

# Library and Knowledge Services case study

# *Torbay & South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, South Devon Healthcare Library: Volunteer Peer Health Coaches*

Date *23/06/2021*

## Reason for enquiry

We were looking at individuals with low levels of patient activation in terms of their knowledge, skills and confidence, with a view to enabling them to self-manage their own health condition(s). In 2019 we hosted a conference with patients to get their feedback on how we could co-design services. One of the outcomes of this conference was the request to develop a peer health coach offering. We needed to evaluate the evidence around peer health coaching prior to committing to implement this service.

## What the knowledge and library specialist did

The LKS ran a literature search, looking at systematic reviews, controlled trials, qualitative analysis studies, pilot studies and feasibility studies, and evaluated the evidence base of peer health coaching in long term conditions.

# Impact of input from the library and knowledge service

The LKS evidence review provided the assurance that there was good evidence to suggest that peer led mentoring was well established and effective in a number of mental healthcare provisions and that health coaching as an intervention was effective at supporting people to optimise on their self-care competencies, confidence and behaviours. However there was currently a gap in the available published evidence around the effectiveness of volunteer peer health coaching, which enabled us to get the agreement to implement the project.

## Immediate Impact

We are setting up a network of volunteer peer health and wellbeing coaches to coach patients living with long-term conditions. These volunteers could be current patients or interact closely with others who suffer from long-term conditions. They are given training in developing their listening and supportive, empowering conversational skills to support individuals to achieve what matters to them. See <https://vimeo.com/516611566> for our advert.

The innovative nature of this project has led to the Trust lead for this project being recruited onto the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur program an NHS Clinical Entrepreneur. A randomised controlled feasibility study has been set up, with funding from Torbay Medical Fund, to learn what it takes to set up and run this service with the view to support a future NIHR multi-centre randomised controlled trial to evaluate its effectiveness.

*“The literature search run by the library team has given us the building blocks to be able to take this project forward.”*

## Probable future Impact

Because of this innovation and connection with the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Program, the Trust has been given an opportunity to become an NHS Clinical Entrepreneur real world Test and Evaluation Site available to beta test future innovations.

Systematic reviews from the literature search highlighted that further high-quality evidence was required in this area. The RCT should provide this.

*[Include Quotes]*

## Submission by:

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## For further information on how you can get similar support contact your local NHS library and knowledge service.