



# PATHWAYS

Middleton • Heywood • Rochdale • Pennines

## Summary Evaluation

The Pathways service commenced in April 2014 after Big Life's successful partnership bid with Pennine Care NHS Trust to set up a substance misuse treatment service for the whole Rochdale Borough.

The new Pathways service aimed to take a distinctive approach to supporting people who are misusing drugs and alcohol by:

- Putting the service user in charge by offering one to one coaching that allows people to explore issues that are damaging their lives and develop techniques to take control.
- Offering support at times and in places that suit clients in a wide range of local venues that help introduce people to services available in local communities.
- Putting lived experience at the heart of the service by offering a wide range of peer support from people who have personal experience of recovery from addiction and building local support networks that reduce the risk from recovery setbacks.
- Offering people a path to recovery that includes help to improve the overall quality of their life.
- Introducing Poppie our shared client information system.
- Working in partnership.

### Putting the service user in charge through one-to-one coaching

We engaged with large numbers of people living in the borough whose lives were being damaged by alcohol and drugs misuse.

- Pathways engaged 3220 people in Tier 3 support since 2014
- In 2017–18 alone Pathways received 1290 new referrals with 551 people engaged in Tier 3 support.

Pathways was particularly successful at helping people to stop misusing alcohol or become drug free and helping people to significantly reduce their use of alcohol or other drugs.



“When I first met Mick one-to-one, it was his approach to my detox and listening to my story as an individual that put me straight on the right path.

And the volunteers too - they work with the professionals from Pathways – they've got the T-shirt. So you're getting professional help and help from people who have been there and done it... Now I see the future in a whole different way to 5 or 6 weeks ago. It's a completely different outlook on life. I'm hopeful, optimistic.

I've got the right support, the right backing and the right people in the right places and it's all down to Pathways and Mick and the voluntary sector. It's saved my life.”

**John - a heavy drinker for 30 years, came to Pathways after spending three months in a drink related coma.**



Since 2016:

- 89.9% of non-opiate users, successfully completed their treatment
- 82.5% of people who had been misusing alcohol, successfully completed their treatment
- 83.3% of people misusing alcohol and using non-opiate drugs at the same time successfully completed their treatment.

## Support at times and in places that suit clients

One of Pathways' key aims was to provide services locally not just to improve access to Pathways' support but introduce people to the wider network of support within their community that could help people sustain their recovery long term.

Pathways clients were able to get direct support from their recovery coaches at 15 different venues across all the borough's townships at a time that suited them. From many of these venues, Pathways staff and peer volunteers were also able to provide a wide range of structured, self-help, support, special interest and drop-in groups that underpinned people's recovery.

## People profile

Since 2104

# 33.3%

of people using Pathways were women

# 10%

were not white-British

# 33.2%

were over 55 years old.

## A typical week of community based activities at Pathways

**Kickstart – Monday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday**

**Womens group – Monday**

**Prep for detox – Tuesday**

**Concerned other – Wednesday**

**Prep for abstinence – Wednesday**

**Managing stress – Wednesday**

**Here and Now – Thursdays in three townships**

**Mindfulness – Thursday**

**Cannabis group – Friday**

## Building a new life in the community

**Lisa, aged 60, built a new life around voluntary activities and support groups linked to Pathways' joint work with the Recovery Republic in Heywood.**

"After 12 to 16 months, I started to wake up in the morning and couldn't wait to go to the Recovery Republic. I get up at 6 o'clock in the morning and I'm in the café across the road at five past eight and I'm here from 9 o'clock. That's every day, even Saturdays. If it was open Sundays I'd come as well..."

"I'm going to be 65 in July and I've lived the best two and a half years of my life. I've even been to Lanzarote last year with Recovery – seven girls. I'm going with them again in September. The second holiday of my life."



## Putting lived experience at the heart of the service

People coming to Pathways for support also played a key role in the service by using their lived experience to help others overcome their addiction.

People in recovery offered a wide range of one-to-one peer and group support. This included up to 8 weekly self-help support groups and drop-in's.

Many became actively engaged in campaigning for a greater say in the future of services and tackling stigma by speaking out about life beyond addiction. One of the highlights of this was the annual National Recovery Walk. For example, in 2017, 35 service users joined Pathways staff on the National Recovery Walk in Blackpool.



**"I had to get ready for the rest of my life"**

"I was asked to go to support groups run by volunteers with addiction issues. You're being primed, you're getting ready, it's the after bit, that you can't see, that you've got to learn to live life now. I didn't know this. I had to get myself ready for the rest of my life – how you're going to live the rest of your life without the use of drugs and alcohol."

**Pathways Client**



## Offering people a path to recovery that improves the quality of their life

At any one time, Pathways had an average of 25 volunteers and since 2015 we have helped many of them into employment.

People were also able to use Pathways to access a range of wrap around support like recovery and re-integration, mental health, housing support and harm minimisations services. This played a crucial part in helping to tackle some of the underlying obstacles to recovery. Since 2014 Pathways referred over 2750 people to this wrap around support.

Recovery is about families too. Since 2016 Pathways supported 886 families alongside people who came to us for help.

## Creating the Poppie shared client information system.

A crucial factor behind Pathways' provision of locally accessible services was the ability of staff to access client records remotely using the Poppie shared client information system.

Previously staff could only build a complete record of their client's history and current treatment by interrogating three database. Poppie was implemented by a collaboration of Big Life IT specialists and Pathways staff to enable this data to be brought together on a single platform. The advantages were huge both for clients and staff, it:

- Allowed effective remote working in the community as staff could get case details wherever they were based.
- Made information sharing much easier promoting co-working and co-operation.
- Vastly reduced the time managers had to spend on allocating and prioritising cases – a whole layer township management meetings with staff was removed freeing up more time to discuss and respond to client's needs.
- Provided a precise and efficient set of monitoring and evaluation reports. Preparations for inspection became a much quicker, slicker paper exercise rather than a lengthy face-to-face evidence gathering process.

**POPPIE  
Implementation  
Team  
at staff awards**



## Tommy's job success!



“From 1990 to 2013, I was a heroin addict. I also took crack, amphetamines – anything really. And I'd been in prison. From day to day, I was doing everything that society doesn't approve of.

Eventually, when I'd stopped taking drugs, I decided I wanted to do something different so I started volunteering at the Pennine Care Drug Team. I did that for about 18 months. Somehow, I ended up being a service user representative in the tender process for Pathways when it started in April 2014.

About six months later, once Big Life had started to deliver the service, I applied for a role as part of a programme for people who have previously been using services, and I got the job!”

## Working in partnership

Pathways adopted a single name and brand to give a united identity to a range of drugs and alcohol intervention teams working for the council, NHS and voluntary services and based at different locations.

Clients and staff championed this approach from the outset and were heavily involved in establishing the new service's name and branding. For them branding was the key to destigmatising the service. They saw the new brand as a concrete way to show the new service was committed to the message of recovery built on people's strengths and a radical move away from help to correct personal failures or a cure for illness.

With this single brand, Pathways was able to make significant improvements in the awareness and understanding of its service amongst the general public, potential clients, referral agencies and commissioning bodies. Fragmented arrangements for contact, referral and eligibility were replaced with a single point of access.

The new service brand launched in 2014, using local roadshows, community networking, word of mouth and a range of promotional tools like - flyers and posters in local venues along with hand delivered welcome packs and introductions for key referrers like GPs. Aligned to the single brand, this promotional work ensured demand for recovery coaches remained high from the outset and throughout the contract.

Loyalty to the brand by people in recovery also resulted in a steady stream of people coming forward to talk publicly about their recovery journey and encourage others to start their own.

## Thanks to all our local venues for your support

ST. CHADS

DEEPLISH COMMUNITY CENTRE

NYE BEVAN

RIVERSIDE

FIRE STATION

SMALLBRIDGE LIBRARY

HARE HILL HOUSE

SANDON HOUSE

ADELAIDE STREET

RECOVERY REPUBLIC

BURNSIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE

LANGLEY CLINIC

BRENTWOOD DAY CENTRE

DURNFORD STREET

DROP-IN KIRKHOLT

ANGEL PROJECT



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