

## **WACA Services and Projects**

### **Community Mental Health Support**

2024 has seen the second year of the 'Mental Health Transformation Programme' that WACA run with the AWC Modality primary care network and our community partners, 'Keighley Healthy Living and Pioneer Project's. The programme is part of a wider NHS project bringing together the NHS, voluntary sector and wider organisations and services to work together to transform the way, mental health care and support is delivered in local areas. The partnership was shortlisted for the 2024 General Practice Awards, in the 'Clinical improvement in mental health' category. To read more about the programme, please visit <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/our-projects/waca-mental-health-service/mental-health-community-hubs.html>

### **Learning Disability Support**

Members of the WACA team have been working to support patients with learning disabilities. We have held a series of focus groups, 'Share With Us' to learn what is needed to best support people with learning disabilities. We are also building a resource page where patients with learning disabilities can access information and support <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/our-projects/happy-mondays-group.html>. We continue to work with 'Exclusively Inclusive' to deliver the weekly 'Happy Monday's Group' in Skipton where people with learning disabilities get together to enjoy activities and games to improve their wellbeing.

### **Autism Workshops**

Members of the WACA GR8 Minds Team held a series of Autism Support Workshops to provide Parents and Carers with knowledge and understanding of the Autistic Spectrum Conditions in order to support their child/ young person pre or post diagnosis. These were very well attended with some very positive feedback... " *The ladies that delivered the training were excellent. Very knowledgeable, kind, relaxed and approachable. It was nice to meet other parents that are in a similar situation too. I felt I really learnt a lot and found the videos that were shown especially poignant. It was refreshing that the whole approach to the session was positive rather than treating this condition as a disorder*"

We hope to continue to deliver similar sessions into 2025.

## **Menopause Support**

We have a dedicated menopause champion, 'Amanda Nowell' within WACA who has worked to achieve the 'Menopause Friendly Employer Accreditation' this year. Amanda is available to support staff and our GP practices with menopause related issues and has helped to build a resource hub that you can visit

at <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/our-projects/menopause-resource-support-for-patients-and-staff.html>

## **Women's Health Talks**

We held a series of Women's Health talks in Ilkley and Settle, including GP led talks on managing the menopause, HRT, lifestyle medicine as well as expert led talks including pelvic health and cold water therapy. The sessions also gave women the opportunity to discuss various subjects in a supportive environment. We will be continuing these into 2025 with sessions looking at strength and conditioning exercise, relationship advice and nutrition.

## **Workplace Health Screening Events**

We have been working with AWC Modality to deliver NHS Health Checks within local workplaces where employers have had their BMI and blood pressure measured and have their blood sugars and cholesterol levels checked. These have been very well received and will be continuing into 2025. Feedback from Byworth Boilers in Keighley... *"A big thank you to this amazing team of volunteers who spent the day doing health checks for all our team yesterday. Everyone leads such busy lives these days with work, families and other commitments that looking after our health often gets neglected. By running these workshops in businesses during work time, employees aren't trying to fit in check ups around their already busy schedules, putting their health first. Health checks like these can help spot early signs of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other potentially serious illnesses. Spotting these things early makes them more treatable and is better for you and the NHS. Win win. We will be continuing these into 2025.*

## **Community Cancer Champion**

This year we have appointed a community cancer champion, Sharon Cope, who will be working with communities to raise awareness of screening programmes, and how to spot early warning signs of cancer. Sharon has been out in the community giving talks including a cancer awareness session to the Sangat Centre Men's health focus Group in Keighley. Sharon is also working to build a cancer resource page that can offer advice and signpost to organisations offering support <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/our-projects/cancer-support-resources.html>

## **Men's Health Talk and PSA Screening Event**

WACA recently worked in partnership with Keighley golf club, to host a Men's Health event for its members, Dr David Thompson held a talk at the start of the event, outlining the pros and cons of prostate screening and following the talk, 37 gentleman completed a PSA (prostate specific antigen) test. The event was very well received with some great feedback, *“ Prostate Cancer is a subject I would normally not discuss with anyone but today we are all here for the same reason so I feel I can chat to other men about this personal topic ”*

## **Peer Support Groups and Health Talks**

We continue to help run monthly support groups in Skipton supporting patients affected by Stroke and Osteoporosis as well as our regular women's health talks in Ilkley and Settle. You can read more about these at <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/our-projects/peer-support-groups.html>

We have also held one-off talks online and in-person on subjects including diabetes, management of blood pressure and cancer screening information. Future health talks will be published on our website and social media pages.

## **Drug and Alcohol Misuse Support Clinic**

We have launched a weekly drug and alcohol brief intervention clinic for patients at our Wharfedale Surgeries, this service, delivered by New Vision Bradford, helps patients to choose not to misuse alcohol and drugs and reduce risk-taking behaviour through dedicated prevention, intervention and support. More information, including referral routes can be found at <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/our-projects/alcohol-and-drug-support.html>

## **Coming Up in 2025**

Many of the services and projects highlighted above will be continuing into 2025 and we will be sharing more specific events with dates and booking details, on a regular basis. You can also follow our news and updates on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/WACAYorkshire> and our website at <https://www.wacalliance.co.uk/latest-news.html>

Our first Women's Health Talk will be held at Springs Lane Medical Centre on Monday January 13<sup>th</sup> and all places are booked up. If you would like to go on our mailing list for future events, please email Fiona.

Our Children's social prescribing team, GR8 Minds are holding a conference on February 4<sup>th</sup> in Skipton which will highlight services and support available for parents and carers. More details of this will be published shortly.

If you would like to be kept informed of any other specific subjects, please email [fiona.bashforth@nhs.net](mailto:fiona.bashforth@nhs.net).