

Paths for All – Project Plan

1. What do you want to do?

Describe what your project activity will be, who will benefit from it and where you will work

The project aims to improve the lives of older people with dementia and other long term condition living in care homes. We will do this in partnership with NHS Lothian through increased opportunities to be active every day. The project will provide a comprehensive package of support, delivered in person or online as required, that will include engaging and training care home staff across Lothian and working with residents to design and implement activities in care homes. Training will enable staff to provide appropriate and enjoyable physical activity to residents safely. Activities aim to increase strength, balance, enrich confidence, maintain connection and empowerment.

Paths for All has been working closely with people living with dementia, in various settings for the past five years. In 2018 we delivered a developmental project to 10 care homes in Perth and Kinross. That project allowed us to evaluate our work, have input from care home staff during development, get feedback from family and friends on the benefits to their family members, and, most importantly, consult and gather input from residents. All these factors have allowed us to fine-tune our support and resources and maximise the benefits to those taking part. Additionally, we worked closely with several expert partners, such as Age Scotland and our steering group which included Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership, Perth and Kinross Council, Live Active Leisure, staff from SportScotland, along with the Care Inspectorate.

Demonstrate that your proposed project meets the Self Management Fund criteria

- The project is a progression of development work that took place in partnership with care homes and residents in Perth and Kinross. We have also worked to adapt our, originally in person, support into a digital format due to the current pandemic and are looking to work with NHS Lothian to embed the work into their service delivery to increase the capacity of the people in their care homes to live well with dementia and other long term conditions. There is the potential to deliver the programme across Scotland once established.
- During our work supporting people living with dementia, they have told us that being active and getting outdoors is extremely important to them. This is particularly the case within care home and even more so during the recent pandemic. We have worked closely with care-home residents, staff, volunteers and family members during the development phase to ensure that we meet the needs of those taking part in our programme and that they have meaningful input to delivery and evaluation.
- There are notable physical benefits to people living with dementia becoming more active. These benefits include alleviating many common problems such as cognitive decline, changes in behaviour, a decline in motor functions, and the presence of mood and sleep disorders. Exercise has shown to slow deterioration and can also lead to improvements in cognitive function, complete daily living activities, and quality of life.
- We have secured a Partnership with NHS Lothian and they will support and ensure engagement with the relevant Health and Social Care Partnerships in the area. They will work with Paths for All to support, embed and maximise participation in our Care About Walking Programme.

Using the five principles of self-management as a guide, how does your proposed project support self-management in Scotland?

"Be accountable to me and value my experience."

Paths for All has developed this programme in conjunction with residents, both living with dementia and with other LTCs. We practice continual review and assessment through focus groups, one to one conversations and have adjusted the programme to meet needs. The programme itself is adjustable to suit each individual's needs and interests.

"I am a whole person, and this is for my whole life."

Our ethos is that everyone has the right to experience the benefits of being physically active for as long as they are physically able and in any setting. This programme will give them that opportunity in a way that they choose and enjoy.

"Self-management is not a replacement for services. Gaun yersel doesn't mean going it alone" Self management does not mean managing my long-term condition alone. It's about self-determination in partnership with supporters.

At the centre of this programme are the residents. However, we must engage with staff, family members, and volunteers for the programme to be successful. For the residents to get the best experience, it will take understanding, support and encouragement from everyone around them. We will facilitate and encourage that by working to create an environment and culture within the care home that understands, supports and promotes physical activity alongside existing care and support services.

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"I am the leading partner in management of my health" I am involved in my own care. I, those who care for me and organisations that represent me, shape new approaches to my care.

Our whole home approach, consultation and ongoing evaluation process has been developed to ensure that those taking part have a voice and input into the programme. Residents are encouraged to share their goals, what activities they want to participate in, what's important to them and how being more active can help deliver this.

"Clear information helps me make decisions that are right for me" Professionals communicate with me effectively. They help ensure I have high quality, accessible information. They also support my right to make decisions.

In the development of the programme, it has been essential that all our materials were tried and tested and developed in partnership with care home residents. We have utilised a Dementia Friendly design approach to all our project resources. This has ensured that they are accessible to everyone who uses them and in the appropriate formats.

If applying to develop an existing idea, you must demonstrate what is different about this project, including how it has been adapted using participant feedback and how the people this project is designed to benefit have told you this.

The project has developed from 5 years of experience working directly with people living with dementia in various settings to increase physical activity. We have gained a great deal of insight from informal and formal conversations, focus groups, delivering academic research, consultations within communities and with dementia service users. We have learned from people's life experience of dementia focussing on what is essential and helpful in living well with the condition. This research and consultation have allowed us to co-produce an effective range of resources and activities that people with dementia have told us, through focus groups and one to one feedback, are effective, enjoyable and help improve their quality of life. We have also learned about the challenges of working within care homes, the pressures they face, the reality of life as a resident and a member of staff. We have also learnt how to effectively engage with staff and management to ensure that outcomes area shared, time and resources are allocated and staff are bought into the project.

"I really like the animation; we use this in the home regularly now on the television. I can do most of it by myself!" – Care Home Resident

"I am not as strong as I used to be, but I like to walk. It's important to keep moving if you can." – Care Home Resident

"Beech Manor were delighted to be given the opportunity to join the care about walking project, the residents were already enthusiastic about exercise, so being able to encourage this outside more is great. The exercise path in our garden has been well used over the summer, and this is continuing over the colder months. We are all aware of the health benefits of both regular exercise and fresh air, and this project has helped the team at Beech Manor achieve this." - Madeana Laing, Beechwood Manor Care Home Manager

With the effects of Covid-19 disproportionately affecting care home residents, it has become even more critical that these tools reach more care homes. We have identified the importance of the culture within care homes and its role in supporting physical activity through our detailed consultations with staff and residents. This next phase of the project focuses on that and takes a whole-home approach to delivery and engaging the local community. We have formed a partnership with NHS Lothian to create a comprehensive activity programme in a new geographical area for the work that supports everyday movement. This offering will allow care home staff to be remotely trained and supported initially to facilitate recovery from the impact of Covid-19. Paths for All will continue to learn and develop the programme from residents and staff's feedback to ensure that we continue to provide the most appropriate package for each home and resident.

2. How will you do it?

Include a project timeline and milestones

June 2021	Project inception meeting with NHS Lothian and representative from the HSCP's
	Identify and liaise with five care homes
July 2021	Consult residents, families, staff within participating homes (virtually if required)
	Carry out baseline evaluation in participating homes
	Create steering group with representation from all stakeholders which will meet quarterly
Aug 2021	Produce action plan for feedback

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	Confirm action plan
	Start implementation of activities in homes
Sept 2021 (ongoing)	Liaison, support and delivery of activities in 5 participating homes
	Review progress, challenges and feedback
May 2022	Complete interim project review, collect evaluation data from participating homes and produce future recommendations
June 2022	Identify and liaise with five new care homes
	Consult residents, families, staff within participating homes
	Carry out baseline evaluation in participating homes
July 2022	Produce action plan for feedback
	Confirm action plan
	Start implementation of activities in homes
Aug 2022 (ongoing)	Liaison, support and delivery of activities in 5 participating homes
	Review progress, challenges and feedback
April 2022	Complete final project review, collect evaluation data from participating homes and produce future recommendations
May 2022	Publicise project achievements, ensuring widespread knowledge of learning and resources across Scotland

Any key activities you need to complete in order to get started, for instance, recruitment, identifying partners or training volunteers

The initial tasks will be working with NHS Lothian to promote the programme to care homes in the NHS Lothian area, ensuring relevant staff are on board and supportive and recruiting initially five care homes to start the programme. We would ask that before signing up to the projects that residents have been consulted on their potential involvement and where appropriate, have indicated that they would like to be involved. We would then hold an initial meeting with representatives from the main stakeholder groups, residents, family staff and partners to explain more about the project and everyone's role.

Think about who needs to be involved

The residents are the main stakeholders as they are invited to decide, plan, deliver and participate in the programme of activities. Their family members will also be crucial, and we will look to engage, consult and include them. Care home management and staff will be involved from the start, as their participation, commitment, and knowledge are essential for the success of the project. Our partners in NHS Lothian and the Health and Social Care partnerships will also be engaged and other key stakeholders in ensuring attitudes and culture changes. We will look to work with volunteers and other local community groups to help deliver activities, resources and widen the impact of the project as and when possible.

What will project activity look like on a day-to-day basis?

The Development Officer will liaise with NHS Lothian contacts and staff as project partners regularly. However, the main activity will be with the participating care homes and their residents, initially through consultation, relationship building and planning, moving onto delivery of activities, maintaining and embedding them, and evaluating the impact. Regular calls, emails and, when allowed, visits will support the project delivery. The activity that will be delivered and supported includes:

- Installation of dementia-friendly strength and balance graphics and tools
- Training of staff to deliver strength and balance sessions
- Implementation of the Care about Walking pack by residents to plan and record delivery and impact of activities
- Review of any outside space and consultation with residents and staff around improvements
- Delivery of outside space improvements where possible
- Reminiscence activities around walking
- Delivery of Health Walks from the care home
- Develop 'Walking with Nature' packs and support use by staff and residents
- Digital strength and balance resource use
- Evaluation and evidence of impact collection
- Promotion of the project learning, success and resident's feedback

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3. What difference will it make?

Identify and list project outcomes

- Older people living in care homes with dementia have improved physical, mental and social health from participating in physical activities.
- Older people living in care homes with dementia are more connected to their local community and environment.
- Older people living in care homes with dementia have a say in how their physical activities are developed, designed and run.
- Staff have greater awareness of the benefits of physical activity and increased skills to promote and deliver physical activity opportunities.

Have you thought about sustainability?

Sustainability will be achieved through the training of staff and volunteers within the care homes, creating improved capacity and skill to deliver the activities on an ongoing basis. The resources and environmental improvements will remain in the homes and provide a long term resource.

What will be the legacy of your project?

We will work to embed a culture of everyday movement in the homes which will create a legacy of future delivery and increased value being placed on everyday movement and independent living.

Through our consultation work with people living with dementia, we know there is a desire to be physically active, including enjoying nature and accessing the outdoors and this is something that is highly valued, empowering and enjoyable as these quotes illustrate, 'I have a history of walking, and I do not want to stop.' '(my husband's) dementia is advanced, but we both like the outdoors, nature... seeing plants, lots of colour, lots of sounds and smells. All that sort of stuff.'

However, there are still lots of barriers faced by people with dementia to being active, including the culture within care settings that 'rest is best'. Research has consistently shown that people living in care homes spend the majority of their day sitting or lying down. This increases the risk of physical and psychological ill-health and can reduce social interaction impacting negatively on the quality of life. Supporting older people in care to be more active through group and independent walking, strength and balance exercises, keeping connections with the broader community, and improving the care home environment will improve physical health and mental wellbeing. There are also benefits to other residents within the care home when a physical activity programme is in place.

4. How will you know if it has been successful?

How will you measure your identified outcomes?

The Project Lead will conduct ongoing evaluation throughout the project that will include: Staff feedback containing their own experiences, reports on participation, activities delivered, differences in participants functional fitness and general wellbeing. Care will be taken to support people living with dementia to contribute to the evaluation in a way that is appropriate and accessible to them.

What methods of evaluation will you use and how will you involve people living with long term conditions and/ or their unpaid carers in the evaluation?

We will gather case studies, photo and video diaries in partnership with residents, their carers and family. Asking how the residents would like to share their experiences and feedback from the project will be key and in our experience results in meaningful, imaginative and creative responses. We will also conduct some academically validated physical measures where/when possible including timed sit to stand assessments, steps per day, grip strength test etc, to measure physical improvements and share these to help motivate residents. More practically, we will record the number of care homes participating and numbers of residents within the care home engaging in activities, as well as what activities and resources they utilise. We will also have one to one feedback sessions with staff and residents and focus groups.

Do you have any plans for promotion and communication of what you learn from the proposed project?

All learning, feedback and best practice gained from the project will be shared across Paths for All's extensive networks including the Scottish Health Walk Network, NHS Lothian's staff teams, the Care Inspectorate and also through our membership of several national working groups and forums including The National Physical Activity Development Group, The Movement for Health Coalition and the Age Scotland About Dementia Forum. Covid-19 recovery will become a key focus, particularly for care homes given the incredibly challenging year they have had. We hope that the success of this project can contribute to a more positive and empowering conversation about quality of life within our care homes going forward.