing and distributing information about new food labelling to promote awareness



Promote involvement in the national Big Lunch. This was a huge success! As well as the social positives and discussion around physical activities, the healthy packed lunches etc. on the actual day it was evident that a lot of discussion and support had taken place prior to the day with the lunches people brought and the reasons why they had picked the things they did (Healthier alternatives) The feedback from support workers and individuals receiving support was very encouraging particularly around the physical activity/exercise that people participated in and how they would like to continue with this beyond the day.



#### **The next steps:**

Further discussion and reflection has taken place to look at how we move with our plan. Due to providing dispersed services we have faced some challenges but believe that the agreed approach is right for promoting the Pathway across our Organisation. By supporting the management teams to become comfortable and familiar using the resources available will then enable effective and confident support to staff teams offering direct support to individuals.

Prepare packs for each manager containing useful resources/activities to share with teams and individuals receiving support

Look at and utilise opportunities where shared working with other Service Providers could happen.

Work on planning a project with individuals who find it difficult to access events/group activities to ensure that they have opportunities to be involved in something meaningful, initial ideas are around growing fruit and veg to then use in cooking.

**“Initially when I was approached about being a “Key Lead” I was unsure about the role and what it would entail, “Will I have time? How will we achieve this?!” Although at times I am sure these thoughts will still be there, it is evident within our Organisation that there is great support and commitment for the vision of the Pathway and the rights of the people we support to have knowledgeable teams of staff offering guidance, information and assistance around health and wellbeing!”**

Leanne Baird, Key Lead



## 'A Healthier Me' and the Key Lead Role - Garvald



### Background, Key Lead role:

Garvald West Linton is a provider of residential care and creative day opportunities for adults with learning disabilities. Situated in beautiful surroundings in the Scottish Borders, we are based 25 miles south of Edinburgh and five miles from the village of West Linton. At Garvald West Linton, the ethos is to create a social environment that promotes individual development and well-being. The philosophy supporting our work is based on the principles of Rudolf Steiner, whose approach to human psychology and development highlights the uniqueness of each individual human, whatever their disability. These principles link well to 'A Healthier Me' and we have supported this project since 2014.

### Positives Outcomes:

- Garvald hosted two pilot groups in 2014 well attended by residents and day service users at Garvald. Individuals enjoyed the working groups and also attending events in other places in the Borders connected to this project. These pilot groups were a fundamental part of identifying the needs and resources required for The Pathway development and enabled resources to be tested in a different locality area of the Borders and also within a Steiner organisation.
- In 2015 Garvald committed to the on-going work of the project, identifying two Key Leads (Hayley and Adele) who have now had nutrition training and are running group information sessions in Garvald.
- In 2015 about 20 individuals signed up to be part of the 'A Healthier Me' groups. Some of these individuals were part of the 2014 groups proving the value individuals place on the activities, but some individuals were new and had heard about the group through previous attendees or through the publicity from the Key Leads. This evidences the importance individuals place on good health and improving lifestyle.
- Having Key Leads from the organisation has enabled better organisation for these groups and understanding of individual support needs for group work. The Key Leads, Hayley and Adele, have also experience working within individual's homes at Garvald bringing a wealth of knowledge to help individuals identify how the Pathway can help the work they do within Garvald.
- The commitment Garvald over 2 years to 'A Healthier Me' has evidenced the sustainability of the approach made by the Pathway and that resources can be used flexibly by a range of services and supporting staff.
- Garvald have welcomed other service providers by hosting a peer group event in 2015 promoting collaboration and shared resources.
- The Key Leads have been able to identify how the Pathway will fit into their organisation and are able to propose realistic working solutions to managers and Staff at Garvald.
- Identifying barriers felt due to capacity such as time and resources of Key Leads will enable better future working.

- Hayley and Adele are both able to identify improvements in their own skills and knowledge as a result of training opportunities and different ways of working promoted by the Pathway. They will be a source of expertise for good health outcomes at Garvald in the future as the health agenda develops in line with 'Keys to life'.
- Garvald have been able to enlist the support of the Learning Disability nursing team to support good health outcomes for individuals and again supports good collaboration.

#### **The next steps:**

Hayley and Adele are looking forward to 2016 and the future. They will use their experience as Key Leads to present to the Management Team at Garvald with a proactive plan to support The Pathway from 2016. This will include looking at how better to make group work available to more individuals at Garvald but also to look in more detail about sharing and training on the resources and knowledge round nutrition and physical activity to other Garvald staff so better health outcomes could be achieved.

Some quotes from of our residents who took part in 'A Healthier Me':

**" It was good because we were doing exercises and it was nice"**

**" I like Healthier Me as we were talking about different topics each week"**

Adele states:

**"I have enjoyed bringing the Healthy Eating Healthy Living programme to the residents of Garvald. It has been well received by the residents and I think it has a valuable on-going role to play in their future wellbeing. I look forward to extending and developing the programme should the Management Team so wish."**

Hayley says:

**"I have thoroughly enjoyed being a Key Lead and promoting 'A Healthier Me' within Garvald. I have enjoyed working with all the residents in their groups they worked really well as a team in all of the sessions. I would love for this to be an ongoing thing at Garvald."**

*Mona Beierlein –Third, House Manager at Garvald feels that*

**“‘A Healthier Me’ has been a greatly beneficial to Garvald and has reinforced our healthy lifestyle ethos. Residents and staff have become involved in each subject and it created interesting talking points in the houses. I hope that the ‘A Healthier Me’ will continue and that we can build on the great work the Key Leads are doing and maybe expand on the subjects covered. Well done to everyone!”**





## 'A Healthier Me' and the Key Lead Role – Eildon Housing Association



### **Background key lead role:**

Our service is located at a group of houses purpose built in the 1980's for people with physical and learning disabilities. We are part of Eildon Housing Association. We support people in the Duns and Berwickshire area.

Everyone we work for has support to shop for food and cook their own meals. It is our aim to encourage healthy eating using fresh produce to enhance health and wellbeing. For individuals the most important choice is to eat what they like.

In 2014 I went with two other staff to the REHIS training, this year we sent two more. These staff have brought their knowledge into every day support, but we wanted to have a more consistent, team wide knowledge of nutritional needs.

I became the key lead for our organisation earlier this year and after completing my 'Train the Trainer' Day I wanted to widen the training to include all the staff team. We wanted to offer places to family members so they could be involved in discussions about healthy eating alongside staff.

### **Initial Positive Actions Outcomes:**

- One of our service users and her staff went to the Big lunch and had a great time
- At our Project Management Meeting I discussed the training and how it fits within our aim to promote healthy eating had a very positive response. I arranged a training date for half the team. The power point presentation was sent over by the Project Officer. I had support from Dinah the training officer at head office to set up projector and print certificates. I contacted family members to discuss the content of the training and invite them to attend. The day went well, a lot of lively discussion and opportunities to expand on health issues that particularly affected some service users. The written material had good clear information. Feedback, generally everyone liked the Quizzes. Unfortunately, none of the parents of service users could come
- "One of the highlights for me personally was another local resident who asked to join us. She led an interesting conversation about how little food was processed when she was growing up, and whether the way food is made in factories these days contributes to the rising numbers of allergies and intolerances." Sheona Muir
- Service users group held an end of summer BBQ along with the sausages and burgers in rolls they prepared lots of fresh salad and dips.

### **Feedback from staff who were at the training:**

Bethan - It was informative and well structured. I remember little things like have cups of tea not straight after the meal because it stops iron being absorbed. I support Sue and Pauline who are encouraged to make healthy choices when menu planning and shopping.

Denise— I thought it was relaxed and informative. I was most interested in the diabetes side of nutrition because of the health needs of some service users. At a service users' meeting we were discussing how he has lost the enthusiasm to cook. He is using convenience food and not using his cooking skills. - Robert decided to have staff support him to cook, and have his friend next door come over to share with him. Now he is going shopping for the meal and buying more fruit for the house.

Quote from Sue: **"I choose pasta and I have a piece of fruit, That's healthy."**

Quote from Pauline: **"I have brown bread and cereal (with bran) for breakfast."**

Quote from Robert: **"We agreed at our meetings we want to meet up every week at each other's house, turn about. Staff help cook meat fresh vegetables potatoes all in the slow cooker. Then we played dominoes after that."**

#### **The Next steps:**

- I will be arranging another training session for the rest of the staff. This time making it longer as we discussed so many topics we ran out of time.
- Getting together with a Local Area Co-ordinator to arrange 'A Healthier Me' Winter cooking event in Duns.
- Alex and his friend plan to meet for meals even more often

**"My role as key lead has made me think about what we do as a Service to encourage healthy eating. We support people who have a range of health conditions which means we need to know how to eat healthy. The service users have always been used to making choices and shopping for food so our role as a service is to adapt our understanding of what makes a good diet to pass this knowledge on. The training gives all staff the same information. Then they can work with individuals to develop healthy eating plans. The 'A Healthier Me' Key Lead meetings have been a great opportunity to share information and find out how other services are finding success promoting healthy living.**

**Our Project will continue to encourage enthusiastic staff to support individuals and we hope to be involved in more the joint social events, a great way to meet people with a common interest."**

Sheona Muir, Key Lead

## Background:

The Richmond Fellowship Scotland is a charity which supports over 2800 people across Scotland with a broad range of needs to live as independently as possible in their own homes and communities. In the Scottish Borders they have two main locations, one in Hawick and one Galashiels. In total they support 9 people. Their Key Lead, Anne, combines the role with that of being a support worker.

## Positives Outcomes:

The difficulties of being a Key Lead whilst doing support and shift work have been a challenge for Anne but she has worked creatively to overcome the puzzle!

Anne has 'taken-over' an office door and puts a range of health materials on the door which she changes frequently to inform other staff. Anne knows this is working as she gets comments like 'I didn't know that about salt' and staff will talk about food they have brought in for their meals.



Anne has been able to get extra time allocated to allow her to attend 'A Healthier Me' meetings and training.

Anne has also been able to negotiate shift patterns to ensure she gets time in both the service locations meaning she gets the chance to work with all individuals. She has also identified Sunday's as a useful day for this as she can be involved with these individuals when shopping and cooking to make a lunch.

Anne was initially worried about her ability to influence health outcomes but lots of little actions have combined to make an impact noticed by service users, other staff and even professionals also visiting the service.

**The next steps:**

- Anne would like to have as much knowledge as possible at her fingertips to be able to pass on informally whenever the occasion arises.
- Anne would like as much information as possible available for staff to promote healthy eating and lifestyle for individuals and staff themselves.
- Anne will take every opportunity when it arises to support individuals to choose or cook healthy meals, but keeping it informal and fun

Anne says,

**“Some days there are no healthy choices but I record all the little successes along the way. Eventually they will add up and indicate a very gradual change for the better. Small changes are better than none at all. That’s my aim for the moment.”**



## 'A Healthier Me' and the Lifestyle Advice and Support Service

Lifestyle Adviser  
**LASS**  
Support Service



### Background

During the pilot phase of the 'A Healthier Me' Project it was identified that adults with a learning disability would benefit from physical health checks to understand the metrics round their health such as BMI's but also would benefit from advice and information in relation to their lifestyle. It was also identified during the pilot that services were not necessarily aware that this service existed in the Borders and could be accessed by individuals with a learning disability. A section of the Pathway was therefore dedicated to signpost individuals to the Lifestyle Advisor Support Service, part of the primary health care team, based in local Health Centres, offers support to people who wish to make a lifestyle change to improve their health. As well as offering physical health checks this team will also help individuals to:

- Decide what it is about their lifestyle an individual wants to change
- Develop a personal action plan
- Think about how to make and maintain these changes.

### Outcomes:

In order that individuals are able to make the most of this service there has been significant work completed with this service to ensure its accessibility for this care category which includes:

- Access to The Pathway and the resources within the Pathway such as the SCLD Healthy Eating, Healthy Living pack to be used by the Advisers
- New paperwork and business processes to ensure 'easy read' paperwork and to try and enable better communication between services so individuals, their carers and organisations can make the most of information gained in their appointments
- Training for lifestyle advisers to enable better working with adults with a learning disability such as communication, Adults with Incapacity and knowledge of learning disability services.
- Although currently limited numbers, mapping of individuals journeys to ensure processes are robust.

The Lifestyle Advisor Support Service attending regular meetings with learning disability services and input into Key Lead development and encourage better working together.

In the future it is hoped greater numbers will better evidence any changes to processes which are required and also be able to measure physical improvements in individual's health as a result of this intervention.

Pamela Jaworowska, Senior Lifestyle Adviser states:

**“The close working between this project, the Pathway and this primary and community support service has helped my team to become more accessible and support the diversity of the patients who access our service. In addition, there has been interest in this Pathway from other services as they can see how this model could benefit a range of individuals out with learning disability. I was recently trying to pull some data about outcomes of LD patients but I am not able to differentiate at the current time. I have been able to add LD as part of referrers tab so at least we can be able to look at direct referrals rather than those coming from GPs. In the future I know that this joined up working will help services realise the importance of these appointments as individuals will benefit from better health outcomes.”**



## 'A Healthier Me' – The Pathway



### Background

People with learning disabilities are more likely than the rest of the population to experience poor health and be overweight or obese. The Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service and NHS Borders Public Health set up 'A Healthier Me' to address this. Their aims are to ensure that people with learning disabilities in the area receive consistent information and support, and can access mainstream or specialised services that can help them. The 'A Healthier Me' project supported the development and implementation of a Pathway (or a toolkit) to raise awareness of issues and the resources and support available for learning disability services, individuals and families.

### How the Healthier Me Pathway works:

- Each learning disability support service, statutory and non-statutory, has an identified member of staff to take the role as a 'Key Lead' and take responsibility for implementing 'A Healthier Me' within their service. The following areas are covered by The Pathway:
- Mechanisms for engaging and encouraging individuals to improve their lifestyle.
- The needs for workforce development, as well as increasing learning and knowledge for family and individuals.
- Programme of support for Individuals – using the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability (SCLD) 'Healthy Eating, Healthy Living' training pack with practical solutions on how to use.
- The Lifestyle Advisor Support Service (LASS) which is available throughout all medical health centres in the Borders. This mainstream service provides individualised support on a range of health issues including physical health checks.
- Learning disability services for individuals who require more specialised support. For those individuals who may be less able to access mainstream support the Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service provides specialised support for individuals with specific needs. Local Area Coordinators, who are also part of this service work with individuals to promote healthy lifestyles and assist them to get involved in local community activities.
- Awareness raising of other relevant local or national resources that services can use; individuals can benefit from or be inspired by. These include food-related courses for people with learning disabilities at Borders College, a learning disability health champion programme and the Borders Sports and Leisure Trust which has a disability sports development officer. There is information about mainstream health promotion resources and information about relevant national campaigns. It provides details on how to access resources such as easy-read health information and recipes to support individuals or groups as well as providing directions for services such as grant funding to help them develop activities to encouraging them to consider approaching local supermarkets for help.

## Outcomes:

Practical solutions within The Pathway encourage services to work creatively to customise their approach for example by enabling services to understand how to involve family members and keep individuals motivated. In 2015 there have been 4 peer group events held to progress the healthy lifestyle agenda such as The Big Lunch held in June. (See photos.)



- Increased the capacity within services by promoting resources and also allow sharing of local resources such as the Eatwell Plate floor mat and food models and kitchen equipment which are already being regularly used.
- Increased communication throughout services about lifestyle and the role everyone has to play in it supports the 'Keys to life' strategy as well as better working together for the good of all who need support.
- The development of a train the trainer 'Key Lead' approach has enabled services to provide better and more appropriate training within their own service. There are examples where this has enabled teams to prioritise the importance of lifestyle within team meetings as well as address some of the barriers which exist for support workers.
- The 'Key Lead' approach encouraging services to implement 'A Healthier Me' Pathway has established a new network of individuals meeting regularly purely to discuss how best to promote the health and well-being of the individuals they are there to support as well as sharing best practice and increasing opportunities for collaborative working.
- The Pathway has ensured services such as LASS are more accessible to people with learning disabilities. The Pathway has allowed to the provision of training to staff within LASS to increase their confidence and understanding when supporting people with learning disabilities on lifestyle advice as well as ensuring they utilise the practical resources contained within The Pathway.

Marion Paterson, Team Manager, Scottish Borders Learning Disability Service feels:

**“The Pathway has been successful in bringing together a range of services and resources available to support individuals to lead a healthier life. It is a flexible resource, valuing the importance of a customised approach, not only for individuals but also necessary for the variety of different services that exist. The Pathway promotes both national and local resources making the most of any capacity which already exist both within services but also in the wider community. Having all the resources and materials in one place will ensure that no matter where an individual lives in the Borders, or who they are supported by, they will be supported in a consistent way with resources that have been evidenced to work.”**