



Complementary Therapy Project

Evaluation Summary Report

Summer 2008

Introduction

Background:

East End Health is a local charity based on Heaton Road in Byker. The charity was established in 1982 as the Walker Health Project and works across the east end of Newcastle and in North Tyneside to tackle health inequalities and to promote a healthy active lifestyle.

As part of our work we run the Complementary Therapy Project, which was established in 2001. The project initially ran one afternoon per week and provided both paid and free therapy sessions. In November 2007, the project was expanded to run five days a week, between 9am and 5pm. The service is currently staffed by five volunteer therapists including two students from Newcastle College's Complementary Therapy Department and three trained local therapists. All appointments are free of charge to clients and to health professionals who make referrals.

The Complementary Therapy Project is aimed at helping members of the local community to access necessary therapies, who otherwise would be unable to access such services for financial or accessibility reasons.

The aims of the evaluation were:

- To conduct an evaluation of the Complementary Therapy Project.
- To assess the project in terms of the current project's structure and facilities, the health professionals referral service, advertising, client and therapist opinions and the organisation of the project.
- To develop a set of recommendations for extensions and improvements to the project.

This document gives a summary of the key findings of the evaluation.

The Current Complementary Therapy Project

Therapies:

The current Complementary Therapy Project has nine therapies, offered by the following therapists:

- Acupressure – Rob Penman
- Aromatherapy Massage – Michelle Jones & Louise Bell
- Bowen Therapy – Steve Austin
- Hot Stone Massage – Sandra Wagner & Mark Gaul
- Indian Head Massage – Sandra Wagner & Louise Bell
- Massage – Michelle Jones & Louise Bell
- Reflexology – Louise Bell
- Sports Massage – Michelle Jones & Mark Gaul
- Swedish Massage – Michelle Jones, Sandra Wagner & Mark Gaul

Appointments:

When the second treatment room is open, and with the current therapists all working, the project will have up to 30 appointments each week. When the new students start (if there are two new students alongside Louise) there will be a maximum of 44 appointments each week. These are divided as shown:



Appointments (with New Students included):

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Room 1	Michelle:		Mark:	Student:	Louise:
AM	2	Rob: 2	2	2	2
PM	3	Sandra: 2	3	3	2
Room 2		Michelle:	Steve:	Steve:	Student:
AM	Ncl College	2	2	2	2
PM	Ncl College	3	4	4	2/3

Clients:

Clients currently receive an initial block of six treatments and are then assessed by the therapist as to whether they could benefit from more sessions. For the majority of clients it is felt that a second or third block of treatments may be necessary. In this case, the client is either kept on by their current therapist, or if it is felt that they may benefit from a different type of therapy, they are moved to a different therapist.

If following the second or third block of treatments, a client still requires further sessions, they are usually moved onto fortnightly and then monthly appointments and therefore the amount of treatment they are receiving is gradually reduced and becomes a maintenance programme rather than a treatment programme.

Health Professionals Referral Service

The Complementary Therapy Project operates on a GP and Health Professional referral service basis. The project currently receives referrals from seven GP Surgeries, including fifteen GPs, four Primary Care Mental Health Workers, one Community Health Trainer and two Clinical Psychologists. (See Table for breakdown of referrals).

The GP practices which currently refer to the project are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Dr Wilkins & Partners: 42 Heaton Road | • Dr Lovedale & Partners: Heaton Medical Centre |
| • Dr Robson & Partners: Biddlestone Health Group | • Dr Gray & Partners: Thornfield Medical Group |
| • Dr Pearston & Partners: Walker Medical Group | • Drs Dalal & Partner: Broadway Medical Group |
| • Dr Schofield & Partners: St Anthony's Health Centre | |

There are two further GP Surgeries within the East End area; these are Dr White and Partners at the Molineux NHS Centre and the Welbeck Road Medical Practice. At present these two surgeries do not refer to the project. Once the new treatment room is established and the new college students have started their placement, it will be possible to contact the surgeries who do not refer, as well as those who have referred only a small number of clients, with the aim of developing new and better relationships with these practices.

As shown by the breakdown of referrals, the Primary Care Mental Health Team (City East) and 37A Heaton Road Medical Centre make the most referrals to the project (See Table 1). Wendy Mead, one of the Primary Care Mental Health Workers, also gave this statement about the project:



"I am a mental health nurse working in the East End of the city. I have referred many people to East End Health's Complementary Therapy Project. I believe that the range of therapies on offer can work as an adjunct to "traditional" approaches to mental health and well being, as they can help with some of the more problematic symptoms of depression and anxiety such as poor sleep.

From feedback, patients referred there have found the service extremely beneficial, as the treatments have helped them cope with their symptoms. Others have found the service beneficial in terms of having time to themselves to relax. The feedback has been helpful to me as a referrer to the service as good feedback often acts as a recommendation for others. I can't praise the service highly enough."

Wendy Mead, Primary Care Mental Health Worker, (City East)

Table 1: GP and Health Professionals Referral Service

Health Service	Referring Doctor/ Health Professional	Number of Referrals
<u>37A Heaton Road Medical Centre</u>	A. Willins	5
	A. Leeder	4
	M. J. Woolley	2
		Total: 11
<u>42 Heaton Road Medical Centre</u>	D. E. M. Wilkins	1
	P. H. Brookes	1
		Total: 2
<u>Biddlestone Health Group</u>	P. M. Carrington	1
	A. M. S. Craig	1
		Total: 2
<u>Broadway Medical Centre</u>	M. Chaudhary	1
		Total: 1
<u>Clinical Psychology Services, Newcastle General Hospital</u>	S. Wrigley	1
	J. Welsh	2
		Total: 3
<u>Community Health Trainers</u>	S. Ritson	1
		Total: 1
<u>Primary Care Mental Health Workers (City East)</u>	W. Mead	13
	D. Hildreth	2
	C. Hopkins	3
	S. Schofield	2
		Total: 20
<u>St Anthony's Health Centre</u>	W. Ross	1
	N. Cavanagh	1
		Total: 2
<u>Thornfield Medical Group</u>	A. Hogg	1
	R. L. Wakerley	1
		Total: 2
<u>Walker Medical Group</u>	G. Pearston	2
	A. Truefitt	1
	H. Jones	1
	J. Clark	1
		Total: 5
Overall Total: 49 referrals		

Clients & Therapists

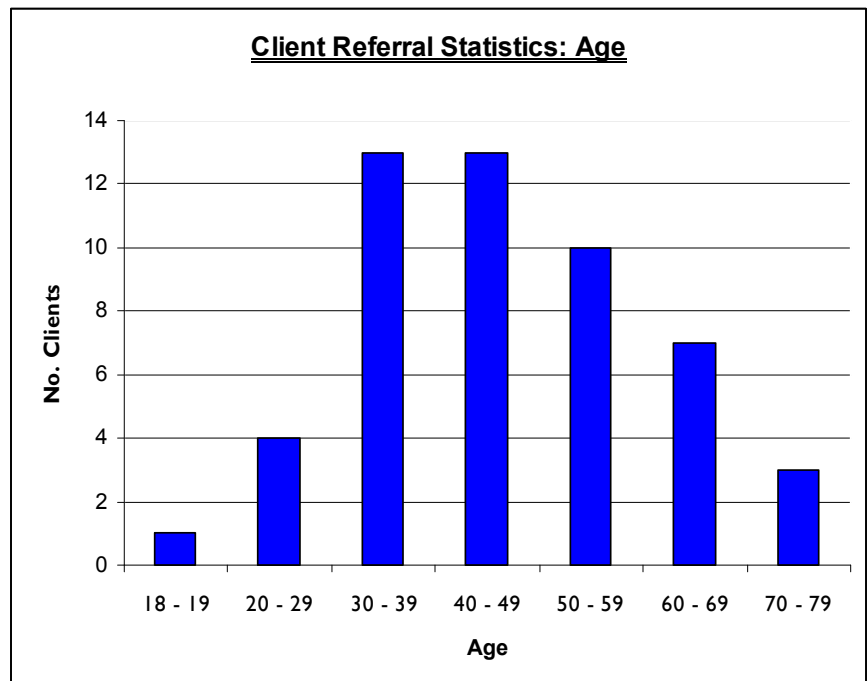
The project currently has 53 active referrals. Where totals do not equal 53, no data was available. Where totals are higher than 53, clients were referred for more than one condition.

Client Statistics and Opinions:

The clients who chose to give their age fitted into the following age boundaries (see Graph 1), showing that most clients referred to the service are between 30 and 49 years:

Client Ages:

18 – 19 Years: 1 client
20 – 29 Years: 4 clients
30 – 39 Years: 13 clients
40 – 49 Years: 13 clients
50 – 59 Years: 10 clients
60 – 69 Years: 7 clients
70 – 79 Years: 3 clients



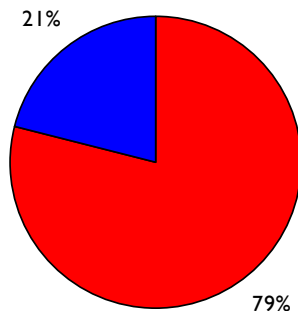
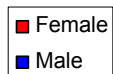
Graph 2: Client Referrals, shown by Gender of Client

Client Referral Statistics: Gender

The clients were also divided according to their gender.

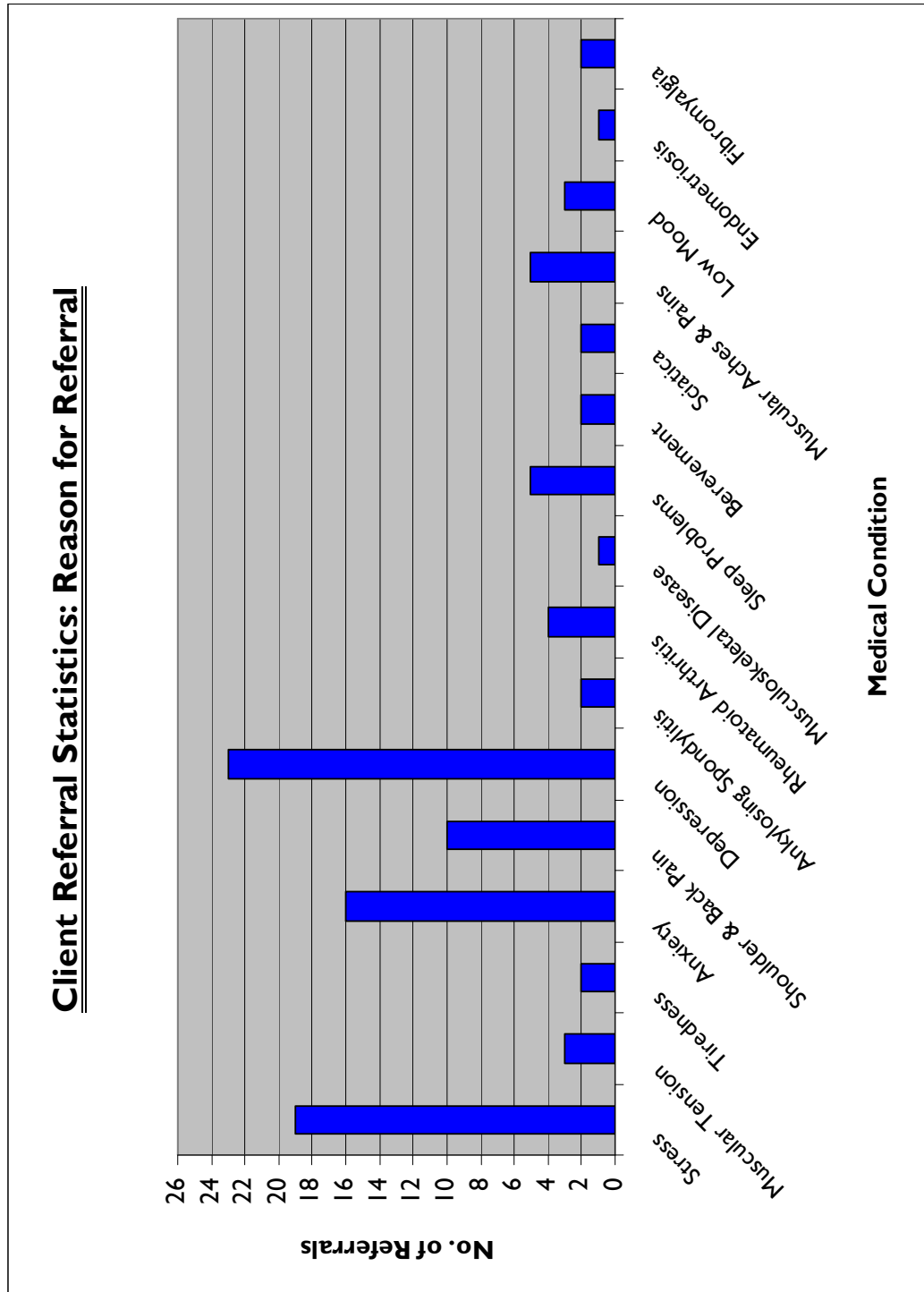
Eleven of the referrals made to the service were for male clients and forty-two were for female clients (see Graph 2), showing an obvious bias.

In the future, it will be necessary to promote the service to male clients more.



The referrals were divided according to the medical conditions for which the clients were referred. As shown, the most frequent reasons for referral were stress, anxiety and depression.

Graph 3: Client Referrals, shown by Reason for Referral



At the end of a block of six sessions, clients are asked to complete a short evaluation about the project. Eleven clients have so far been asked to complete a form. Where totals do not equal eleven, no answer was given.

Service Organisation

1) For your first appointment how easy was it to find the building?

Very Easy: 8 Easy: 3 Difficult: 0 Very Difficult: 0

2) How easy was it to get a referral from your doctor?

Very Easy: 4 Easy: 6 Difficult: 0 Very difficult: 0

3) If you received a leaflet about the service, how usefulness was the leaflet?

Very Useful: 4 Useful: 2 Not Useful: 0 Did Not Receive a Leaflet: 1

The Therapy Sessions

4) How clear were the explanations about the therapies?

Very Clear: 8 Clear: 1 Unclear: 0 Very Unclear: 0

5) Did the therapy you were offered help improve your overall sense of wellbeing?

Very Much: 11 A Little: 0 Not At All: 0

6) Did the therapy help alleviate the main symptoms of your condition?

Yes: 11 No: 0 Not Sure: 0

7) How would you rate this service?

Very Good: 11 Good: 0 Satisfactory: 0 Needs Improvement: 0

8) Do you think the room used for the therapy sessions was:

Very Suitable: 11 Suitable: 0 Not Suitable: 0 Very Unsuitable: 0

9) Would you recommend this service to a friend?

Yes: 11 No: 0

Further comments made by Clients:

“Thank you for all your help.”

“I have really enjoyed and feel that the treatments have made a huge difference to my state of mind and body.”

“The Complementary Therapy Service gave me a chance to experience therapy that I could not find myself.”

“This has been a wonderful experience. The staff are lovely and it has been the highlight of my week to come here.”

“East End Health has a very warm and friendly atmosphere. I found the people I met friendly. Because of the massages I received, I felt they helped me, but because of my anxiety and depression only on the day. They helped me relax a bit better. Michelle has a very good approach, and is very warm and friendly and understanding.”

The therapists also ask clients to complete a comments form about the project. So far six clients have completed the form.

1. How did you feel after your first treatment?

- "I felt anxious when I arrived. Michelle was easy to talk to and the massage was very good, I felt a bit more relaxed."
- "Relaxed, clear headed and positive."
- "I felt really great. I was very well treated. Clare is a really nice girl. She made me feel at ease. I could not wait for Mondays to come quick enough."

2. How did you feel by the end of the course of treatments?

- "I definitely noticed a difference. My aches had eased up a lot and just my outlook was a lot more positive."
- "More relaxed and less stressed."
- "Pins and needles sensation has now gone from my calf muscles."
- "I have had my feet, neck and shoulders done. I felt like a new woman. My back was also done with care."

3. How has coming to the project helped you?

- "Because of my anxiety and depression it gave me a reason to get out and something to look forward to."
- "It's made me realise how important it is to look after and be more in tune with my body. In turn this has helped me stick to my healthy eating plan and lifestyle."
- "Shoulder pain has now seemed to have gone."
- "I feel that on Mondays, the day I went on, it was my special day, a time just for me. It made me feel a very important person."

4. Why do you think the therapy sessions helped you?

- "I have problems with stress and tension and I think that these sessions have helped alleviate some of this."
- "I feel that as I usually have a lot of pain in certain areas of my body. It generally lowers my mood and can make me depressed. With these treatments it helps, as my aches have definitely become less intense."
- "I have mental health problems and at the time I was having my therapy it seemed to take some of my troubles away and made me feel good in myself."

5. Have you any other comments about the therapy sessions or the project in general?

- "I think it is really useful, and if more leaflets could be placed in more surgeries I think that a lot of people would also like this treatment. I think it is a very useful project."
- "I found the project a very warm and friendly environment. Michelle was very understanding and she helped me not only with my massage but also with her friendly chat, understanding and warmth."
- "Very professional and friendly service. Many thanks!"

6. Would you recommend the Complementary Therapy Project to a friend?

Yes: 6
No: 0

Organisation of the Project

The project has now been running in its current form for nine months. With the expansion of the project to include a second treatment room, a new qualified therapist and with the future new student placements to be arranged, there is a need to assess the organisation and co-ordination of the project.

Treatment Forms:

The project currently uses eleven forms, as listed below. There is a need to condense the forms to make them more succinct and appropriate to the therapies offered by the project. With the introduction of the new therapies to the project, there is also a need to develop forms for Indian Head massage and Hot Stone massage, as well as forms to be used when sending feedback to the referring doctor or health professional.

Treatment Forms:	Other Forms:	New Forms:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aromatherapy Consultation - Body Massage Consultation - Essential Oil Selection Sheet - Therapist Comments - Reflexology Chart - Reflexology Client Record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client Comments - Client Evaluation - Parental Consent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indian Head Massage Consultation - Hot Stone Massage Consultation - Referral Acknowledgement - Therapist Feedback and Letter - End of Treatment - No Response Acknowledgement - Aromatherapy Disclaimer - Aftercare Advice

Contacting Clients and Referral Organisation:

When we contact a client for the first time, a letter is sent to the client telling them about their referral. They are asked to contact the project to arrange their first appointment. The problem with the referral letters is that a number of clients do not respond. In this case we try to contact the client by telephone to arrange their first session. If this then fails we do not contact the client further.

In the future, if the client fails to respond to the letter and the phone call, it may be advisable to send a letter to the referring doctor explaining that the client did not respond. A cut off point of three weeks can be set within which we would expect a client to respond.

There is a standard referral letter that is sent to each client. This currently informs the client of the referral, offers them a course of six treatments and gives details about the sessions. One of the therapists has suggested that it would be a good idea to add a paragraph explaining that this is a volunteer led project, that the project does not receive funding from the NHS but that we raise the necessary funds ourselves. It can also be added that there is no cost associated with the project but that donations are very much appreciated to help the project continue.

Alongside the referral letter the project is also going to start sending out information leaflets about the therapy that the client will be receiving. This will require the client to be allocated to a particular therapy, and therefore a therapist, before their referral letter can be sent. If the client is unable to attend on that particular day, it may be necessary to change the therapy they are going to receive. In this case, it may be necessary to have a back-up therapy that the client has been allocated to.

Health Professionals:

To help increase the profile of the project, two new forms are to be introduced. These are an acknowledgement form which will be sent to the health professional that makes the referral to the service and a feedback form, with cover letter that will be sent to the same doctor at the end of each block of six sessions. The therapists are to be responsible for sending each of these forms.



Recommendations

As a result of the evaluation, a number of recommendations can be made to improve the project:

GP & Health Professional Referrals:

- Make contact with GP surgeries within the NE6 area that do not refer.
- Contact new health professionals who work independently of doctors surgeries.
- Contact the GP surgeries and health professionals who have made only a small number of referrals to try and improve the relationship with these practices.

Clients & Therapists:

- Promote the service to male clients.
- Promote to Health Professionals the range of medical conditions which can be treated by the therapies.
- Source and fund further equipment and supplies for treatment rooms.
- Produce an information pack for new therapists.

Organisation of the Project:

- Re-design each of the current therapy forms.
- Develop new forms as listed.
- Develop new information leaflets.
- Include information leaflets with referral letters.

If you would like more information about the Complementary Therapy Project, or East End Health, please visit our website at: www.eastendhealth.org.uk.

To see the full Complementary Therapy Project Evaluation, please visit the Complementary Therapy page of the website at: <http://www.eastendhealth.org.uk/pages/complementary-therapy.php>