

# Health, Housing and Care working together to achieve a Prevention Model of wellbeing in Extra Care at Marina Court, Tewkesbury

Written for the Housing Learning and Improvement Network by **Jill Kearsley**, Programme Director at NHS Gloucestershire

## Introduction

There are many reasons that all public sector organisations need to start looking differently at the provision of services in and around extra care settings. On top of the financial challenges that both the public and private sector faces over the next few years, we all have to find ways in which to support an increasing older people population. This increase will add significant cost pressures as we move into the next 5 to 10 years and beyond. This requires us to start to develop new integrated strategies for managing future care, support and housing provision. Future proofing service designs and being creative in delivering support to the older population is essential in order to cope with greater demands for personalisation, choice, and dignity.

Furthermore, increases in an ageing population will continue to put further capacity pressures on health and social care systems. Currently we know that a significant amount of resources is going into supporting individuals within an acute setting. Providing adequate support through preventative and rehabilitative services in community settings, as set out in the government's recent vision for adult social care and health White Paper, *Equity and Excellence*, could produce significant savings across the health/social care sector, and would empower individuals to remain independent for as long as possible. A useful mechanism for providing better support is to join care, housing, health and supporting services into an integrated model of support. This requires embracing integrated models of care and support through the private, public, and voluntary in order to maximise efficiencies and create new and exciting opportunities through matrix working. Housing and related services have an important role to play in this.

## About Marina Court

An example of integrated working with housing can be seen in the development of Marina Court Extra Care Scheme in Tewkesbury. In 2004, Gloucestershire Community and Adult Care worked alongside the Primary Care Trust, the Borough Council and Hanover Housing Association to secure capital grant funding from the Department of Health to develop an Extra Care Sheltered Housing scheme. The success of working across sector boundaries was celebrated in April 2009 when Marina Court was nominated and shortlisted for the regional Health and Social Care Partnership Award.

Marina Court Extra Care Sheltered Housing Scheme opened in January 2008, adopting a collaborative approach to partnership working. Residents and the local Tewkesbury community are at the heart of the innovative and preventative approach to wellbeing and independence at Marina Court. A unique development of 75 one and two bedroom flats and bungalows for people aged 55 and over, it offers 24/7 onsite care and support to residents.



The partnership developed preventative services that maximise the independence of older people, including the development of a health and wellbeing suite and ethos within the building. Health and Social Care appointed a Therapy and Wellbeing Coordinator to coordinate and/or deliver holistic programme of activities. These activities range from boxercise, active balance, Nintendo wii exercise circuits, art classes, hopi ear candle waxing and hand and foot massage making full use of the onsite facilities. The remit of this post is focused on testing and tailoring activities that stimulate people's minds and bodies with a strong focus on preventing a decline in health or emotional wellbeing of residents of Marina Court Extra Care Sheltered Housing Scheme, and the wider community of Tewkesbury.

## Engagement with Health

Gloucestershire County Council's Community & Adult Care Directorate (C&ACD), and NHS Gloucestershire Public Health Department (PHD) agreed to the quality outcomes of the post and have incorporated many of the maintenance and prevention aspects of the wellbeing agenda. This includes meeting the following objectives and resultant outcomes:

### Objectives:

The post holder is permanently based at Marina Court, and the coordinator facilitates person-centred activities that complement and/or work in tandem with mental and physical therapy practices, enabling attendees of exercise and health sessions to improve and build upon existing personal capabilities.

The Therapy Coordinator is responsible for the programme management of therapy facilities. In particular the therapy and wellbeing coordinator oversees the development of a holistic range of activities which include:

- Monitoring and tracking activity successes, and conducting reviews of services available to ensure they meet the needs of the local community
- Promotion of the programmes to professionals within Acute and Primary Care and Social Care
- Work collaboratively with the third sector and independent organisations to promote and coordinate events and activities at Marina Court that will be of benefit to the older people population of Tewkesbury
- Ensuring clear processes are in place for referrals and access to therapy services
- Seek to engage other professionals in the development of the therapy service available
- For at least 50% of the post holders time / activities to have a Public Health Focus – to include the wider determinants of health, mental health, physical activity, food and nutrition

#### Outcomes:

- Increase the level of activities, information and involvement available to the wider community of Tewkesbury
- Contribute to the outcomes of the Tewkesbury Healthy Towns Bid
- Increase the level of engagement of older men in public health activities within Marina Court, including people from Marina Court and in Tewkesbury
- Continue to strengthen links with Tewkesbury falls clinic and community hospital ensuring clinicians are briefed on activities available in Marina Court
- Closer working with third sector and independent organisations to deliver health and wellbeing opportunities
- Positive qualitative feedback on health and wellbeing of residents and community attendees of the range of activities

#### **Quality of life Activity Monitoring and Evaluation**

An example of the achievements and benefits of this role can be evidenced through a number of participants, as the following personal experiences below demonstrate:

1. A resident, an amputee. Discharged from hospital early last year he was told he would never walk again and would be wheelchair-bound. One-2-one rehabilitation and group work means that he now walks upright on crutches with a prosthetic limb. The partnership has created a stimulating environment that increases local engagement, supporting care closer to home, giving people opportunities to retain independence and dignity in later life.



Having spent 8 months in hospital for treatment of a cancerous tumour in the spine, which also resulted in the amputation of one leg and atrophy of all postural muscle groups, he came to live at Marina Court in a wheelchair-adapted apartment. Initial rehabilitation involved proprioceptive stimulation of his remaining foot, before progressing to strength enhancing exercise with therabands and dumbbells. Over the course of two years, he managed to reverse the atrophy, progressed to holding a stand at the barre and was consequently referred back to the NHS for a prosthetic limb. Backward Chaining, a therapeutic method of teaching a person to get down to and up from the floor, was subsequently adapted by the Therapy & Wellbeing Coordinator and taught to him, who was then able to progress his strength regime with additional floor exercises. Throughout his two years of rehabilitation, he has remained totally independent

2. Another resident at the scheme has been a regular weekly attendee of both the Healthy Heart and Active Balance classes at Marina Court. In his 90th year now, his doctor has monitored improvements in hypertension and been able to reduce his blood pressure medication. He has also noticed dramatic improvements in his balance and posture, walking more confidently and falling only once in the last year, which he attributes to “over-socialising”! In addition, in a letter to the Therapy & Wellbeing Co-ordinator, he gratefully acknowledged the positive part played by the comprehensive programme of activity at Marina Court in the process of bereavement following the loss of his wife.
3. A local member of the wider community of Tewkesbury attends classes twice a week at Marina Court to boost her muscular strength and endurance prior to a hip replacement operation. She subsequently attended the same classes after the surgery and a short period of physiotherapy. At her follow-up appointment, her speedy recovery was acknowledged by her doctors in Smethwick, who were both curious and complimentary about the facility that she had used to aid her recovery.
4. Another local beneficiary originally attended the Expert Patient Programme at Marina Court in order to learn how to cope with long-term depression. Whilst attending Marina Court regularly from her sheltered housing scheme in Tewkesbury, she enquired about “hiring” the Therapy Suite so that she could resume ballroom dancing with her husband, which has helped her depression in the past. An arrangement was made for her to use the Therapy Suite in exchange for running a monthly “Chance2Dance” activity with residents at Marina Court. This has now been running successfully for over a year and has seen her improve in confidence and sense of purpose as her efforts are well-received at Marina Court. She and her husband have also become regular attendees at the Healthy Heart exercise class.
5. And finally, great strides have been taken by a 46 year old local woman who had suffered a brain haemorrhage and was admitted to Frenchay Hospital in Bristol. Whilst in hospital she subsequently suffered a stroke *and* contracted MRSA. She spent two whole years of her life in hospital. She now attends Marina Court on a Wednesday with her husband for Seated Exercise, having been recommended by the ARU at Tewkesbury hospital. In addition to hemi-plegia, she has the added complication of ataxia, but has increased both her strength and her control during the session’s exercises. Every week she increases the length of time she holds a “stand” at the barre, now managing ten minutes out of her wheelchair looking through the window. This achievement has paid



off in other areas as she is now stronger and more able to remain on horseback when she participates in Riding for the Disabled at Twyning, where she has won an award for most-improved rider.

The Therapy and Wellbeing Co-ordinator collaborates with the Estate Management team and the on-site care team to ensure that needs are adequately supported, activities are broad ranging and continue to tackle the needs of the scheme residents and the wider local community. The care team have a flexible approach to meeting the needs of residents and are happy to work with people on a variety of levels including providing low level rehabilitative support to people who have been in a crisis situation. This compliments the work of the local enablement teams and health care workers.

## **Conclusion**

Further exploration into the benefits of supplying care and support through hub systems and adopting 'lead provider' models of commissioning services are also being explored locally. The intention is to test whether efficiencies can be realised by creating a 'one stop shop' for commissioners enabling independent providers to capitalise on collaborative opportunities and create pools of resources and skills that may not be within their core business capabilities. By developing stronger networks to deliver services it is hoped that both providers and commissioners will see benefits in both costs and quality of services provided locally. Moreover this type of service provision should encourage efficiencies in Health, Social Care and Housing by working together to deliver person centred care and support.

And finally, there is no doubt that the Therapy and Wellbeing Co-ordinator's role has enabled both residents at the Extra Care Scheme and local people to make enormous improvements in their quality of life. Indeed, Marina Court provides a useful foundation to test this type of modelling within Gloucestershire.

Edited by Jeremy Porteus, Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

For information on the South West Housing LIN, email [info@housinglin.org.uk](mailto:info@housinglin.org.uk)

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For further information about the Housing LIN and to access its comprehensive list of on-line resources, visit [www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/housing](http://www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/housing)

The Housing LIN welcomes contributions on a range of issues pertinent to Extra Care housing. If there is a subject that you feel should be addressed, please contact us.

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