

Summary of the Enhance evaluation findings for year two May 2024

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Enhance



[Enhance](#) is funded by [Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust](#) (LCH) and managed by [Leeds Older People's Forum](#) on behalf of [Forum Central](#). The programme brings together 13 third sector delivery partners with LCH teams across the city. It provides person-centred, community-based support to individuals to help avoid delayed hospital discharges and readmissions, and to enhance capacity throughout the health system. This is a summary of the evaluation findings for the second year of Enhance delivery.

Enhance supported 922 people in year two and 1,494 in total since 2022.

The year two evaluation was informed by:

- Interviews with 79 people, including participants, delivery partner staff and volunteers, LCH and wider health and social care staff
- Questionnaire responses from 410 participants (including 190 people who completed a second, follow up questionnaire)
- Assessment of data analysis based on pseudonymised NHS numbers (covering 35% of participants across 9 delivery partners)
- A review of quarterly monitoring returns completed by all 13 delivery partners.



Profile of the people referred into Enhance in year two

- 85.2% have some level of frailty
- 97.4% have at least one long term condition, with an average number of 4.85 conditions
- Nearly half live in the most deprived areas (England deciles 1 and 2 on the indices of multiple deprivation)
- Nearly one third reported chronic depression (at 31.5%)
- 78.9% rated their social activities and relationships as fair or poor
- 62.8% were referred to Enhance via LCH.

Outcomes and impact for Enhance participants

Enhance is promoting independence and tackling the risk factors associated with frailty through empowering individuals to manage and improve their health and quality of life. It is achieving this through a holistic support offer which tackles financial inequality and promotes meaningful social interaction, exercise, movement and good nutrition.

Improved physical health

Based on people who completed a two phase questionnaire, after receiving Enhance support participants were:

- A fifth less likely to rate their physical health as poor
- More able to carry out social activities (this score increased by 13.5%), and were 71% more likely to assess this as good to excellent
- 28% less likely to report severe to very severe fatigue levels
- 29% less likely to record a high pain score (7 or above out of 10).

“We go for a walk [the Enhance worker] tries her best to get me out – there is a local park – she goes there with me...Where I live they have started doing exercise on a Friday morning –the worker persuaded me to go so I have just started – she makes me feel that the pain can get better if I keep going...she is always trying to get me moving.”

Enhance participants were more likely to maintain gains through appreciating the link between movement and nutrition and improving their overall health:

“It made me more aware of the necessity of exercise –I was a sedentary person...now I won’t just sit in a chair and watch TV for a couple of hours – I will walk around and do things.”



Reduced loneliness and social isolation and improved mental wellbeing

Enhance was viewed by LCH staff as a particularly effective programme for those with limited family support, to help them to manage their health needs and tackle social isolation and loneliness.

“When people don’t have family or anyone to lean on – little things become big things – [and the] wound can hurt a bit more.” (Matron)

Based on people who completed a two phase questionnaire:

- Assessed quality of life increased, with 28% less likely to rate it as poor
- Satisfaction with social activities and relationships had increased by 22%,
- 41% were less likely to feel bothered by emotional problems always or often
- 29% were less likely to rate mental health as poor.

Help to build social connections led to improved wellbeing and a more positive outlook:

“[I] have met lots of new friends. I feel better health wise now...before I didn’t go out and was really struggling with my mental health - now I am in a much better place... I have a more positive outlook – I wouldn’t have come out of my house without it – it changed my life”



Promoted inclusion and reduced financial inequality

Some LCH staff referred patients with more complex needs into Enhance to enable them to access more tailored, intensive support.

Participants reported that Enhance had led to improved financial circumstances. The **amount of additional benefits secured by delivery partners for participants totalled just over £311,000** (yearly equivalent amount). Cold, damp homes were identified as contributing to physical and mental health issues. Enhance supported people to keep warm through addressing fuel poverty and maximising home heat efficiency. Financial assistance was sometimes provided to prevent crises, such as topping up electric meters or providing heating sources. One participant reported being introduced to local “warm spaces”, which contributed to their wellbeing through providing a warm and comfortable environment.

Enhance supported participants to develop digital skills and access technology which increased their independence and ability to manage their health. This included medication management, online shopping, and connecting with loved ones.



Reducing pressure on LCH Neighbourhood Teams by complementing service provision

Enhance helped LCH staff to achieve a more patient centred approach that they strived for, with one describing it as “*releasing time to care*”. It was also felt to contribute to quicker recovery times and reduce the likelihood of crisis situations. Due to the holistic, context specific nature of Enhance, staff could not always quantify how Enhance saved their time, as addressing non-clinical aspects so they could get on with clinical duties generally consisted of a number of small tasks.

“It definitely does [save time] – we had a number [of patients] that stayed on our caseload for many years simply because the only social aspect they have is through having a nurse or clinical support visiting, it was the only thing in their life – but now they are going to lunches, having outings once a week – some have come off of our caseload, suddenly they can do their own medication they didn’t think they could.”
(Occupational Therapist)

“There are times that staff go above and beyond – they can’t walk away, they do shopping, sort out cleaning – you are human...but you have 10 visits that day and you know you shouldn’t do it – but we do.” (Neighbourhood Team Coordinator)

How is Enhance reducing LCH staff pressure?

1. **Empowering people to self-manage their care** which staff reported had helped to reduce the number and duration of visits and facilitated closure of long term cases. This was achieved through promoting positive health actions and embedding social support – which provided the opportunity to share learning with peers.
2. **Accompanying people to appointments and providing advocacy** helped people to build confidence and feel in a better position to manage their own health needs.
3. **Facilitating referrals and access to services** which can support the health of participants, such as for Telecare, Social Care, adaptations services, key safes, dosette boxes and disability related benefits.
4. **Improving staff wellbeing** as staff reported increased job satisfaction through Enhance providing reassurance that patients could receive comprehensive support beyond clinical care.

How has Enhance developed stronger partnerships?

Learning about each other's roles and appreciating the value each brings was felt to facilitate strong partnerships and lead to a better understanding of how non-clinical support can complement clinical care. Delivery partners and LCH staff reported carrying out joint visits, delivering training sessions and piloting new ways to promote complementary services to people.

Bringing together clinical and non-clinical support in a community setting was particularly effective. A few delivery partners hosted LCH staff in their community spaces, facilitating interaction and showcasing how the third sector contributes to improving the health and wellbeing of local residents. This had reportedly fostered a sense of real partnership which went beyond referrals and is contributing to the creation of seamless patient pathways.





Easing pressure across the wider health and social care system

Enhance's impact extends beyond individual and LCH staff outcomes, with examples of it contributing to greater efficiency and reduced pressure within the health and social care system, such as through supporting timely hospital discharge and those waiting for services to manage elements of their care.

How does Enhance ease pressure across the wider system?

- 1. Reducing hospital stays:** Data analysis revealed significant reductions in hospital admissions and readmissions, and bed days, following contact with Enhance. Factors contributing to this include addressing social isolation, ensuring home safety and comfort, and facilitating earlier discharge through practical support.
- 2. Adult Social Care:** have accounted for 63 referrals to Enhance in year two. Feedback suggests that Enhance interventions often fulfil some of the needs which would be identified by social care through an assessment.
- 3. Supporting Primary Care:** 68 Enhance referrals came through GPs since the start of Enhance, and a primary care network in one area invested in the Enhance model to support their local population.

Identified challenges and considerations

- Despite the clear benefits of collaboration, this was sometimes hampered by resource constraints, making it difficult to coordinate staff so they could work together and offer a more seamless service.
- Delivery partners continue to identify effective ways to link in with LCH staff in their respective areas, though a few report lower than expected referrals (with the proportion of LCH referrals by area ranging from 14% up to 88%).
- For individuals with complex needs or who are housebound, the support required is more intensive, and progress can be slower. This meant that these groups were less likely to maintain outcomes beyond the 12-week Enhance support period.

Recommendations

Recommendations to help sustain and develop the effectiveness of Enhance while addressing emerging challenges and opportunities include:

- 1. Continue with collaboration and learning:** Maintain avenues for sharing good practices and facilitating peer learning, focusing on activities of interest and which have been shown to support positive outcomes, such as hosting cross-sector community health hubs and developing dedicated exercise pathways.
- 2. Explore the feasibility of cross-sector working groups:** This helps to address shared ambitions and challenges and involves operational and strategic staff from both sectors.
- 3. Promote system-level benefits:** Continue to highlight the system-level benefits of Enhance, showcasing examples of how it eases pressure on services and exploring opportunities for collaboration with other NHS and social care areas.
- 4. Clearly present the Enhance offer:** Evolve ways to present Enhance's offer to busy staff, ensuring clarity about its role in addressing social determinants of health and avoiding misconceptions.
- 5. Retain the person-centred ambition:** Retain flexibility in service delivery to meet the needs of patients with more complex needs and continue to provide training and professional development opportunities for staff and volunteers.
- 6. Measure outcomes and impact:** Capture process-level learning and participant feedback, explore the role of Enhance in supporting staff wellbeing and retention, and collaborate with LCH staff to measure impact at the operational level.

