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## SUMMARY REPORT

### Age UK 'Together for Health': A Social Return on Investment Analysis

#### Key Messages

- Together for Health was a 3 year Age UK Yorkshire & Humber project delivering a 'social connectedness' service to reduce loneliness & social isolation and increase health & wellbeing among vulnerable older people;
- The intervention used a holistic tool to assess clients' needs and progress over a 6-12 week period, and provided interventions and signposting to other services;
- 667 clients provided data (19,526 hours of Age UK staff time);
- Statistically significant improvements were seen in all domains of the assessment tool; the largest improvement was seen in **social networks**;
- Statistically significant reductions were seen in **loneliness**;
- The social return on investment was at least **£4.84** for every £1 invested.



### About 'Together for Health'

A new 'social connectedness' service that aimed to reduce levels of loneliness and isolation amongst vulnerable older people, and improve their health and wellbeing.

Worked with secondary care and integrated health and social care teams to identify older people in need of support to link into their community and networks.

*Target population:* People over 50 who are at risk of being lonely or isolated, and have been in hospital in the last 12 months and/ or they are a 'frequent flyer' at their GP or A&E.

Used LEAF (a validated outcomes assessment tool) to help older people assess their own needs, identify the changes they need to make to take control of their lives and their own health and wellbeing.

Working with 4 local Age UK charities in Barnsley, Bradford, Knaresborough and Wakefield

Statistically significant improvements in all 8 domains of LEAF (n=420) at 6 week and 12 week (n=122) follow-up.

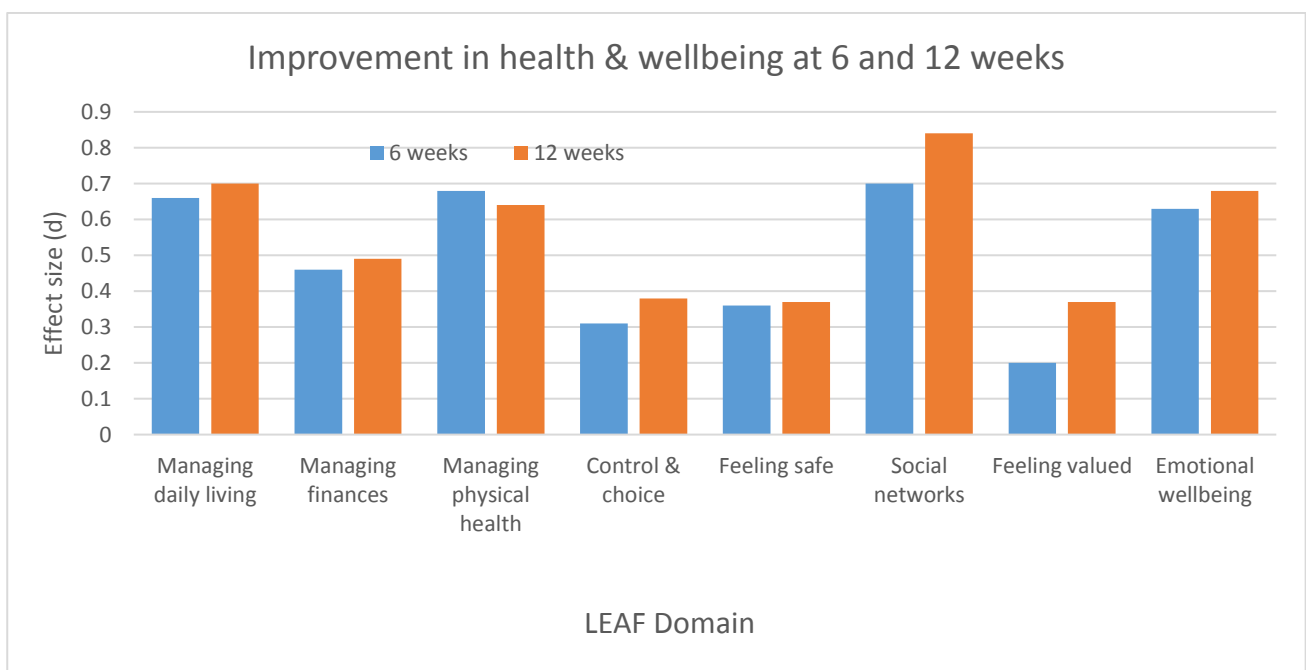
Largest effect size seen in "social networks".

Medium effect sizes in physical health", "emotional wellbeing", "managing daily living"

Small effect sizes in "feeling safe", "control" and choice", "feeling valued" and "managing finances"

**Small, statistically significant decrease in loneliness (n=177, -0.14, SD=0.90,  $p<0.05$ ).**

Resilience (n=174): no statistically significant change (+0.24, SD=1.66,  $p=0.056$ ).





Social Return On Investment analysis found that for every £1 invested in Together for Health, the social return on investment is at least **£4.84**

*“They supported me with nearly everything really, you know what I mean. Now I mean I feel more settled. I wasn’t before; I was a nervous and everything.”*

## What people told us

We interviewed 23 older people and 17 Age UK managers and staff, across 4 areas and at 3 time points.

Older people reported social, financial and practical benefits of the initiative, including increased support confidence building, and appreciated the range, flexibility, trustworthiness and friendliness of the service.

Staff and managers reported benefits to client’s family members as well as the clients themselves, and improved collaborative working with statutory services.

*“We got stuck in a rut you see, we never get out anywhere but since Age UK come to our house we’ve been getting out a lot more and meeting more people ... we’ve been happy since we started coming.”*

## Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Age UK Support Services (Yorkshire & Humber) to evaluate the ‘Together for Health’ project. We would like to thank Joanne Volpe and Richard Hindley, and all the Age UK staff and clients for their contributions to the evaluation. The evaluation was designed by Gianfranco Giuntoli and Jane South and carried out by Gianfranco Giuntoli, Anne-Marie Bagnall, Gary Raine, Kris Southby, Karina Kinsella and Chris Spoor. Together for Health was funded by the Department of Health’s IESD fund.

## About the evaluation

The evaluation was carried out by the Centre for Health Promotion Research at Leeds Beckett University. Using a theory of change approach to determine impacts on older people’s health and wellbeing, and the social return on investment, the following data were collected:

- Stakeholder-led Theory of Change workshop
- Qualitative interviews
- Health service use data
- Social return on investment analysis
- Validated questionnaires
  - LEAF
  - UCLA 3 item loneliness scale
  - 6 item Brief Resilience Scale

Full report: Bagnall AM, Raine G, Kinsella K, Southby K, Spoor C, South J, Giuntoli G (2016) Measuring well-being outcomes in older people receiving help from the Age UK ‘Together for Health’ initiative: A Social Return on Investment Analysis.

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Together for Health: evaluation of a social connectedness intervention for vulnerable older people

