

09. Drawing it all together – conclusions and next steps

The Fulfilling Lives programme aims not just to support people with multiple needs to have a better life, but to fundamentally alter the way in which support is provided. Issues such as homelessness, offending and substance misuse are inter-related and mutually reinforcing.¹ But services are too often set up to deal with a particular issue or aspect of someone’s life rather than the whole person.² Addressing just one alone is unlikely to be effective.³ Fulfilling Lives partnerships are working collaboratively across sectors and with people with lived experience of multiple needs to create more joined-up, holistic, person-centred and ultimately, effective support. Partnerships are testing and evaluating different approaches, demonstrating the impact of doing things differently.

A high proportion of Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries are homeless or in unstable accommodation at the start of their journey with the programme. Lack of a stable home makes tackling other challenges even more difficult. **Housing First** is one way of addressing this and the effectiveness of the approach is well evidenced outside of Fulfilling Lives. Fulfilling Lives partnerships are well placed to deliver Housing First, as they incorporate many of the key principles within the way they work and can coordinate the necessary cross-sector support. A particular challenge is the lack of suitable housing stock – but by engaging with landlords to challenge the stigma surrounding multiple needs, some partnerships are successfully opening-up housing options. Fulfilling Lives evaluations also show how Housing First could be effectively targeted at particular small but high-risk groups – such as female sex workers.

Fulfilling Lives **keyworkers** play an important role in supporting people with multiple needs. They successfully engage beneficiaries who may have been let down or

¹ Rankin, J. and Regan, S. (2004) *Meeting Complex Needs: The Future of Social Care* IPPR and Turning Point

² Battrick, T. Crook, L. Edwards, K. and Moselle, B. (2014) *Evaluation of the MEAM pilots – update on our findings* FTI Consulting

³ Making Every Adult Matter (2018) *Tackling Multiple Disadvantage Nationwide: A strategy for the MEAM coalition 2018-2022*. MEAM Coalition

excluded by other agencies. They provide both practical and emotional support, and in many cases assist with ‘navigating’ the systems – advocating on beneficiaries behalf and helping them to access services. To be able to provide the kind of flexible, tailored and person-centred support that beneficiaries value and that appears to be effective, keyworkers need to be free from the constraints of performance targets, restrictive time-scales and high caseloads.

This job is not an easy one and it is vital that keyworkers are effectively supported to ensure their own mental health and wellbeing is not adversely affected.

The role of the keyworkers can be usefully supported and enhanced by **peer mentors** – people with similar past experience of multiple needs. Peers can provide a really valuable way to engage beneficiaries – living proof that recovery is possible. Mentoring also provide a valuable opportunity for mentors to gain work experience and gain skills and confidence. This is a step on the road towards employment and, it is arguable, a future workforce with unique insights and perspectives on multiple needs.

However, developing a peer mentoring programme is not a quick or low-cost option as peers need proper training and support, which can be resource intensive. Clarity is needed to ensure the role of peers and other staff members is distinct. Co-designing a scheme with staff and people with lived experience helps to ensure everyone understands and is bought-into peer mentoring.

Keyworkers can also be assisted to work effectively and to be resilient through **PIE - psychologically informed environments**. The opportunity for reflective practice helps staff feel more resilient and better able to manage challenging behaviour. The resulting improvements in practice should help beneficiaries too. While the focus of local evaluations so far has been on the benefits to staff, there is an opportunity now to explore in greater detail the ways in which PIE supports Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries.

Keyworkers and peer mentors support beneficiaries to attend assessments and appointments. But it is not enough to just help people navigate a complex system that often does not effectively address their needs - the system itself needs to change to be more responsive to multiple needs. Improving services for this particular group is also likely to make it better for others too. Particular frustrations for people with multiple needs include having to tell their story numerous times to different agencies and that when they find the courage to ask for help they are often turned away because they have not approached the ‘right’ agency. Systems designed to **improve access to services** and information sharing across organisations, such as No Wrong Door, are exploring the potential for what would be significant systems change through different ways of working and collaborating.

Although a fulfilled life includes a stable home and good health, it is about so much more. This includes good relationships with friends and family, purpose and a social life as well as being in control, having choice and being empowered to make decisions.

Personal budgets are just one way to help beneficiaries achieve these things.

Personal budgets are also valuable in supporting Housing First, providing funds for deposits, furniture and other home essentials. However, personal budgets have not always been used for the life enhancing activities that were envisaged by partnerships – instead, too often, they are used for basics such as food, rent and buying essential services. This serves to underline how mainstream support often fails to adequately provide for people with multiple needs. And while personal budgets can address this in the short term, it is important that the Fulfilling Lives programme uses this evidence to direct attention to such failures.

The Fulfilling Lives partnership evaluations provide promising early analysis of the extent to which beneficiaries are changing the way they interact with public services and the potential opportunity costs savings associated with this. Emerging patterns indicate that reductions in service use by Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries are most likely to be seen in ‘negative’ or crisis services such as use of A&E and interactions with the criminal justice system. There are less substantial decreases and increases in more positive treatment services.

But the approaches described in this report, such as the navigator model of keyworker support, cannot work effectively in isolation. Fulfilling Lives partnerships may influence what goes on outside the programme, but they also rely on it too. Wider changes are needed to the systems and services that affect people with multiple needs. And to ensure a lasting legacy from the programme, these changes need to be sustainable – meaning changes are required in policy, culture, attitudes and behaviours, rather than being reliant on time-limited funding programmes like Fulfilling Lives or a few key individuals. The fact that in several cases, having piloted a particular approach, such as PIE or Housing First, and demonstrated the benefits, other agencies have begun to adopt similar practice, illustrates how Fulfilling Lives has the potential to create lasting change.

Next steps

A key aim of this report was to inform the future evaluation of the Fulfilling Lives programme – in particular the focus of the national level evaluation. On the basis of this report, we make the following recommendations for the national and local evaluations.

The national evaluation team should:

- Evaluate the added-value of the navigator model of key-working. This should include research into how navigators can be effectively supported to contribute to systems change.
- Analyse the relationship between receiving help from a peer mentor and beneficiary progress and positive outcomes. This could be complemented by further exploration of how peer mentoring might be used effectively at different stages in the beneficiary journey – from initial engagement to helping to sustain recovery.
- Investigate whether there is an association between receipt of a personal budget, and progress and positive outcomes for beneficiaries.
- Gather and share evidence of good practice in effectively implementing personal budgets to overcome key challenges.
- Conduct a more detailed evaluation of the role and impact of PIE within the Fulfilling Lives programme.
- Revisit progress of No Wrong Door and information sharing solutions in later years to assess effectiveness and impact on beneficiaries and wider systems. Gather together learning on how best to make such models work.
- Publish initial analysis of beneficiary public service use patterns and the costs associated with these. Continue to work to source administrative data and publish analysis at intervals to demonstrate longer-term trends.
- Explore opportunities to facilitate a more consistent approach to cost-effectiveness analysis allowing comparison of results between partnerships.

Local evaluators / partnerships should:

- Continue to monitor how personal budgets are used and consider what this suggests about how beneficiary basic needs are currently met (or not as the case may be) and how this might direct systems change work.
- Continue to evaluate and communicate the results and learning from local PIE and Housing First initiatives. This should include examples of how Fulfilling Lives initiatives have influenced other services to create most lasting change.
- Continue to evaluate No Wrong Door, information sharing and other activities to improve access to services, including recording challenges and how these have been overcome.
- Continue to share results of local analysis of service use interactions and programme cost-effectiveness.