



MDT EXPANSION

Transformation Fund has confirmed the allocation of £61 million over the next four years for the MDT programme to expand.

A letter was recently issued on behalf of Gearoid Cassidy (Director of Primary Care, DoH) requesting that locally agreed implementation plans are submitted to local SPPG MDT Programme Managers by mid-March to enable commencement as soon as possible in 2025/26. This is in line with the commitment outlined in the Minister of Health's 'Three Year Plan'. SPPG are now actively engaging with Trust and Federation colleagues on the next steps.

Considering the financial and staffing pressures in the system, it was announced that the rollout will likely be delivered in two phases.

The first phase would be funded in full by the Transformation Fund and last for four years beginning in 2025/26. This would see MDTs completed in the seven existing areas where implementation has already commenced, and the Programme expanded to a further five areas; East Antrim, South West, Craigavon, Armagh and Dungannon and North Belfast.

The second phase is anticipated to run for a further 3-4 years from 2029/30 and would see MDTs expand to the remaining five GP Federation areas; Mid Ulster, East Belfast, Lisburn, Antrim & Ballymena and South Belfast

We are all delighted with the news and look forward to making MDTs more accessible to patients across the region over the next few years.

As Gearoid explained in his communication "I recognise the enormous effort that has gone into the programme to date and the transformative impacts our existing MDTs are having. The collaborative approach between Health and Social Care Trusts and GP Federations has been key to this success and your continued support in expanding the MDT Programme is very much appreciated".

LOCAL AREA NEWS

SOUTH EASTERN AREA



FCP COMMUNITY COLLABORATION IN MSK

First Contact Physiotherapists (FCP) in the South Eastern Trust have been collaborating with voluntary and community sector groups to help deliver a range of health promotion and self-management strategies to empower service users to better understand and control their musculoskeletal health.

PAIN MANAGEMENT

FCPs have joined up with Peninsula Healthy Living to help deliver a pain education and awareness as part of the Better Days Pain Management Programme. FCPs delivered interactive educational sessions on understanding pain and the benefits of physical activity to between 10-25 service users on 3 occasions throughout 2024. This marked a new collaboration between the Trust & voluntary sector.

Allan Reid, Health Development Worker at Peninsula Healthy Living commented “Having FCPs helping to deliver our Pain Management Programme has been incredible, with their knowledge base, approachability, expertise, enthusiasm and understanding being second to none. The positive feedback received regarding their session is very deserving. Each programme is evaluated pre and post and currently the FCP session is very much proving to be the most popular and most rewarding for those attending.”



MENOPAUSE EVENT



At a recent seminar in Ballynahinch, the effects of perimenopause and menopause on brain health were explored. The seminar took place in the Millbrook Lodge Hotel and guest speaker Dr Gwyneth Hinds delivered an insightful presentation on the impact of menopause on brain structure.

Many of the women who attended the seminar were introduced to strategies to maintain and improve brain health, including adopting a Mediterranean diet, promoting gut health, increasing exercise, consuming a variety of 30 different fruits, grains, pulses and nuts per week, reducing alcohol consumption, quitting smoking and considering the effective use of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT).

The event was arranged by the South Eastern Trust's Down MDT Social Worker Team. Those attending the seminar found it to be extremely beneficial.

"Tonight has been an emotional evening, as someone is listening, someone is helping" one commented.

"I have gained better knowledge on how to help myself while going through menopause" another remarked.

Reflecting on the success of the seminar, Senior Social Work Practitioner Amanda McMillen said "It was clear that many attending this seminar took away this message of hope, understanding that they have the power to improve their brain health alongside managing menopause symptoms".



NEURO CAFE

A new neuro café which has opened at the South Eastern Regional College's Downpatrick campus has been hailed a "resounding success".

The café is hosted by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Down Locality Planning Group and has been created to provide a "welcoming space".

SE Trust MDT Senior Social Work Practitioner, Niall Rotherham, said "the Café supports those living with neurodiverse conditions and provides an opportunity for parents and carers to connect and share experiences, and access support from community and statutory organisations".

He also explained that "this was an event for parents and carers of children with Autism, ADHD and those awaiting assessments as well. The Café has been a great partnership approach as we have had different organisations from the community, voluntary and statutory sector coming together to show what our parents and carers can access for their children and young people".

Niall shared how important it is to promote neurodivergence including "its strengths, the positives around it and helping parents and carers to link in with key services and supports".

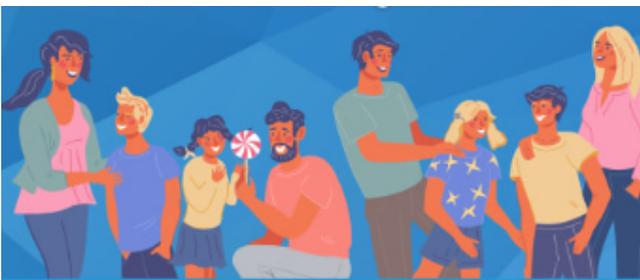
He added: "Sometimes it is hard to know what services, what support is out there but with the Café we are all under one roof. There is a greater understanding around neurodivergence. It is important that we have these events and link people into vital services".

"It's a great thing to be part of"

Service User, Quinn Reilly

"I've met friend and a lot of new people and groups such as the NOW, as well as groups who offer mental health support and employment support"

Service User, Ryan Robinson



L-R: MDT SSW Niall Rotherham, MDT SW Lead Rachel Duncan, Health Visitor Anne Tumelty, Katrina Hynds (Newry Mourne & Down Council), SET Health Development Practitioner Noelle Hollywood, public health staff Nurse Laura Gallagher, SW Lead Anne-Marie Dooley, Surestart Health Visitor Laura Sharvin and Louise Dickson (Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership)

LOCAL AREA NEWS

SOUTHERN AREA



Mental health see poster

NDDFP SMHP are attending the International Conference on Integrated Care, Lisbon, on 14-16 May 2025. With the overarching theme 'Synergising Health and Care: Leveraging Integrated Care for a Sustainable Future' the conference will bring together leaders, researchers, clinicians, managers, community representatives, patients and caregivers from around the world who are engaged in the design and delivery of integrated health and care.

Alison Rooney, Director of Operations Southern GP Federation, will represent the MDT Project at this event.

MDT Senior Mental Health Practitioners

A new model for Primary Care

Federation of Family Practices Newry & District

HSC Southern Health & Social Care Trust

Mental Health Practitioners work alongside the existing practice team to provide enhanced access to health and social care services within a primary care setting. There will be an increased focus on prevention and early intervention initiatives, with the aim of ensuring that patient's needs are met at the earliest possible opportunity, reducing the need for onward referrals into secondary care services. The development of MDTs was a central element of 'Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together'. This seeks to transform the way in which health and social care services are delivered in Northern Ireland, with a focus on **person-centred care**, rather than buildings and structures.

What do we do ?

- Provide the right care, at the right time at the right place by early intervention and prevention.
- Provide first contact assessments and brief interventions to patients presenting with mental health concerns to GP practices
- Bring additional mental health expertise and experiences to GP practices
- Help to reduce increasing workload on GP practices

Patient Feedback

★★★★★

I felt very listened to and understood, I was given a chance to express myself.

I have really valued this service. It has allowed me to value my life.

'You literally saved my life. Thank you.'

I am so lucky to have had this support on my doorstep.

Understanding Needs

One in four people in Northern Ireland will experience problems that negatively affect their mental health. In 2022/2025 rates of self harm admissions in the most deprived areas were more than **two and a half times** that in the least deprived. **3 of the 5** largest health inequality gaps in the Southern Trust area are linked to mental health and addiction.

Community Development

- Children's Mental Health Library
- Support Videos
- Partnership with Towards Zero Suicide
- Mental Health Awareness Social Media Campaigns
- Menopause Support Sessions

Patient Outcomes

03 2024/2025

Primary Care 9.1%

78% Trust Outpatients

2,464 patients

4,940 consultations

68.2% of patients had NO onward referral

No onward referral 68.2%

Addressing the impact of language barriers in Health and Social care

HSC Southern Health and Social Care Trust Quality Care - for you, with you

AIM Partnership and Community Development to Reduce the Impact of Language Barriers within Ethnic Minority communities utilising digital translation devices.

WHY?

- Language support needs not always known by HSC services.
- Needs assessment (2022) outlined key barriers: Supported by National and international research.
- Language Identification Poster and interpreter card to be displayed in all Health care premises.

Top languages used:

Russian/Lithuanian/Polish, Polish/Bulgarian/Russian, Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Tetum, Tagalog, Indonesian, English, ARABIC benefits hugely, not have a lot, Russian/Ukrainian, Portuguese, Polish/Lithuanian/Polish, Lithuanian/Bulgarian/Polish

Co-production & Co-design

Regional Ethnic Minority Focus, Community Groups and Organisations, SHCT, Steering Group, Improving Service BSO, CYPSP, MDT Digital Skills

THE PROBLEM

Language barrier identified as biggest obstacle in accessing services for minority ethnic communities (CYPSP, 2022)

- Language support needs not always known by HSC services.
- Particularly challenging in unscheduled, crisis, emergency and community context.
- Service users will receive timely access to support services without delay.
- Service users experience will be more positive, culturally sensitive and promote better outcomes.

What we did:

Engaged with multi-lingual staff, Partnership, Direct service user engagement, Increased Access to Services, Community Engagement, Understand Key Barriers to Health and Social Care, Initial pilot 3 Years devices, Language Barrier, Cultural differences, Testing of Yeevo Device, Pilot of Devices, Evaluation, Update a further 10 Devices, Update to 65 devices in GP practices, ED Departments and CAB Organisations

CONCLUSIONS AND LEARNING:

- Improved accessibility to the right service at the right time with the right support.
- Increased confidence for staff and service users during initial contact.
- Easier referral pathways for both service user and staff to navigate.
- Increased staff knowledge and skills re; impact of language barrier and HSC inequalities.
- Improved co-working and communication with our colleagues across all directorates.

OUTCOMES

100% Found this device easy to use

85% Found the device improves patient contact.

85% Nil increased access to services.

25% Nil the devices should be available in all Health Care Settings.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to review and monitor gathering feedback from staff and service users
- Establish review panel to share learning, recommendations and further funding.

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Project Team:

Martina McAloon - Social Work Lead for MDT
 Robbie McCague - Inequalities and Inclusion Co-ordinator
 Maria McKevitt - MDT Project Support Officer



NEWRY & DISTRICT GP FEDERATION FIRST CONTACT PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Move More for Our Mental Health

Mourne Matters Hub in Killeel hosted a community engagement event to promote Mental Health Awareness Week to promote this year's theme: Move More for our Mental Health. There were opportunities for the public in to try taster sessions in Strength & Balance, Chi-Me, Musical Drumming and Heritage 4 Health Programme. There was information on the PARS programme, Better Days Pain Programme, walking group opportunities and information stands from local services promoting health and wellbeing. Christine Burns Primary Care Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) First Contact Physiotherapy Practitioner in the Mournes area provided a session on the benefits of Physical Activity and access to the MDT services.



Well While waiting in Banbridge Group Surgery

Primary Care Multidisciplinary staff provided information on Knee Osteoarthritis, the benefits of Physical Activity, joint care, improving general wellbeing to optimise orthopaedic outcomes, home safety and how to get further support.

Staff were delighted that 32 patients attended and Anna from Versus Arthritis was able to advise on their resources and self-management programmes.

Positive Ageing Event Success

First Contact Physiotherapy Team were part of the Annual Positive Ageing Day in Newry Leisure Centre with over 300 participants and stand holders. The team provided advice, resources and information on the importance of physical activity in fighting frailty.



AHP Research & Innovation Conference

First Contact Physiotherapy provided a Rapid 5 presentation to the conference on their work on "Be Connected for Health and Wellbeing.

Primary Care Multi-Disciplinary Team First Contact Physiotherapy service; enabling self-care and community connections". Denise Hall Consultant Physiotherapist also presented the regional AHP population Health work on AHPs Take 5?



New physiotherapy webpage

Primary Care Multidisciplinary Team First Contact Physiotherapy Practitioners in Newry & District GP Federation Practices have developed a webpage to direct patients on musculoskeletal conditions, chronic pain, physical activity, promoting health and wellbeing in conjunction with the Southern GP Federation Support Unit. A handy card with the webpage address and other useful support has also been co-produced by the team and patients.



Be Connected for Health and Wellbeing



Denise Hall, FCP Consultant Physiotherapist Newry & District GP Federation introduces, "Be Connected for Health and Wellbeing" this multidisciplinary initiative is focused on enhancing community health through First-Contact Physiotherapy Services, encouraging self-care, and building community connections.

Be Connected for Health and Wellbeing
Primary Care Multi-Disciplinary Team First Contact Physiotherapy service, enabling self-care and community connections

Oral Presentations

- FCPNI Event 15.06.23
- International Conference for Integrated Care (ICIC) "Taking the leap: making integrated care a reality for people and communities" Belfast ICIC 22-24th April 24
- Inaugural AHP Research and Innovation Conference 11.09.24

Delivering Together Primary Care Multidisciplinary Teams

Denise Hall
Consultant Physiotherapist
First Contact Physiotherapy Service
Newry & District GP Federation

St. Mary's Health and Social Care Trust
Newry Centre for girls, with girls

By collaborating with community partners, the project offers physical activity classes and health literacy training. Key outcomes show improvements in participants' health, wellbeing, and social engagement. This project exemplifies the value of integrated, community-centered approaches in primary healthcare, supporting diverse patient needs and local health goals.

Live Well Cardiac Event

First Contact Physiotherapy Team participated in a partnership event with Southern Trust' Cardiac rehabilitation service, in Newry Leisure Centre with over 250 participants attended and 160 took advantage of health checks with 25 information stands. The First Contact Physiotherapy Team provided advice, resources and information on the importance of physical activity in living well and staying strong.



Health event for Farming & Rural Communities

First Contact Physiotherapy Team supported the event in Altnaveigh House Newry on 20.03.25 attended by over 20 organisations supporting rural communities health and wellbeing.



MDT SOCIAL WORK TEAM, RATHFRILAND HEALTH CENTRE

The MDT Social Work team in Rathfriland Health Centre have been proactive in linking with some voluntary/community groups in Rathfriland to identify current needs within the community. One of the GP's suggested the social work team should link in with the local Rathfriland Cross Community ABC – Amateur Boxing Club to work in partnership together to develop projects for young people in the Rathfriland area.

Following a meeting with the boxing club they highlighted there is no provision for a summer scheme in Rathfriland for children with additional needs such as Autism and ADHD.

The Social Work team in partnership with the Boxing Club set up a fun based inclusive group summer scheme for two weeks for young people with ASD and ADHD with the aim that these young people will feel included in their local community. The MDT Social Work team supported the programme through funding and signposted the boxing club to free Autism Awareness Training offered by the promoting well-being team. This meant all the trainers that would be involved in the programme would receive training before the beginning of the 14 week programme. The weekly boxing sessions ran for 14 weeks with 11 boys attending the classes regularly.

NIO MINISTER FLEUR ANDERSON VISIT TO THE CLUB

The Boxing club have been working to be able to buy bigger premises in Rathfriland in order to expand their services for young people in the area. The premises would also allow them to open a youth club for all young people in the area. Alongside raising their own funds they were successful applicants of the Community Ownership Fund which will now allow them to purchase a bigger building. Due to their successful application the club had a visit by the Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Minister Fleur Anderson. The club invited different organisations that work with the club, which included the PSNI and the Social Work Team in Rathfriland. The Minister spoke with Kellie O'Donnell, Senior Social Worker about the MDT role in communities and advised she would like to take back the idea of inclusive boxing to her own boxing club in England. The Minister also advised she had plans to highlight the inclusivity of the boxing club to all young people in parliament.



Christopher & Kevin Sheppard - Boxing Club Coaches, Logan Cromie - Rathfriland Boxer, Minister Fleur Anderson, Kellie O'Donnell - Senior Social Worker, Ciaran Clancy - Rathfriland Boxing Club Committee, Charlie Fisher - Development Trust NI and local Community PSNI officer



Charlie fisher-Development Trust NI, Minister Fleur Anderson, Christopher Sheppard - Rathfriland Boxing Club Coach



Health Ministers visit to the Health Visiting Team in the Derry GP Federation area

Health Minister, Mike Nesbitt met members of the Derry Federation MDT Health Visiting team and enjoyed interacting with service-users. The Minister heard in detail about the team's primary role delivering the Healthy Child Healthy Future programme to all families and how the MDT Model has transformed Health Visitors' role in public health and community development with evidence-based Health Visiting Groups to meet the health and social care needs of parents and pre-school children.



The Health Visiting Groups, developed and facilitated by the HV teams, focus on Making Life Better's key public health priorities, including supporting maternal and infant mental health, reducing obesity, accident prevention, breastfeeding – to give children the best start in life. They also incorporate Baby Massage, Stay and Play and Rhyme Time. Health Visitors work collaboratively with other statutory and voluntary organisations, such as Talking to Your Babies, the Council's Home Safety Scheme, Parenting NI and Tiny Life, to deliver information sessions. Parents report the Groups are welcoming and a safe space where parents and children have the opportunity to develop friendships, learn new knowledge and skills to support their child's health and development and be connected with a range of other services.



There are currently 15 Health Visiting Groups throughout the Derry GP Federation area, targeting populations and areas of need with an aim to reduce inequalities in health for children and families and ensure better health outcomes.



Western Trust launches lifesaving Dementia Wristband Initiative – ‘Scan the Band for a Helping Hand’

The new initiative aimed at giving people with dementia peace of mind and helping them if they are lost or distressed has been launched in Derry.

The Western Trust in partnership with Age Concern Causeway, the Public Health Agency and the Derry GP Federation were joined by the Mayor, Lilian Seenoi-Barr as they launched the Age Concern Causeway Dementia Wristband initiative in the Guildhall.

This vital initiative was first launched in the Northern Trust last Autumn and is now being rolled out across the Western Trust. The brainchild of Age Concern Causeway’s Manager Mandy Corr, the scheme involves a wristband which stores electronic information about the wearer which can be scanned if the individual is found lost or distressed.



Chairperson of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Cllr John McClaughry with Western Trust staff South West Age Partnership (SWAP) singing group to launch the Dementia Safeguarding Scheme.

This scheme will be promoted on public transport, hospitals, GP surgeries, community facilities and social media platforms.

Free wristbands will be distributed by GP social workers, dementia navigators and voluntary and community organisations and groups.

You can request a wristband at www.ageconcerncauseway.org or call 08000113846.



Launching the Dementia Safeguarding Scheme Allison Forbes, Manager South West Age Partnership (SWAP); Cliona Connolly, Dementia Navigator, Fermanagh and Omagh area of the Western Trust; Mandy Corr, Age Concern Causeway Manager and Majella Magee, Dementia Service Improvement Lead - Community and Older People's Services, Western Trust

Western Trust have been working in partnership with various stakeholders to ensure the success of this fantastic initiative. SW MDT in the West play a pivotal role in this initiative as the only SW team (alongside guidance from GP colleagues) who complete memory screening assessments (MMSE & MACE). This initiative has been endorsed by the Health Minister. **Anne-Marie Bradley, MDT SW Lead**

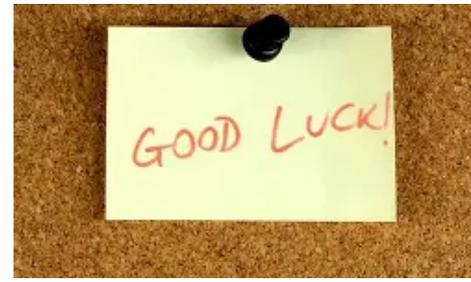


Derry GP Federation Social Work Lead Dr Ryan Power with Western Trust staff and Mandy Corr, Manager of Coleraine-based Age Concern Causeway (third from right).





REGIONAL AWARDS.....



Christine Brace Derry MDT Social Worker

MDT social worker in Derry, Christine Brace, has been shortlisted as a finalist for the Regional Social Work Awards, in the category of 'People's Choice Award'. She was shortlisted in recognition of the impact her work has had on an individual level, but also for the community development initiatives she has implemented in response to unmet need in the community.

Kelly Forbes Senior Mental Health Practitioner in Southern Area

RCN nurse of the year- Senior Mental Health Practitioner in Southern Area, Kelly Forbes is a finalist in the category- NI nurse of the year 2025 and the Primary Care nursing category

If you have any Good News Stories from your MDT area that you would like shared in our newsletter, we would love to hear from you!

Contact: emma.mccorin@hscni.net or
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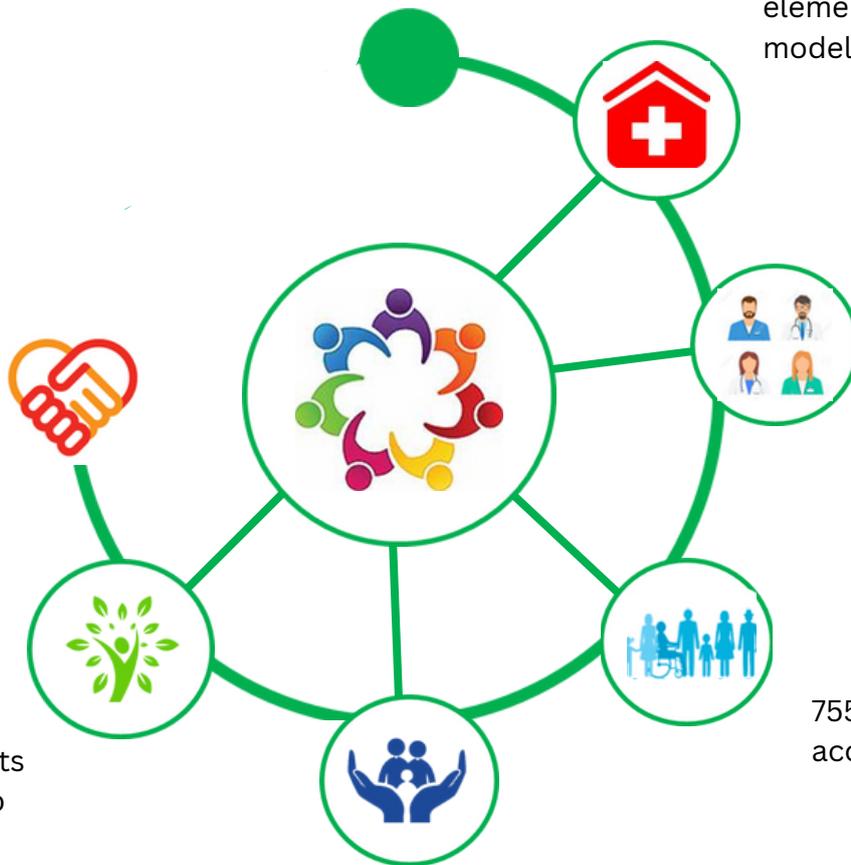


MDT IN NUMBERS

GPIP MDT HIGH LEVEL DASHBOARD

MDT DATA - AS OF MARCH 2025

117 GP practices currently have an element of the MDT model



WTE Staff in Post:**
Mental Health – 70.4
Physiotherapy – 58.7
Social Work – 118.8
Health Visiting – 46.8
District Nursing – 65.17

70.6%* of patients managed with no onward referrals

755,950 patients with access to MDTs

84,453* patient contacts

Our GPIP MDT High Level Dashboard is populated with both EMIS and Vision data and provides data from January 2020 on a continuing basis. This dashboard is the official dataset for MDTs and will be refreshed at the beginning of every month.

Current figures can be found above.

Data may vary depending on timing of quarterly submission of Highlight Reports

**Source: GPIP Q4 2024-25*

*** Staff in Post data as at March '25*