



HEALTH
CONNECTIONS
Your GP practice social prescribing
and health coaching team



Providing NHS services

HEALTH CONNECTIONS MENDIP

Annual Report 2024



Foreword from Dr Kingston

Our resilience and hope for the future is dependent on the support we have around us and our inner self awareness and confidence to seek this. Ill health and distress are experienced within the context of our wider lives. Knowing we are not alone and have the support we need can get us through difficult times. It has been my privilege to have spent the last 12 years working with Jenny Hartnoll in setting up and building the service.

The Health Connections Mendip team has been working as an integral part of primary care across Mendip. It has been a joy to work alongside the team. They have brought an awareness and access to the richness all our communities can offer into routine primary care. This has supported clinicians to have different conversations in their consultations and has had a transformational impact for the whole team. By facilitating non-medical approaches they have enabled the whole team to focus on a truly personalised approach to care. This mature and trusted social prescribing team continues to work closely with the rest of primary care. It has grown from a single worker in 2013 to a team now of 26.

The Health Connections services in Mendip has been a project bringing together all 11 practices, building relationships and trust between the practices and fostering sharing innovations and new ways of working. We have been able to learn through quality improvement approaches together and embed this in our resilience to other challenges faced by primary care. Their presence helps ensure that primary care is effective, sustainable, and focused on wellbeing and prevention. It supports teams to deliver equitable care by supporting those who are most vulnerable and at risk of health inequalities.

“ Our Health Connectors are experts in the support available within Mendip communities and have a key role in helping to raise awareness and community activation. ”

Our Health Connectors are experts in the support available within Mendip communities and have a key role in helping to raise awareness and community activation. Their innovative training of Community Connectors, their well-established community access points, regularly updated web directory and publicity campaigns ensure that our community can find help when they need it. They have injected freshness, enthusiasm and a can-do approach into primary care. The primary care team is so much stronger through their presence. They support us to feel proud of the care we can deliver and to feel we are supported to continue to make a difference.

Through their networking with the voluntary sector and broader community they have been able to identify and resolve gaps in provision. The team act as an expert resource for the rest of primary care. Their presence has transformed the richness and scope of what primary care staff can offer our communities. Ongoing training of primary care staff and internal promotion of the service within practices has truly enabled community approaches to be integrated with medical models of care.

Their facilitation of group consultations and networking skills is enabling peer support and helps to develop strong alternative non-medical approaches to chronic pain. Our patients and staff have told us of the benefits this brings, enabling holistic personalised approaches to care and focusing on what really matters to each individual. Our report helps to articulate these benefits both through statistics and individual case studies to demonstrate the depth and scale of the impact the of Health Connections service.

We are grateful to the Somerset ICS for their continuing to support and funding that has enabled this transformation of primary care. As I retire now from partnership and hand over GP leadership to my colleague Dr Jos Selwyn-Gotha, I look forwards to the further development of the Health Connections team and remain grateful and proud that I have been a part of this journey.

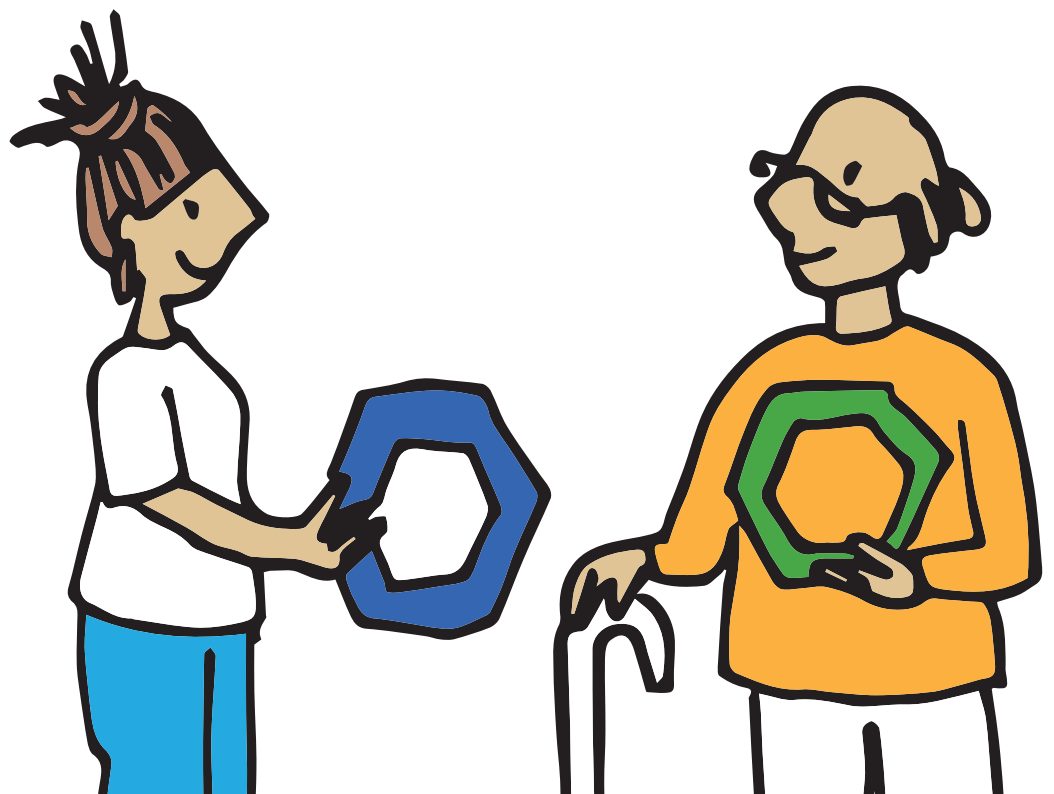
Dr Helen Kingston

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Introduction

Health Connections Mendip (HCM) remains at the heart of empowering our local communities to live healthier, more connected lives. Through a holistic, proactive, and relationship-based approach, we play a role in reducing health inequalities, building neighbourhood working, supporting the prevention agenda, and addressing the social determinants of health. We work alongside individuals and communities to build knowledge, resources, and support to maintain good health and wellbeing and prevent illness.

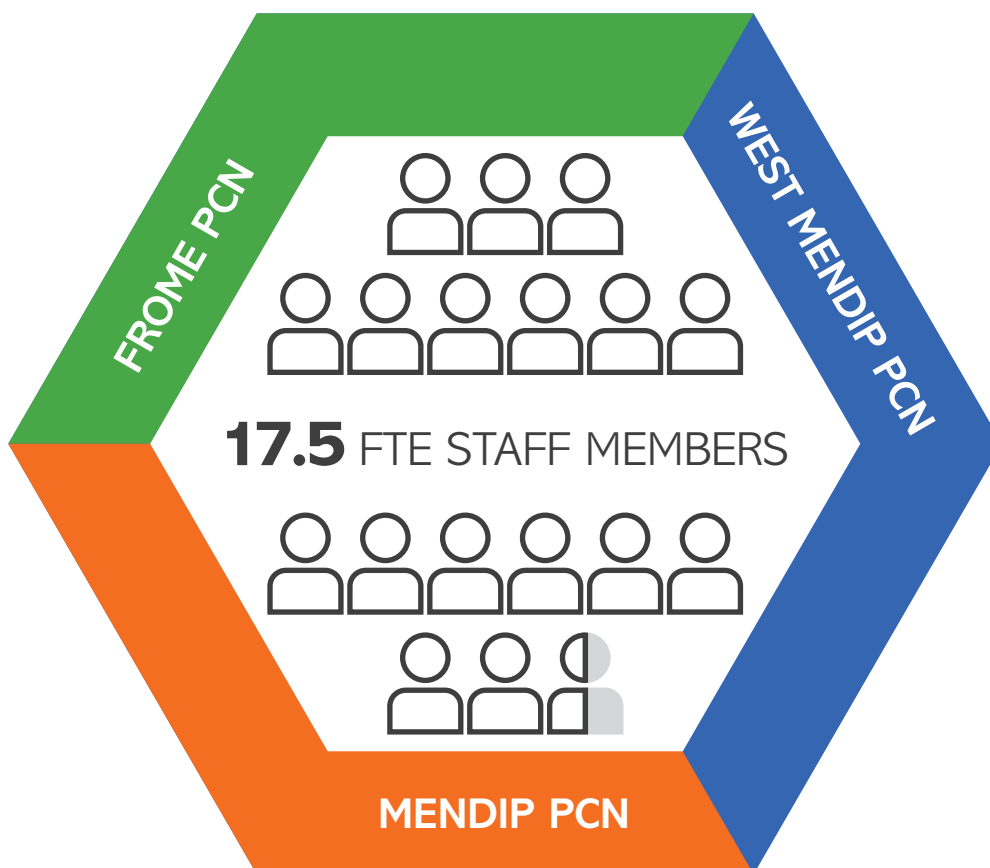
We take a whole-community approach to our service, aiming to be inclusive and offer opportunities for people to engage in ways that best suit them. This may include one-to-one support, where we take time to understand the complexities of an individual's life including the challenges they face, their strengths, and the support they may already have within themselves, from friends, family, or community. We also offer group work which might be alongside GP colleagues in group consultations, healthier lifestyles and pain management programmes or peer support where we draw on the knowledge and skills of those with long term conditions.

Our community development includes helping set up support groups, building connections via our Talking Cafes and Talking Benches, advocating for equality of service provision, training citizens to signpost others to support and providing a website directory of services to the whole community.

Our dedicated team of 26 staff members (17.5 full-time equivalent) is employed across three Primary Care Networks (PCNs): Frome PCN, Mendip PCN, and West Mendip PCN. Together, we support a practice population of 120,762 through social prescribing, health coaching and community development.

Our well-established model has been running since 2013 and the team consists of: Health Connectors/Senior Health Connectors (10.5 FTE), Team Co-ordinators/Admin, Service Managers and a Development Team. Every team member is trained as both a Social Prescribing Link Worker and a Health Coach, reflecting our hybrid approach.

This report highlights our achievements, statistics, feedback, and case studies.



Sharing Information about Support, Resources and Opportunities in our Community



Information Access Points

We have created and manage a comprehensive website directory of support and resources designed to help people improve their health and wellbeing. Our team works hard to keep this information accurate, up-to-date, and accessible to everyone.

The **website directory** is available to everyone. It can be used by people in the community to find information for themselves, friends and family. GP practice staff and other professionals have 'social prescribing at their fingertips' via the directory of services and Health Connectors use it while working alongside the people they support.

We understand that people access information in different ways and some people may prefer not to or may not be able to access information online.

To accommodate this, we have developed various **Information Access Points** to ensure everyone in the community can easily find the support they need in a way that suits them. The Information Access Points are: Website directory, Phone line, Talking Cafe & Talking Bench. This is what we call 'many ways to many'.



Website Directory

For individuals who prefer to go online, our directory www.healthconnections mendip.org/mendip-directory/ is always accessible. It provides a comprehensive resource for exploring services and support.

Number of resources added to the directory in 2024:
61

Number of page views:
123,000

Number of services added to the directory in 2024:
120

“ I find the most useful local resource to be the directory managed by the Health Connections team and have favourite page links that I share regularly with patients.

I prescribe nature all the time – probably five times a day! ”

West Mendip GP

Top Services Viewed

1. Exercise
2. Befriending
3. Counselling & Therapy
4. Bereavement
5. Carers
6. Creative Wellbeing
7. Healthy Weight
8. Mental Health Services
9. Dementia
10. Help at Home



Phone Line

For those who prefer direct communication, we offer three phone lines, each staffed by a Team Co-ordinator who provide personalised information and support tailored to their area.

Calls to the Health Connections
Team Co-ordinators:
4,496

“ We are very fortunate to have a team co-ordinator in each area that can manage and triage all incoming telephone calls.

Usually we can signpost/ refer people to local support in the community such as food banks, Talking Cafes & Citizens Advice where this support would help them most effectively rather than booking in a consultation with a Health Connector.

This means we can prioritise time for 1-1 consultations where needed.”

Health Connections Co-ordinator, Mendip PCN



Talking Cafes

Established in Frome in 2013, Talking Cafes have since expanded across Mendip, other areas in Somerset, and even internationally. These are welcoming spaces where people can make friends and access the information on the website directory via the Health Connector. Some Talking Cafes are small and others have grown to include other organisations and activities.

See Appendix 3 for Spotlight on Glastonbury Talking Cafe + Wellbeing Monday.

Number of Talking Cafes held:
389

Total number of visits:
7,037

“ I’ve made very good friends who helped me through caring for my husband, his death and then beginning to start a new life as a widow on my own.

People who have shared good times and bad with understanding, but without dwelling on problems.

The Health Connector is an integral part of this, available when needed – with advice and help, and relevant information.”

Talking Cafe Participant



Talking Benches

Recognising that not everyone is comfortable going into a building to attend a Talking Cafe or going online to use the website directory, Talking Benches provide informal anchor points in the community. Here, people can chat with a Health Connector and learn about available resources.

Number of conversations with a Health Connector at a Talking Bench: **642**

Number of Talking Bench sessions: **89**

“ I found out so much about what is going on in my community, talking to a Health Connector, on the Talking Bench.

I now go along to Talking Cafe and have made so many friends and joined an art group which is so much fun.”

Talking Bench Participant

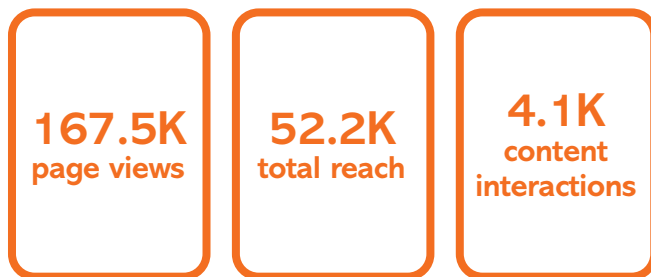


Other ways we share information

Health Connections has an active and vibrant presence both online and within the community, using various platforms to connect with individuals, promote our services and raise awareness of other organisations in the community.

Social Media Presence

We engage with over **1,400 followers** on Facebook and **699** followers on Instagram and share updates about events, services, and health & wellbeing related content. Our Facebook reach in 2024 was:



Community Outreach

We believe in making connections where people are, so in addition to our online presence, we also engage in-person at various locations:

Posting flyers and information on town noticeboards, in shops, and other public spaces to reach a wider audience.

Leaving information cards in places like libraries and local shops for people to pick up as they pass by.

Attending local events where we share information about becoming a Community Connector and the services we offer.

Attending community groups to engage with people who may not otherwise come across our information.

Collaborating with other organisations that share our focus on health and wellbeing to extend our reach and impact.

Local Press

We also work to raise awareness through local press coverage, with articles published in local newspapers and on online news sites.

GP Practice Engagement

Within our GP practices, we use various ways to communicate, such as digital screens, banners and posters displaying Health Connections information. Or additionally, cards or flyers are available for individuals to take home, helping to spread the word in a more personal and accessible way.

Community Connectors



Community Connectors

Community Connectors come from all walks of life – teachers, hairdressers, students, people experiencing homelessness, housebound individuals, doctors and taxi drivers. Anyone and everyone can be a Community Connector, helping to spread awareness and support across our community.

Becoming a Community Connector is simple. We have developed different ways to train people, these include: adding the training to our Healthier Lifestyle Programme, formal training booked via Eventbrite, informal training in workplaces or ad hoc training in cafes or places of the person's choice.

We have trained over 2,400 Community Connectors to date and the model has been shared in this country and abroad.

The Community Connector model has expanded to include other types of connector, for example Heritage Connectors. See Appendix 2.

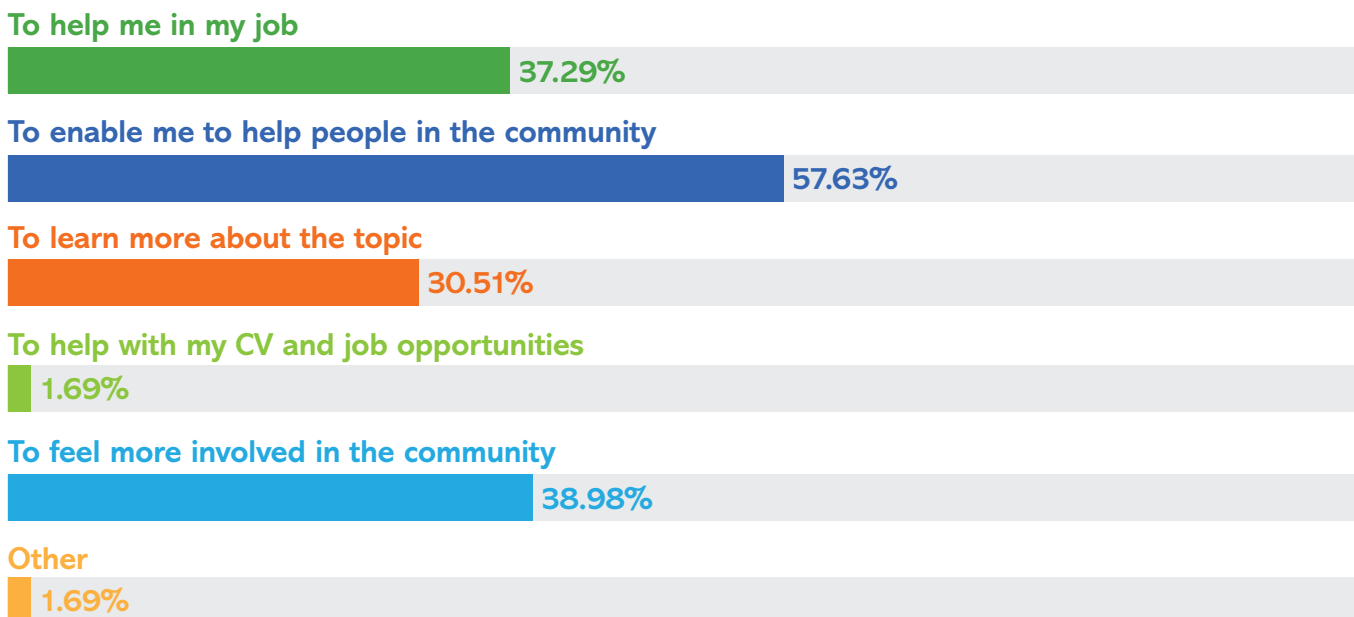
We have trained over **2,400 Community Connectors to date** and the model has been shared in this country and abroad.



“It makes me feel proud to help people.”
Community Connector

Survey directly after the training session

Main motivation for completing training:



Survey directly after the training session

How confident to you feel to pass on messages about information access points to others?

Not at all confident

0%

Not so confident

1.69%

Somewhat confident

6.78%

Very confident

52.54%

Extremely confident

39.98%

How knowledgeable were/are you about how to access support and opportunities to help improve health and wellbeing in your area?

Before your training

Not at all knowledgeable

20.03%

Not so knowledgeable

23.73%

Somewhat knowledgeable

35.59%

Very knowledgeable

10.17%

Extremely knowledgeable

8.47%

After your training

Not at all knowledgeable

0%

Not so knowledgeable

1.69%

Somewhat knowledgeable

6.78%

Very knowledgeable

57.63%

Extremely knowledgeable

33.90%

“Very informative, who knew there was so much help out there!”

Community Connector



"When I was considering moving to a new area, I remembered hearing a GP on Radio 4 discussing how the practices in Mendip had developed an innovative approach to support patients through social prescribing and by connecting them to local community initiatives. That talk was one of the key factors in my decision to move to Frome.

As soon as I arrived, a neighbour welcomed me. Having trained as a Community Connector, she gave me a card outlining where I could find out about the many support services and opportunities available in the area, along with information on how to access them through Health Connections.

I was eager to be part of this supportive community and contribute in my own way, so I trained as a Community Connector myself! After speaking with the trainer about my background in training medical staff in wellbeing, I was invited to deliver training for the medical practice. I've just completed a six-week course with them—proof of the incredible ripple effect and power of Community Connectors!"

Community Connector

“ I found the training really beneficial.

It really helped me understand the importance of empowering people by linking them to access points.

Also, how crucial it is to do this in the correct way.”

Community Connector

Health Connectors One-to-One Support



Health Connectors One-to-One Support

Health Connectors provide tailored one-to-one support working alongside individuals on their journey towards better mental, physical, and social wellbeing.

Our approach focuses on what matters most to each person, working together to build connections—with themselves, friends, family, community groups, and local resources—while also fostering a sense of meaning and purpose. This can help individuals recognise their own strengths and abilities, develop self-care and self-management skills, and make lasting lifestyle changes that support their health.

Health Connectors offer confidential appointments, either in person or by phone, working alongside people to explore their strengths, challenges, and the support they already have from family, friends, or the community. Using a range of personalised care and support planning questions, they help individuals navigate issues such as loneliness, stress, financial difficulties, and managing long-term conditions.

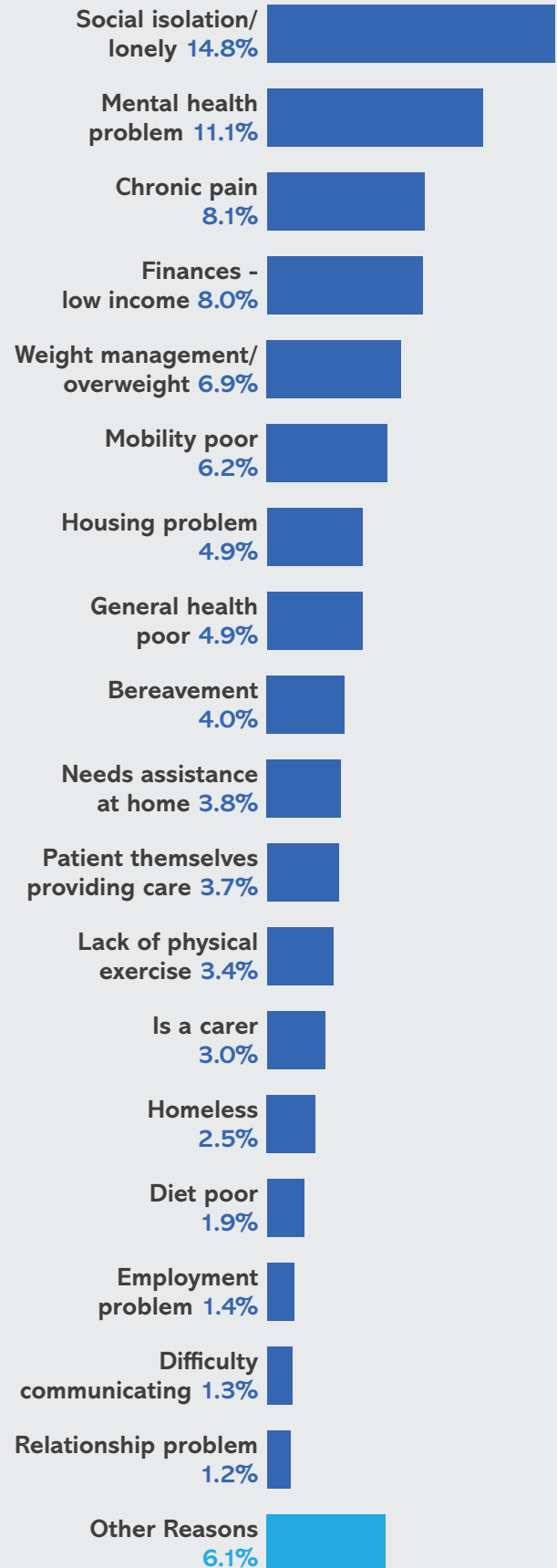
The focus is on understanding the complexities of each person’s life, identifying what matters most to them, and supporting them to take the next steps toward improved wellbeing.

Health Connectors receive supervision, peer support and ongoing professional development to ensure high-quality care.

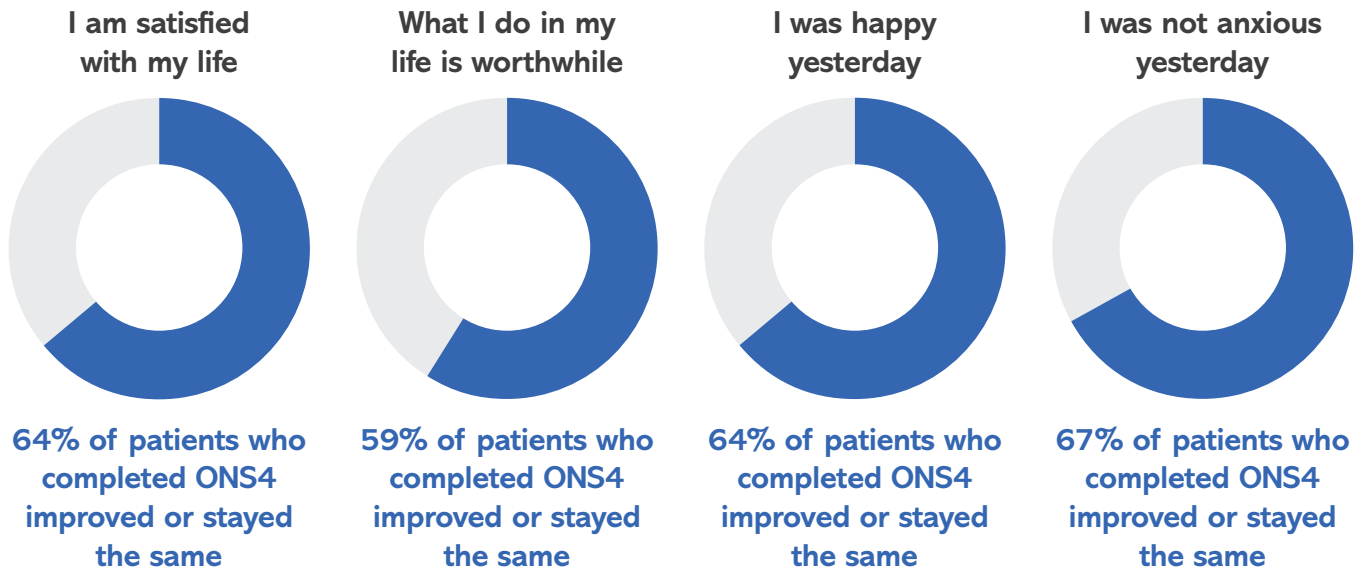
We work closely with health, social care and voluntary sector professionals to ensure that those facing complex health and social challenges receive the right support at the right time.

**Number of individuals supported
in one-to-one sessions:
2,760
with many more being supported
through our group work**

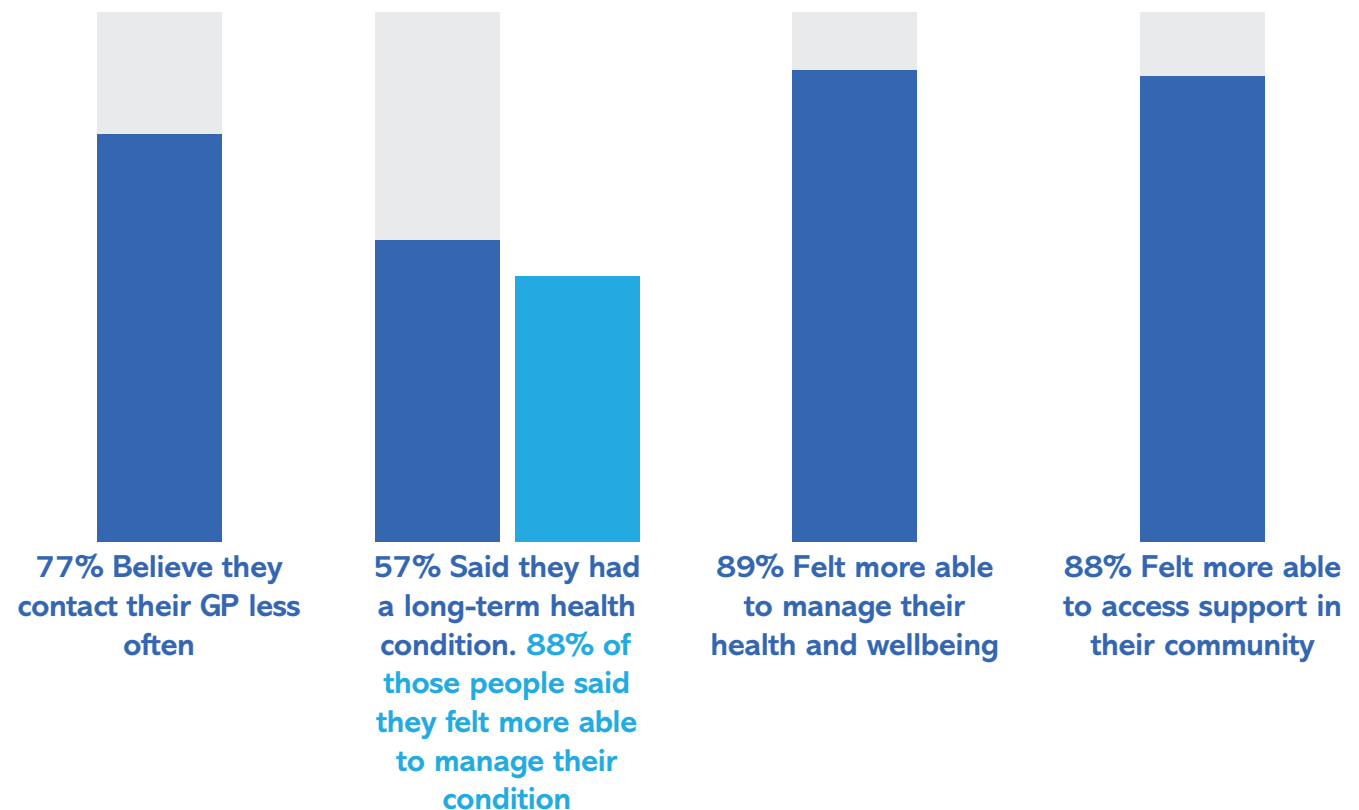
Reasons for referral



ONS4 Results after having used the Health Connections service



Feedback after having used the Health Connections service



Health Connector with specific remit to Reduce Health Inequalities with a focus on homelessness

Since Oct 2023, Mendip PCN have employed a Reducing Health Inequalities (RHI) Health Connector. This role works primarily alongside, and with referrals from, the Inclusion and Homeless Health GP for Mendip and Yeovil - and works across Mendip, with patients registered at any of the 11 practices within the Frome, Mendip and West Mendip PCNs.

The rationale for this role is that in order to reduce health inequalities, a minority of the patients we serve will need a different approach. For this reason, the RHI Health Connector spends a substantial amount of time doing outreach. Cases will often be more complex, taking longer to achieve outcomes, and for this reason they have a smaller caseload. The patients supported are generally people who are homeless (including sofa surfing and in temporary accommodation) or in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

“I feel very lucky to have the Health Connector supporting me with community links and coaching support - it is having such a large, positive impact on my life.”

Service User

Feedback from being supported one to one:

“I wanted to give you some feedback on the signposting you have given me to creative activities which I have found extremely beneficial, that subsequently spring boarded me to purchasing a potter’s wheel and getting really into ceramics again. I’m also going outside a lot more and am planning to start yoga. I wish to thank you for this has all been hugely beneficial to my wellbeing. You organising me a pass to a heritage site has made going outside so much easier and more purposeful. I really appreciate all the good work you’re doing - thank you very much, I will not hesitate to reach out if I need more support”.

Service User

“I was going through a difficult time and my GP told me about Health Connections. The main concern was around my physical health and the impact it was having on my mental health. Since seeing a Health Connector, I have changed my eating habits focusing on more healthier foods, which the whole family is now doing, I started walking my children to school, joined a football group, I am keeping a gratitude diary and have even started a new job. With the support from my Health Connector I was able to get back on track, make positive changes and I feel so much more able to access support in the community. I found the Health Connections directory and resources so helpful.”

Service User

“I am so grateful that you were able to help me by arranging a refurbished laptop for me through Donate iT. I couldn’t afford to buy a laptop so this enabled me to search for jobs and undertake training whilst I recovered from spinal surgery. I found a new job which I’ve now started, and I’m therefore ready to pass the laptop on to someone else who may need it.”

Service User

“I received fantastic one-to-one support and signposting from my Health Connector. I have been going through huge life and health transitions over the last couple of years and had to give up working as a teacher. I am also new to the area. I have really benefitted from linking with local wellbeing and physical activities.”

Service User

Health Connections Groupwork and Programmes



Healthier Lifestyle programmes (Mendip wide)

All three Health Connections teams deliver an interactive six-week group programme designed to support individuals in managing long-term conditions and improving both physical, social and mental wellbeing. Each session focuses on key aspects of health, including sleep, nutrition, physical activity, emotional wellbeing, and social connections. Led by Health Connectors, the programme provides a supportive environment where participants can make meaningful changes that matter to them.

Since the launch of the original Health Connections Self-Management Programme in 2015, the initiative has continuously evolved, shaped by the insights of other professionals and participant feedback. This ongoing development ensures the programme remains relevant and responsive to the diverse needs of those who take part.

At the heart of the programme is the understanding that participants are the experts in their own lives. By coming together, they learn from each other, recognise their own strengths, and build confidence in managing their health and wellbeing. The programme takes a holistic approach, addressing emotional, social, and physical wellbeing, and supports participants in developing the tools, knowledge, and connections to make lasting improvements in their lives.

Number of sessions:
103

Number of attendances:
546

“The group dynamic helped enormously. I was lucky to be in a positive group of people. I wasn’t the only one with challenges - we recognised each other’s predicaments.”

Group Participant

Live Well with Pain Programme

Building upon the pain management support in our original Self-Management Programme, we now deliver a programme called “Live Well with Pain”, focused around a 10-step framework, group coaching and peer support. This six-week programme empowers individuals living with chronic pain to adopt effective self-management strategies, enhancing their quality of life.

Participants engage in weekly sessions that cover various aspects of pain management, including goal setting, understanding pain, pacing activities, and exploring non-pharmacological approaches. The course fosters a supportive environment where individuals can share experiences and learn from one another, promoting peer support as a cornerstone of the programme.

In collaboration with GP colleagues, we support patients in reducing their reliance on pain medication by equipping them with alternative strategies to manage their pain effectively. This partnership aims to enhance patient outcomes and promote sustainable, long-term health improvements.

Number of sessions:
30

Number of attendances:
264

“ I have learnt so much from this course. Most importantly was meeting others who understood exactly how I was feeling.

The added bonus was understanding how to live with pain and not let it rule my life.”

Group Participant

Pain Cafes: A Gateway to Support for Those Living with Chronic Pain (West Mendip & Frome PCNs)

Health Connections Mendip facilitates Pain Cafes, peer support groups designed for individuals living with chronic pain. These informal gatherings provide a safe and welcoming space for people to share experiences, learn from one another, and explore different pain management strategies. Facilitated by a Health Connector, the sessions also feature guest speakers, such as complementary therapists and Occupational Therapists, who offer additional insights and approaches to managing pain.

Pain Cafes serve as an accessible first step for those seeking support, whether they are exploring self-management for the first time, waiting to attend one of our structured programmes, or looking for a community of people who understand their experience. They offer an easy way for individuals to connect with others, gain useful information, and discover more in-depth support options available through Health Connections Mendip.



“I have found the Live Well with Pain programme and the Pain Cafe very, very informative.

I have been able to share my experiences with my Health Connector and others safely, and always felt supported.

I feel lucky living in this area with the support I receive.”

Group Participant

Group Consultations with medical practice staff and Health Connectors

Health Connections Mendip collaborates with medical practice staff to offer group consultations, providing an innovative way for individuals to receive support and guidance. These consultations bring together small groups of patients with similar health concerns alongside medical professionals and Health Connectors. In these group settings, patients can share experiences, ask questions, and receive advice tailored to their specific needs. Medical practice staff, including GPs and nurses, provide clinical expertise, while Health Connectors offer additional support, helping participants explore community resources, lifestyle changes, and self-management strategies.

Group consultations allow individuals to benefit from peer support, fostering a sense of community and shared learning. They may also reduce the pressure on individual appointments, ensuring more people can access support in a collaborative and efficient manner. This approach enhances both health outcomes and patient experience, as it combines medical care with the holistic support offered by Health Connectors.



“I enjoy working alongside my GP colleague, as it provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen our working relationship while supporting patients. We each bring unique knowledge and skills to the group consultations.”

Senior Health Connector, Frome PCN

Long Term Health Conditions Group (Frome PCN)

The Long-Term Health Conditions Group, formerly known as the “On Track” group, is a monthly support meeting facilitated by Health Connectors. This group offers individuals living with long-term conditions, such as fibromyalgia, a safe and welcoming environment to connect with others facing similar health challenges. Participants have the opportunity to share experiences, discuss management strategies, set goals and provide mutual support, fostering a sense of community and understanding.



Personalised Care and Team Working



Personalised Care and Team Working

At Health Connections Mendip, we work closely with our colleagues in GP practices, Complex Care Teams and hospital discharge teams, forming an integrated and collaborative approach to care. Being part of a multidisciplinary team brings a richness to our work, fostering strong relationships, a deeper understanding of each other's roles, and a shared commitment to problem-solving. This multidisciplinary approach enables us to combine diverse expertise, perspectives, and skills, leading to more comprehensive and effective care for individuals. By working together, we support one another, bringing different skills and knowledge to the team, which enhances the care we provide.

Beyond our immediate team, we collaborate with the wider Mendip Neighbourhood Team, including district nurses, the Older People's Mental Health Team, palliative care services, and adult social care.

However, our role extends beyond professional networks. With one foot in GP practices and the other in the community, we bridge the gap between formal healthcare services and the vital networks of family, friends, and neighbours.

By bringing all these aspects together, our team often serves as the glue between professional services and the community, not by simply providing support, but by empowering individuals to recognise and use their own skills and knowledge. We believe in working with people and their support networks rather than doing things for them, ensuring that they remain active participants in their own wellbeing, wherever possible. We all value the lived experiences and knowledge of individuals and their support networks just as much as professional expertise, and by valuing it and bringing it all together, we ensure that all parts of the support system are recognised and work cohesively as a whole.

This whole-population approach ensures that people receive the right support at the right time, whether through health and care services or through the strength of their own communities. By strengthening these connections, we foster collaboration across all sectors and empower individuals to access the support they need in a way that works best for them.

“ The Health Connectors are invaluable, particularly within the MDT.

We can support the medical and clinical aspects of a person's care and we are able to take a more holistic approach — Health Connectors provide crucial insights.

They highlight how lifestyle factors and social isolation impact health and suggest proactive solutions, such as reaching out to the individual or arranging a joint visit.

By spending time with the person, they identify what truly matters to them and connect them with the right support — whether it's a befriender, a condition-specific support group, or additional resources for carers. ”

Complex Care Team Member

Community Development



Community Development

Community Development is a key part of our work across Mendip and a requirement of the national NHS social prescribing framework. Our three Health Connections teams collaborate closely with local people, the VCFSE sector, local councils, primary care colleagues, and a wide range of professionals and services to strengthen community networks and resources, and to address identified needs.

Over the years, Health Connections has played a key role in supporting the creation of numerous local peer groups and projects. In the past year, we have provided information and support to individuals looking to establish peer support groups for conditions such as Lichen Sclerosus, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, ME/CFS, and mothers' mental health.

Our teams also connect emerging projects with organisations like Spark Somerset, who offer guidance on establishing charitable structures, policies and procedures, volunteer training, and funding opportunities.

In 2024 we continued our partnership working with organisations including Job Centres, Town Councils, Police, Housing, the VCFSE sector, businesses, Glastonbury Abbey, the Bishop's Palace in Wells and of course citizens.

We also delivered a range of talks and presentations, including to the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) network ('Creating connected, caring and healthier communities'), Somerset Aster Housing team, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust's Neighbourhood Forum, a Women's Institute group and a cohort of people participating in a community falls prevention, strength and balance programme.

Financial support/partnerships

Surviving Winter grants

For the fifth year running, as part of a partnership with Somerset Community Foundation, we have been able to allocate £23,760 of Surviving Winter funding to those in Mendip aged 60 and over who struggle to heat their homes in the colder months and who have long-term health conditions (and in some cases those aged 50+).

Other financial support

The Health Connections teams also link people to a range of other grants, debt support and assistance. For example, we have an ongoing partnership with Citizen's Advice Somerset, enabling us to refer people for specialist one-to-one advice and support, and we regularly contact local churches and charitable organisations to help people source white goods and furniture.

Strategic Leadership with a Grassroots Approach



Development Team

The small development team of two (1.5 FTE) plays an important role in ensuring both strategic oversight and practical, on-the-ground impact.

We work strategically with partners across Somerset in the Social Prescribing Collaborative to strengthen, sustain, and clarify the social prescribing model in Somerset. Part of this involves advocating for sustainable funding for Health Connections as well as the broader social prescribing system.

We also lead the Community Connector programme, overseeing training, providing ongoing support, conducting monitoring and evaluation, and ensuring the initiative evolves to meet emerging needs.

The Development Team also identifies and addresses gaps. For example, we have initiated a pilot project in Frome to improve the integration of Young Somerset within GP practices and have also driven efforts to raise awareness of pension credit. We work together with partner organisations to help them reach their target groups, such as the council's public health team, and have supported them with the integration of the Focus on More programme into primary care and the community.

Beyond this, we play a key role in bringing together and sharing information with teams and the wider community. We lead on the website directory, the weekly team newsletter, and reports such as this annual report, ensuring valuable information is accessible and widely shared.



We also respond to issues raised by patients, advocating for change in overlooked areas that might contribute to inequalities, such as access to hearing aid cleaning and retubing services. Additionally, we work with community members' ideas and offers, such as bringing in a community member-led staff wellbeing programme, The Thriving Giver.

The Development Team balances strategic work, collaboration with partner organisations, addressing patient and community-led ideas/concerns, disseminating information and leading the Community Connector programme. As an important yet behind-the-scenes part of the Health Connections team, we help strengthen the overall system to ensure better outcomes for all.

“ It is essential to have key partners around the table to collaboratively build a sustainable and solid approach for the future of neighbourhood working.

To achieve this, everyone's input is vital, and insights from local teams like Health Connections, working within primary care and the wider community, provide valuable perspectives.

These insights help shape a clear picture of how we can best serve our communities and inform future commissioning decisions. ”

Emma Blake, ICB Associate Director of Personalised Care and Neighbourhoods

Green Impact



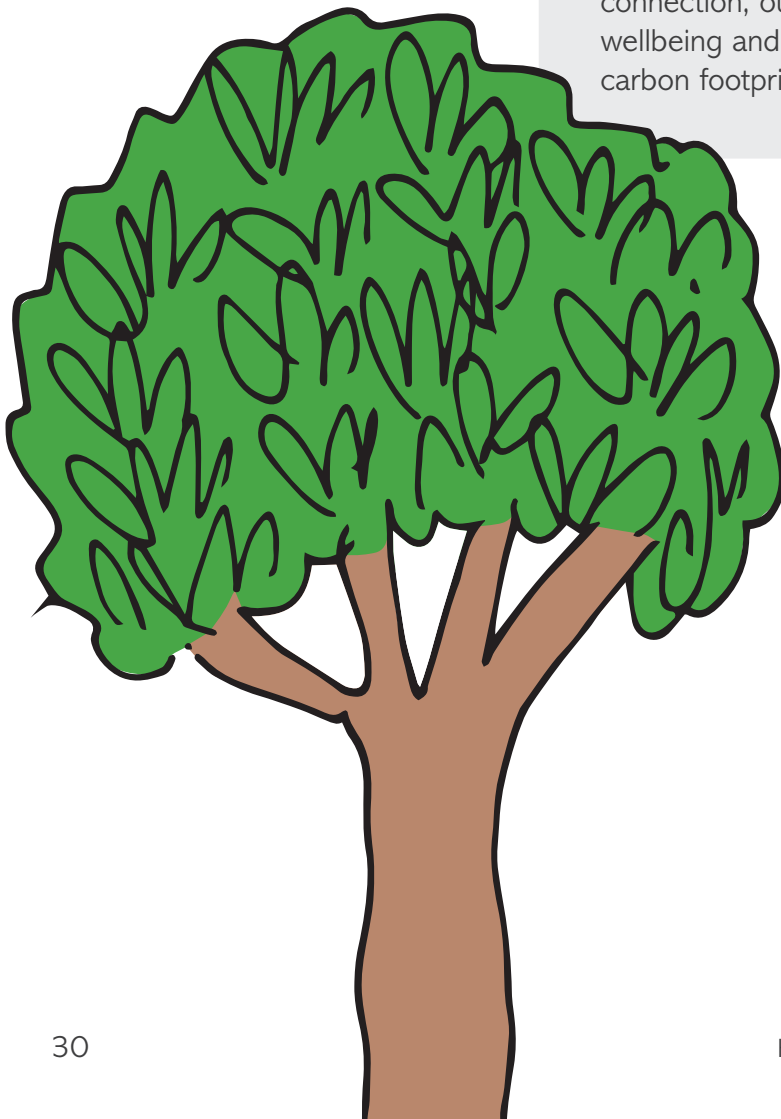
**Good for People,
Good for Communities,
Good for the Planet**

Health Connections Mendip is committed to improving health in ways that also benefit the planet.

By supporting people to make changes that are important to them to improve their health and wellbeing, we help reduce reliance on pharmaceuticals, lower carbon footprints, and promote more sustainable lifestyles. This approach may also reduce the need for medical interventions, contributing to a more sustainable healthcare system.

As part of the GP practice teams, we play an important role in supporting practices to address sustainability and reduce their environmental impact.

By focusing on prevention, self-care, and community connection, our work supports both individual wellbeing and broader efforts to reduce healthcare's carbon footprint.



Green Impact for Health

Our contributions have directly supported practices in achieving the Social Prescribing element of the Green Impact for Health Award. Through our collective work, we continue to drive positive change in healthcare sustainability.

“Our amazing Social Prescribers were instrumental in achieving the Green Impact for Health award, earning several points for being part of our team.

Thank you for all you do! ”

Grove House Surgery



Deprescribing — working alongside GP colleagues

Health Connections works alongside innovative GP led deprescribing, where the Health Connections team offers a pain management programme to those that the GP is supporting to reduce their pain medication. See appendix 4.

Enhancing GP Staff Recruitment, Retention and Satisfaction including Staff Survey



Enhancing Staff Recruitment, Retention and Satisfaction

The presence of Health Connections Mendip within GP practices can make them more attractive places to work, drawing in professionals who value a holistic, community-focused approach to healthcare.

“Health Connections Mendip continues to be an internationally recognised service and is a valuable, celebrated community asset.

Its strengths initially drew me to Frome Medical Practice, and I’m proud to now be part of this pioneering team.”

Dr Jos Selwyn-Gotha

“Working alongside my Health Connections colleagues and having access to the directory enables me to support my patients in considering the broader aspects of their lives that impact their health and wellbeing.

It empowers me to empower them, allowing me to practice medicine in a way that feels both holistic and rewarding.

With this support, I can offer the kind of care I truly want to provide, making my work more fulfilling.”

Dr Rebecca Hall



Staff Survey

We conducted a staff survey across all the practices we work with in Mendip to gather feedback on the Health Connections service. The survey aimed to assess awareness, engagement, and the perceived impact of our work within GP practice teams.

We received an excellent response, with 176 staff members sharing their views over the course of a week. This valuable input provides insight into how our service is integrated into primary care, how staff interact with it, and opportunities for further development. The findings will help shape our approach to supporting both staff and patients/community members more effectively.

Staff Survey responses

(Removing those who wrote 'not applicable to my role')

86% know what the Health Connections team do

84% signpost people to the Health Connections directory

83% think that the Health Connections team has made a positive difference to the service they can offer patients

59% say that the Health Connections team has improved their job satisfaction

71% say that the Health Connections team is well integrated into the practice

55% believe that the Health Connections team has helped reduce unnecessary GP practice appointments

78% say that they signpost to the Health Connections website directory

Q. In your opinion, how has Health Connections team impacted patient care:

83% selected 'improved patient wellbeing'

88% selected 'enhanced access to community resources'

55% selected 'enabled you to provide more holistic care to patients'

Our Wider Impact Nationally and Internationally



Sharing our Work Nationally and Internationally

The Development Lead, who set up Health Connections, is funded by a charitable trust to support other areas in the UK. Through speaking at many conferences and webinars and by providing consultancy support we have supported many areas and organisations to explore models that work for them.



In 2024, our work was also featured in the press and in several international media outlets which reached millions of people.

- TRT World: [Through The Ages – Tackling the UK's Loneliness Crisis | Beyond Border](#)
- Italian Public Broadcasting Corporation: [L'era della solitudine](#) (LINK from 01:02:57)
- Swiss Public Broadcasting Corporation: [Puls](#)

Conclusion



Conclusion

In 2013, 11 practices in Mendip came together to form the Health Connections team, a collaborative initiative that built trust, fostered relationships, and created a shared vision for the future. This partnership laid the groundwork for further collaboration, leading to the formation of Complex Care teams and enhancing care coordination.

Sharon Morgan, Managing Partner,
Vine Surgery

As Mendip expanded into three distinct PCNs, the collaborative spirit thrived. The sharing of knowledge and best practices became a hallmark of the region. Health Connections joined practices with a common goal, and its impact has continued to evolve. When ARRS roles were introduced, Mendip practices seamlessly integrated them, building on their existing collaboration. Today, they focus on proactive, preventative care and supporting those with long-term conditions. The success of the Health Connections team is a testament to the power of partnership and the lasting positive impact on the local healthcare ecosystem.

Emma Fynn, Mendip PCN Project
Development & Covid Vaccinations Lead

In 2024, Health Connections Mendip continued to support the development of connected, resilient communities, helping individuals on their journey toward improved mental, physical, and social health and wellbeing. Our work has included training and empowering of new Community Connectors, providing essential information across a wide range of topics, and delivering personalised individual support through multiple settings to thousands of citizens. This has all been while facilitating a wide variety of engaging group programmes and working alongside community partners to set up further new groups and initiatives.

Throughout the year, our teams have proactively responded to the unique needs and priorities

identified within our local communities. Being embedded within GP practices and employed by Primary Care Networks (PCNs), our Health Connections staff have reinforced a holistic and collaborative approach to patient care. Their presence in GP teams enhances community engagement in health, and gives individuals a stronger voice, empower themselves to actively contribute to personalised solutions.

Having taken over clinical leadership from Dr. Kingston – whose tireless commitment to innovation has been integral to the development of this service – I feel privileged to reflect on the remarkable achievements of our team. As we approach our tenth anniversary as a full Mendip-wide team in 2025, this has been a fantastic opportunity to highlight the inspiring and transformative work undertaken that has shaped the social prescribing sector.

Looking ahead, we are excited to further strengthen our role as a key component of health provision in the Mendip area. Our vision includes expanding outreach to support underserved communities, enhancing innovative group sessions and coaching programmes, and deepening collaboration with PCN teams to maximise our impact. Building on successful projects in areas such as chronic pain and diabetes, we will continue developing proactive strategies to improve health and wellbeing. Digital transformation will play a key role in identifying those most in need and delivering support in new ways, while also enhancing health literacy to empower individuals in managing their own wellbeing.

Above all, we remain committed to our core function of empowering individuals and communities to drive meaningful change, promoting healthier, more connected futures for everyone.

Thank you to our dedicated team, our valued partners, and our engaged and vibrant community for your ongoing collaboration and support.

Dr Jos Selwyn-Gotha

GP Partner, Frome Medical Practice

Appendix

Appendix 1

Highlights of Frome PCN work

Collaborative work with Frome Job Centre

We started attending the job centre once a month from June 2024 where the job centre staff allocate people to six appointment slots to see a Health Connector for support. Many of these people have complex needs and social inequalities and we are able to signpost them to services and organisations to support them with addressing these needs.

Women's health project

Health Connections team member in Frome, along with clinical health psychology worker, conducted 3 in-depth focus groups with over 20 Frome women for feedback on current services and to understand needs for improvements. Clinical and staff feedback on women's health services and training needs were also conducted. This research was used to identify 3 priorities for improving women's health services to meet community needs.

- Menopause care > lifestyle support beyond HRT, better consistency of care across the practice, improved follow-up.
- Menstrual health > education - particularly for young women, improved access to trusted information, menstrual health as 'vital sign'.
- Improved healthcare experience across the board > proactive care, better resources, and better communication about access to supportive and informed clinicians.

Farmers Health Hub

Health Connections Frome is a regular participant in the Farmers Health Hub at Standerwick Cattle Market, held once a month. Recognising that the farming community often faces challenges in attending GP appointments due to work demands and seasonal pressures, the idea was that health teams are brought directly to them. Health Connections Mendip played a key role in establishing the HUB by supporting the founders to link into Somerset Foundation Trust and by offering the support of our team. Our Health Connectors engage with the farming community, guiding them to the HUB for health checks and offering support for emotional wellbeing. They also take the time to discuss available resources and connect individuals with organisations like the Farmers Community Network for further assistance.

KeyRing – My Hub, Frome

Health Connections Frome identified a gap in support for patients attending our Learning Disabilities clinics at the medical practice. To address this, we reached out to KeyRing, a charity that assists people with learning disabilities and those needing support to live independently. After discussions, we collaborated to set up a Hub at the medical practice on the same day as our learning disability clinic. This initiative has been incredibly successful, with the worker offering invaluable assistance in areas such as managing letters and bills, arranging hospital appointments, and helping individuals find community groups, social events, and support networks to get involved in.

Frome and surrounding Area Ukrainian Welfare Checks

Frome Town Council established The Welcome Hub, which connects refugees and asylum seekers to existing local services and opportunities. It serves as a point of contact, with staff at the hub directing individuals to regional and national resources for practical support, as well as offering cultural and social activities. They approached Health Connections Frome for collaboration, and we now conduct initial welfare checks, as well as follow-up checks at 6 months and annually, with Ukrainian refugees. Health Connectors ensure they know how to register with GP practices, enrol their children in schools, access job centres, and ensure they feel safe, supported, and content with their host families. We have continued by conducting two yearly checks and ensuring that families are informed on how to find accommodation of their own.

Young Person Clinic Frome Medical Centre

Frome Medical Practice offers a weekly Young Persons Clinic for individuals aged 13 to 18. This clinic provides a safe space where young people can discuss contraception, sexual health, and emotional wellbeing. Nurses are available to provide guidance on contraception and sexual health matters, while Health Connectors focus on emotional wellbeing and can refer individuals to free mental health services if further support is needed. Health Connectors are also trained to issue C-cards, allowing access to free condoms, and to educate on the importance of condom use not just for contraception, but also to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections. We also offer advice on chlamydia testing.

Frome Postcard Project

The postcard project in Frome was launched November 2020, this very popular project has continued to grow and many of the recipients and writers have stated how rewarding they find this project.

In 2024 we had:

- Writers: 10
- Recipients: 22
- Number of cards sent: 190

Highlights of Mendip PCN work

PCN Fitbit Diabetes Programme

The Fitbit Diabetes Programme ran twice in 2024, involving 47 participants. The cross-PCN initiative was supported by three Health Connections team members alongside the PCN Diabetes Lead Nurse and the Care Coordination Hub (CCH).

Programme Highlights:

- Structure: Six group sessions on topics such as habit-building and sleep, supplemented by telephone health coaching.
- Results (Second Cohort):
 - Total weight loss: 90.8 kg (average 3.6 kg per participant)
 - HbA1c reduction: Total 101 mmol/mol (average 4.6 mmol/mol), with a 33% shift down.
 - Waist circumference loss: 17.5 inches (average 1.35 inches)
- Individual Successes:
 - 3 participants progressed to the Diabetes Path to Remission programme.
 - 2 participants qualified for surgeries previously denied due to high blood sugar.
 - 1 participant gave a workplace talk on nutrition, inspiring colleagues.

Participant Feedback:

- Improved food choices, portion sizes, and cooking habits.
- Enhanced awareness of managing Diabetes and lifestyle changes.
- Notable reductions in medication and blood pressure for some participants.

“The programme opened my eyes and gave me the confidence to change my lifestyle.”

This success has informed the development of the 2025 DiaBEATit programme, which will include three Health Coaching sessions.

Lung Health Events

In collaboration with Mendip PCN, SASP, and Health Connections Mendip, Lung Health Events were held in Shepton Mallet and surrounding areas in Autumn 2024, with plans for a February 2025 session in Frome.

Key Achievements:

- Promoted awareness and prevention of lung health issues.
- Evaluation report and video available on request:

Postcard Project

Launched in June 2024, this initiative fostered connections through handwritten postcards. Liv and Caroline hosted a coffee morning in December to celebrate the writers.

Impact:

- Writers: 6
- Recipients: 8
- Postcards Sent: 48

Participants described the project as heart-warming and meaningful.

Highlights of West Mendip PCN work

Collaboration with Wells Job Centre

Health Connectors supported over 80 patients in 2024, many of whom face complex health and social inequalities. Eight slots are available each month for Work Coaches to book in their customers to see the Health Connectors face-to-face at the job centre.

Men's Health Event (moMENTum)

Organised in Glastonbury by the PCN, with the Somerset Prostate Support Association, and attended by over 200 men, this event connected participants with health and wellbeing support and resources. Health Connectors were on hand throughout to offer help and signposting to attendees.

Wells Community Day Event

Health Connectors raised awareness and networked at this January event with Wells Health Centre, Wells City Practice, PCN colleagues, and over 70 community projects and services.

Social Prescribing Passes

For the third year, Glastonbury Abbey partnered with HCM and local GP practices to offer free passes to those facing financial or other barriers.

Health Walk (Glastonbury)

In partnership with SASP, the West Mendip team launched a beginners' health walk, with team members trained as Walk Leaders.

Discover Your Community Event

HCM participated in a health and wellbeing themed event in Street, alongside VCFSE organisations and PCN colleagues.

Pain Cafe - local engagement and launch

HCM worked with Somerset ICB to host public and professional events promoting the Pain Cafe model and related resources. A pilot Pain Cafe was then launched in summer 2024

Appendix 2

Heritage Connector Pilot (West Mendip PCN)

The initial Heritage Connector pilot took place in Frome to promote the health and wellbeing benefits of engaging with heritage, with funding and support from Historic England.

The initiative offers members of the public training as Heritage Connectors, who then signpost others in their communities to sources of heritage information and activities. This led to us developing our website directory of local services to include a **Heritage Wellbeing** category which lists local organisations delivering heritage and wellbeing activities, such as physical exercise through walks, volunteering or meeting others.

In 2024, West Mendip PCN Health Connections team further developed this work alongside local partners and community members.

The first Heritage Connector session was held in November 2024 at the Red Brick Building. Facilitators included Fen Bagias (Health Connections - West Mendip), Siobhan Goodwin (Bishop's Palace Wells), and Alison Horgan (Red Brick Building and Heritage Cafe). The session built on learning from a pilot run by the Health Connections Development Team.

Session Overview:

- Duration: 2 hours
- Attendance: 14 people from local groups, including Wells Museum, Wells Cathedral, Bishop's Palace, Glastonbury Abbey, a psychotherapist, an archaeologist, and others.

Feedback:

- Most participants found the session useful, with more than half rating it as very useful.
- Key highlights included the signposting information, learning about available resources, and understanding the link between health and heritage.
- Suggestions for improvement included case studies, role-play opportunities, more detailed promotional materials and further guidance around connector boundaries.

Participant Comments:

"I found the information and interacting with the group very useful."

"Good to know I don't have to be a total expert!"

"Short, simple, to the point, thank you."

Next Steps:

- A second training session for new Connectors will be held in summer 2025.
- Attendees from the 2024 session will have a follow-up session at The Bishop's Palace, Wells, focusing on a new heritage location and sharing their experiences.

Appendix 3

Spotlight on Glastonbury Talking Cafe + Wellbeing Monday (West Mendip PCN)

Summer 2024 marked three years of Health Connections' West Mendip PCN team hosting a weekly Glastonbury Talking Cafe in St John's Church and helping to facilitate other activities alongside this. The Health Connections team was first introduced to the church during the second phase of a £465,500 National Lottery Heritage Fund project – following the phase one building and restoration works plus new, flexible seating. The aim for phase one and two (and beyond) was to conserve, re-order and extend the use of the church for the benefit of the people of Glastonbury and visitors.

Health Connections initially worked with the church and the consultants who secured the lottery grant, to launch the Talking Cafe and develop a wider community Wellbeing Monday offer, featuring local groups and activities. A key objective was to engage with isolated, deprived and neglected members of the Glastonbury community whose needs were particularly exacerbated by COVID.

A final report covering phase one and two of the project was submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, highlighting key successes, with a range of feedback from local people, church members and professionals.

The biggest successes were identified as:

- The building being in considerably better condition with the successful completion of the capital works;
- The flexibility of the space allowing greater potential for community engagement with a wider range of people in perpetuity;
- The installation of permanent, but moveable, interpretation;
- The positive reaction from visitors who have an enjoyable experience;

- The growing number of concerts which will in time make the church more resilient and reach a wider range of people;
- The church being well lit;
- The ongoing achievements and sustainability of the Talking Cafe/Wellbeing Mondays, facilitated by Health Connections West Mendip – ensuring that for those most in need, Glastonbury is a better place to live.

The report for NLHF highlighted the “phenomenal success of the Monday event, which has out-performed at every level, bringing new, vulnerable and diverse people into St John's and bringing tangible benefit to their lives and wellbeing. There is a calm buzz and positivity coming from all corners of the church building which is commented on by many; the mood is set by those organising it and their flexibility, inclusiveness and empathetic approach to users, including allowing companion-pets to join in.

“Everyone stated how important the space is: many service users are excluded from places of beauty and serenity - and being relaxed and welcome in this space is in itself affirming. The nature of the space commands good behaviour and people feel confident to approach others.

“Agencies are increasingly seeing the event as an ideal location for 'pop-up' projects as people will engage as a result of their trust of the place, Health Connectors and by extension others invited in.”

What happens at the event?

Monday mornings at St John's Church are a true coming together of the local community and a range of local projects, services and professionals. It has been, and continues to be, a privilege to have the use of such a beautiful, prominent church within Glastonbury.

The event takes place every Monday between 10am – 12pm, with art therapy and occasionally other activities running into the afternoon.

All are welcome to attend, and most weeks there are 70-80+ people coming through the doors. Alongside the Talking Cafe, some of the projects that are regularly in the space include a free clothing pop-up, digital support teams, poetry group, neurodiverse chat space, carers' support, energy advice and more. Community nurses, a GP and Housing workers also regularly attend to support those who are street homeless or living in vans. The church provides a safe, flexible space for the various initiatives, and for private one-to-one conversations with Health Connectors or other professionals, for example if people are seeking practical assistance or emotional support. All projects and activities are currently free to access.

The wonderful volunteer kitchen team serve hot drinks, toast, snacks and fruit. Food or supplies are often generously gifted on the morning, including by the Love Glastonbury pantry and foodbank. Refreshments are offered by donation, according to what people can afford, and the cafe funds itself this way. Volunteers provide a warm welcome and sometimes simple signposting, and one of the lay ministry team also attends most weeks.

There are countless small kindnesses that attendees show each other each week, as well as the opportunities for more formal support and onward referrals.

Feedback from attendees, church members and professionals:

Attendees

"This event is really important. Without it, people in crisis would have been missed and unable to access support and help - people without family and friends."
"There are so many connections between people and organisations - it's a real joy to be part of that."

"I met a friend here and now we go out litter picking and doing stuff together outside of the Talking Cafe."

"It's the only proper breakfast I get in a week."

"I'm recently widowed and live on my own. I come into town to see faces and movement, but can sit in a cafe and end up not speaking to anyone. I wandered in to the Talking Cafe and was greeted 5 times within minutes of arriving! I would like to get involved as a volunteer."

"People connect and share ideas – it's a social opportunity. We often lack those spaces in society: we need the right spaces and resources for people to trust each other."

"It's so important to socialise and to have peers – it's really important to have people I know."

"There would be nothing like this in Glastonbury without the project. It gives people something to look forward to and something to focus on. It lifts their confidence and self-esteem, and some would plummet like a stone without it. Longevity is pivotal."

"It's led to other things outside of the Monday event - there's now a new art group in the town hall."

"Tourists come in too and have a chat – the Cafe is all about diversity and bridging between very different people."

"I stay for the whole morning – I did a workshop in confidence building and enjoyed it. I've learnt a lot from the different organisations and it's been really productive. I'd always been told 'You can't do this, you can't do that' - this is different. My message to the church and organisers is carry on doing it."

"I have vascular dementia and the Talking Cafe is really helpful. I'm also on a pain management course with the Health Connectors. I've got to have a weekly schedule – it's really important for me to come here."

“This type of event is incredibly important for people with mental health problems. I get support through talking to others, and sometimes 1:1 support from a Health Connector. I've formed friendships and joined a walking group. I travel on the bus from a neighbouring town to attend the cafe and I know each week I'll see my friends.”

“I first went to art therapy nine months ago because of mental health problems: I saw it advertised and a friend told me about it as well. It's very structured and it's all confidential so there's a real safety net. We all share our stories and talk about the week. We paint and draw symbols and share what it means. There's also a theme every week – something like ancestry. The age range is from 16 to people in their 80s – most come every week, we really have all sorts.”

Church members

“This event is a very, very valuable thing in Glastonbury, and important for the church to be offering. The activities will really help with the wellbeing agenda. It's heritage by stealth being in this setting.”

“People are coming to the cafe and activities who are the real salty, earthy Glastonbury people who say they didn't know they were allowed in - now we see them coming back, and connections being made - it's a very exciting time.”

“The perception is that we're becoming more tolerant, that we're genuinely more open to different ways. Our strapline of 'A Christian centre for spiritual life' is more honest than it was. Primarily this has happened because of the Talking Cafe and connected groups.”

Professionals

“I couldn't do what I've done in this town (with the Engage Somerset project) without this project – it brings people together who wouldn't normally come together. Everyone I know in Glastonbury is because of this day.”

“It's the people who make it – and you see them grow enormously in their confidence. They talk to more people and come out of their shells.”

Paul's story

“I started coming to the Talking Cafe in October 2022 – it was recommended by a neighbour who came with me on the first visit. I'd stayed in for two or three months after a break-up and didn't know anyone, and didn't work. I wasn't eating, I was depressed and I couldn't see a way out - this place is the antidote. I didn't think I'd fit in, but they networked me and I've made fantastic friends in various groups outside of the Talking Cafe including gardening and the repair cafe: it's been an absolute boon, giving me validation and a role. They feel like my family. My neighbour is jealous because he can't come due to work.

It's made a massive difference to me, having somewhere to go knowing I'll meet friends. I always come away feeling OK, having had a good time. Everything I do is linked to this place - there's something every day of the week keeping me busy.

I may have had a troublesome weekend but I know Monday's coming. Now at weekends I do stuff at home - my time now makes sense to me, and I don't feel lonely and cut off. I know the names and faces of 100 people I've met through here. I can't call myself alone. I've just walked to the Post Office and met three people I knew. I'd lived here in a difficult situation and didn't know anyone.

The cafe really fulfils its role providing food, signposting and other support. You get linked to someone for more specific advice if needed.

People come here for help: from the bench people to locals who've fallen on harder times, it's a broad spectrum of people all using the space as their own, muddling in together. Some people play the guitar or piano, some people know they can get clean clothes. I'd be heartbroken if it ever closed, I'd lose a key social space.”

Appendix 3

The Talking Cafe and Wellbeing Monday activities have become much-loved in the town and have made a clear difference to many in the community. Health Connections West Mendip team would like to thank all who attend the event and bring it to life, the fabulous and numerous volunteers, those who attend in a professional capacity, the church including the very helpful Verger, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Ruth and John from Heritage and Community - and Irena for ensuring the Glastonbury Unity Candle is burning bright each week.

Gratitude to all of the projects that have attended the event on a regular basis, run pop-up stands or provided other support, including; Somerset FT Homeless Nursing and GP outreach team, Somerset Housing Officers, Glastonbury Development Trust, Kubi May art therapy and poetry groups, Margaret's clothing pop-up, neurodiverse chat group, Ali's piano and singing sessions, The Volunteer Network, Somerset Carers' Service, Centre for Sustainable Energy, Healthwatch, Spark iT, Donate iT, Love Glastonbury pantry and the foodbank, The Old Clinic Ltd, Glastonbury police team, Engage Pluss project, Cosmic digital, Positive People, Somerset Public Health, Hep C Trust, Somerset Foundation Trust cancer nurses, SASP + NHS Somerset Sloppy Slippers campaign, Elim Connect Centre, Filo Project, Somerset Skills and Learning, WEA, Julie Thompson coach and mentor, Mark Noble art pop-ups, Soul Fire veg project, Beacon of Light Tai Chi, Dermot Corkey Qigong, community-led poetry group, the former Glastonbury Dementia Action Alliance, Singing Circle for people with memory loss, yoga for people with memory loss.

Appendix 4

Supporting Pain Management Through Deprescribing (Frome PCN)

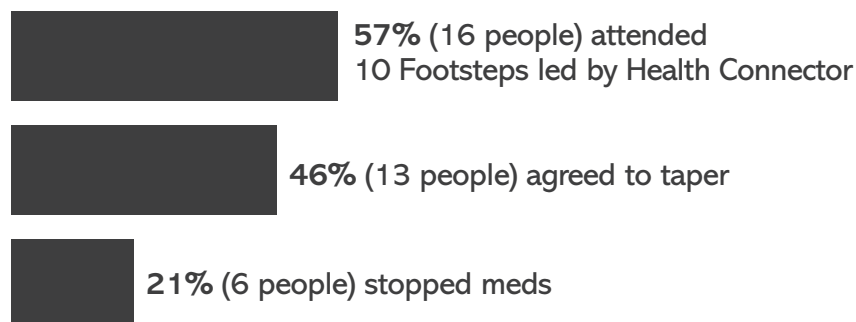
As part of our commitment to improving patient wellbeing, Health Connections Mendip works alongside GPs to support deprescribing for pain management. Two GPs proactively engaged with patients who had been prescribed opiates and gabapentinoids for chronic, non-cancer pain, and invited them to review their medication use. These conversations explored whether their medication remained effective, what other pain management strategies they found helpful, and how a more holistic, supported self-management approach could offer better outcomes.

For patients interested in reducing or stopping their medication, the GPs developed personalized tapering plans and provided guidance on alternative strategies. Patients were also referred to the Live Well with Pain Programme, facilitated by a Health Connector at the Frome practice.

Pilot 1

72 patients were invited to take part.
28 of those who were invited, agreed to take part.

Of the 28 people who took part:



The aims were to:

- Reduce medication burden and potential harm
- Lower medication-related emissions
- Most importantly, enhance quality of life by empowering patients with effective, sustainable pain management strategies

We calculated the carbon reduction as a result of the deprescribing.
Min. 900kgCO₂e over 5 years





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