

“From me to you”

A guide to easy and successful referrals between organisations and services.

Referral: “the act of directing someone to a different place or person for information, help, or action”.



Introduction

Brighton and Hove is a city with a great deal of care and support activity provided by the private, public and voluntary sectors. Services and organisations work hard to support residents to be well, healthy, entertained, active and fulfilled. The Citywide Connect Programme is effectively bringing together organisations from all sectors who work to prevent older people from being isolated and feeling lonely.

These services and organisations usually work well together, even though they might use different styles and systems. However, one particular challenge remains, often hindering people's access to social support and activities. That challenge is because of the high number of different referral procedures in use across the city, and sadly, the effect is felt not just by front line staff, but also by the people who are coming to them for help.

Over the last 6 months, Citywide Connect ran workshops which examined the issues faced by service providers. This guide summarises the range of ideas and good practice that was highlighted and suggests things services can do relatively quickly and easily to enable people to access them more efficiently.

The Citywide Connect Programme is co-ordinated by The Fed Centre for Independent Living. The Fed is a user-led organisation that promotes independent living for all. We offer support for disabled people, older people, their carers, families and friends.

From me to you with ease; try it!

Why not join many of the organisations and services who are already adopting the principles outlined here.

We have included a sample referral form which is already being used and can easily be adopted to suit your own organisation.

The Principles

- The person being supported is at the centre of decisions related to the referral.
- Details of how the referral is made and who it needs to go to are clear
- A simple, straightforward, “admin light” referral process is used
- Criteria about who can be referred, which areas of the city people can be referred from, the waiting times and capacity of the organisation to accept new referrals should all be clear before a referral is started.
- A follow up is made after a referral so organisations are confident to refer again.

Things which make referrals between organisations more difficult

- Referral requests take too long to complete
- Difficulty finding information about referral criteria (ie who can use the service) and areas served
- Lack of information about waiting times for a service after a referral is made
- Lack of information about the capacity of an organisation to take on a new client
- People waiting to use a service sometimes expected more than was possible
- Lack of follow up after making a referral about its success (or otherwise).



It is important that the person being supported is:

- In control of, and steers the referral.
- Can talk about what's important to them and their interests and inspirations in an open way which is guided, but not directed by the organisation they are talking to
- Can plan their own goals and the steps they will take towards achieving them.
- Staff in services and organisations acknowledged it is important not to make assumptions about what an individual might need or be interested in, or about how attainable their goals might be.

For example:

- not all older people think of themselves as old or want to socialise with other older people

- some people might be looking for one to one companionship, rather than spending time with people in a group setting
- people labelled as ‘housebound’ might be able to leave the house with appropriate support.

“Listen to the person; make sure you are referring them to something they actually want to do”

Think about what the person might need



- Organisations and services need information and to know about options which are relevant to the people coming to them for support, including about their desired goals.
- Organisation should be able to easily find the criteria the service or activity uses (including areas covered).
- Organisations and services should be able to describe the benefits of various available options to motivate and encourage people to take a first step to being supported.
- The person’s own preferences should be taken into account (as outlined above)
- Organisations and services should make it clear the individual can say no to any options or suggestions for support they make.

The practicalities

There may be a range of practical issues which organisations and services can address to make it easier for people to access the support they are looking for. These include:

- Making participation easier.
- Looking for ways in which people with long-term health conditions, mobility or sensory impairments and/or mental health conditions can access a service.
- Checking that if a service is charged for, the cost of it is not prohibitive.
- Checking to see if transport to get to and from places where the support or activity takes place can be found either through volunteers or other community transport.
- Making contact with the person before service or activity happens so the individual is reassured.

- Holding taster sessions so people don't feel they have to make a longer term commitment to do something.
- Accompanying people to activities or services so they don't feel they are on their own.
- Setting appropriate expectations.
- Providing a named contact from the service or activity being referred to, who can describe what happens next.
- A realistic indication of timescales.

“What will happen next – leave an action plan with contacts, timescales, etc”

“Keeping them informed on the process of the referral – how long will it be before something happens”

What can you do if you are making a referral?

Talk, build relationships and trust.

- Start a conversation to find out what's important to the person; find out what the person's interests and hopes are.
- Consider how to build their trust and confidence, and find out how to motivate them. Seek their permission to intervene on their behalf.
- Let the person be empowered to identify their own goals and outcomes

“Persuading the client to engage...people get stuck in a rut and are nervous about doing something new or different”

“Encouraging people to take the next step”

“Challenges with the individual – they may be resistant...so it's about knowing how to work with them in a way that's not patronising”



Know what's out there?

- Know where to find information on social support and activity in local communities.

It's Local Actually, www.thefedonline.org.uk/local, provides access to low cost or free activities happening in neighbourhoods across the city.

- Know how the service or activity you are referring to tackles social isolation or loneliness, and the benefits for the individual being supported.

Videos on the Citywide Connect pages of The Fed Centre for Independent Living's website describe this. www.thefedonline.org.uk/citywide-connect

"I'm learning much more about services in the west - I will ensure that my line manager and social workers make full use of these resources."

- Make sure the information you have is relevant to the person you are working with. For example, check service criteria and coverage, which should be available and accessible on the organisation's website (check your own website to make sure this is true for your own organisation too).

Case study: Time to Talk Befriending

We accept referrals for individuals aged 65+ living across all areas of Brighton and Hove.

If the person being referred meets the criteria outlined above please download and complete our referral form.

The practicalities

- Know of the likely response times and capacity to help manage individuals' expectations

"I contacted Cruse to try and access bereavement support for my client and they let me know that there is currently a waiting list of two months".

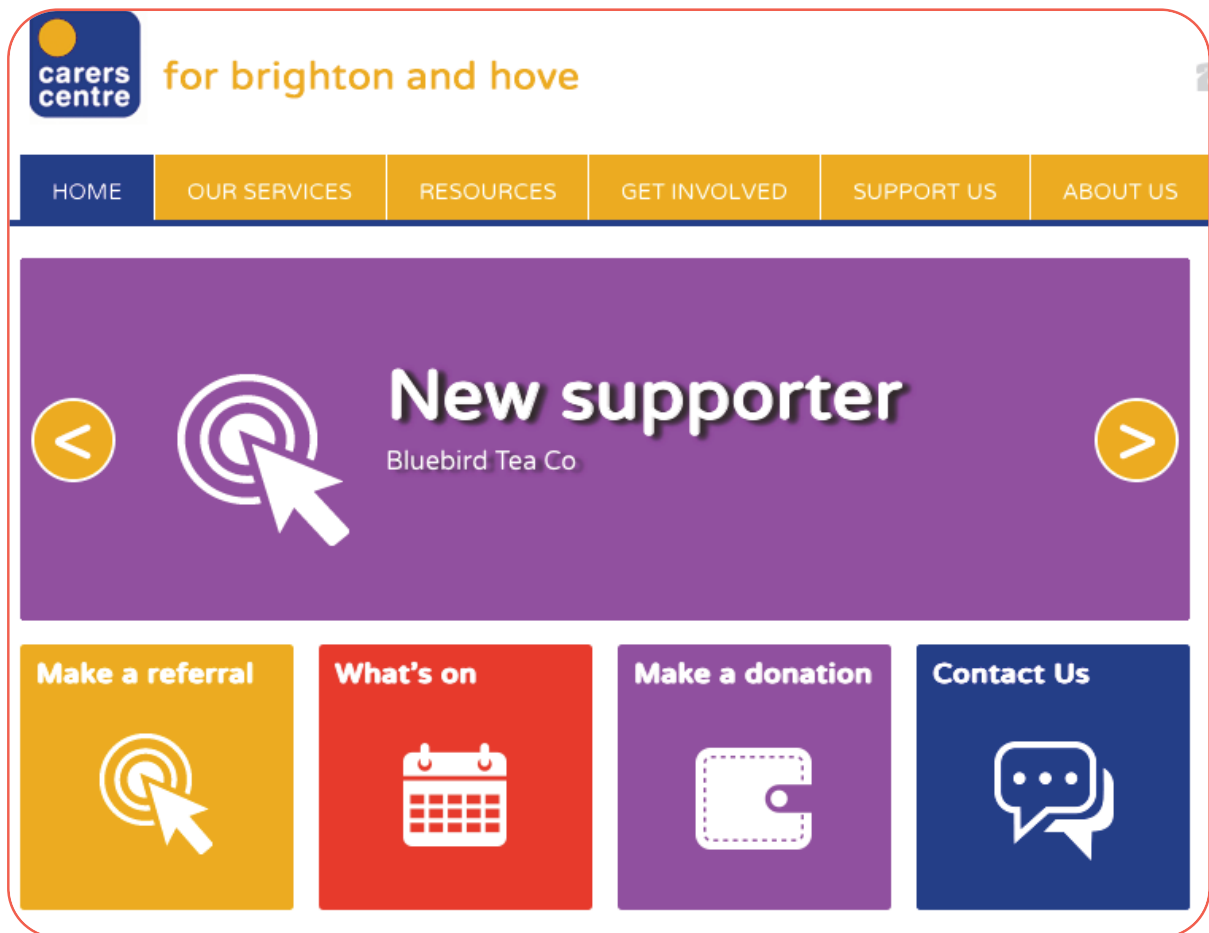
- Have a named contact within the service or activity being referred to
- Provide an acknowledgement, together with an ongoing status update on the progress of the referral
- Use a simple, 'admin light' referral pathways and processes.

“It has to be very simple and quick as I don’t have 15 minutes to fill out a form”
Their referral pathway (how and who to refer to) should be visible on the service or activity provider’s website (see Carer’s Centre case study).

“Ideally on the home page, so you can go straight to it”

Case study: The Carers Centre

Their referral point is clear on their home page.



Organisations or services receiving referrals should have

- Consent from the individual needing support.
- Requests for support that are appropriate, based on the criteria provided.
- Details of any access requirements.
- Provision of accurate contact details, address etc.

- Made contact with the individual before accessing the service or activity to orientate and reassure them.
- Know whether the individual has been referred to more than one organisation.
- Streamlined the amount of information needed from the referrer, by the service or activity, gathering more detailed information from the individual before access.

“One page of basic information to hand over...a grab sheet”


“Name, contact details, consent received yes/no, preferred means of communication, safeguarding issues and reason for referral”

Broadening support through cross referrals

Case study: Time to Talk Befriending

In cases or circumstances where an alternative organisation could provide support, for example when capacity is problematic, or the person does not meet the criteria specified, a referral might be possible through a network of providers who know and understand each others' services

“...having a network you can refer into in the East, like we've seen today with Lifelines, etc”

 **Referral Form**

If however the person being referred does not meet our criteria for services you might like to try one of the other befriending schemes in the City (details of which are outlined below). Alternatively please visit the Our Service, Signposting page for further information about day centers, activities and clubs taking place across Brighton and Hove.

Helping Hands (Jewish Community)
<http://www.helping-hands.org/>

Impact Initiatives (Hove, Hollingbury/Hollingdean)
<http://impact-initiatives.org.uk/older-people/>

Neighbourhood Care Scheme (East Brighton, Central, Hove, North Portslade)
<http://www.bh-impetus.org/projects/neighbourhood-care-scheme/>

The Royal Voluntary Service (Saltdean)
<http://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/get-help/services-we-provide/>

St Vincent De Paul Society (Patcham and Preston Park)
<http://www.escis.org.uk/advice/counselling-and-advice-advice/counselling-and-advice-services/st-vincent-de-paul-society-brighton-and-hove-2/>

What would help when providing feedback or follow-up?

- Information about the success (or otherwise) of the referral, and any reasons.

“Were they made to feel welcome?”

“Feedback on the appropriateness of the referral for the individual concerned”

“Whether or not they accessed the service and how they got on. Did it help the clients?”

“Positive feedback is just as important as negative...how good the service is that you’re providing...what it is about the service that could be improved”

Case study: Home and Company

The benefits of using Home and Company’s service are clear on their homepage, as are the areas they cover and the type of help they provide. Home and Company have also included cross referral information for East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service’s Home Fire Safety Check.



HOME & COMPANY
CALL US ON: 01273 434190

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LATEST NEWS

Have you had a Home Fire Safety Check? Your local fire service can visit you and carry out a check. It's free and you may be eligible for a smoke alarm. Call 0800 177 7069 for more information or to arrange a visit. Did you know the fire service also offers general health and wellbeing visits across Sussex? They can offer advice and information and put you in touch with appropriate sources of help. If you would like to arrange a visit or find out more please call 01323 462437.

Loretta Julie

Home Care Services and Home Help for Brighton & Hove, Lewes and Mid-Sussex

Home & Company is a home care services company owned and managed by Julie Gibson and Loretta Harrison who have worked together previously to promote best-practice in health and social care. "We believe there is a better and different way to provide help at home"

We have both had recent experience of helping older relatives and friends find appropriate home care and support. We felt there was a need for greater choice, and so have set up Home & Company to offer home care services and home help in Brighton & Hove, Lewes, Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath.

How are we different? We want the people we visit to feel they are living life to the full so we have brought together a **complete range of quality home care services** that can be accessed easily, delivered by people they can trust. The quality of the people is paramount so we have **handpicked a great local team who we know personally.**

At Home & Company we work hard to match you with the ideal

"You and your brilliant, lovely staff can't do enough for your clients, the change in my partner since you arrived has been amazing" LS, Hove

We can provide company for you and regular or one-off help with:

- shopping • meal preparation
- cleaning and laundry • administration
- appointments/activities • pets
- hobbies • computers/tv/telephones
- hairdressing • beauty treatments
- gardening • osteopathy
- foot care • benefits advice • home security
- building and repairs
- decorating • window cleaning

As part of our quest to find brilliant people to help you in your home, we are happy to undertake recruitment assignments where you are looking to directly employ a housekeeper, carer or companion.



What would help when providing feedback or follow-up?

- Ongoing dialogue and review between those making referrals and those receiving them to:
 - o maintain a simple and effective referral process.
 - o enable people with mobility, mental health or sensory impairments to access activities or support services
 - o set appropriate expectations for people
 - o minimise the number of inappropriate referrals by raising awareness and understanding.
- Enabling individuals themselves to provide feedback via a range of accessible platforms.

Case study: LifeLines

“We have updated our referral process and built a new step into it which ensures we feed back to the referrer what happened with the person they referred to us. We have put this into action in the past month or so”.

Contacting the person referred	
Preferred method of contact:	Preferred time of contact:
Access to where they live: (Do they live in a flat, do they live alone, is the intercom working, can they get to the door, are there pets or anything else to consider when visiting?)	
Thank you for this information. Please return this form by post or email to: The Project Officer, LifeLines, Montague House, Montague Place, Brighton, BN2 1JE Email: lifelines@volunteeringmatters.org.uk Tel: 01273 688117	
Date received by LifeLines:	Actioned date:
Comments:	Feedback provided to referrer? Y N/A

Sample referral form (thanks to Lifelines for sharing)

Activity Partners

Aim: To encourage and enable isolated older people who have lost the confidence in going out alone to become more active and involved in their communities. It is not a befriending scheme. The emphasis is on getting people out of the house, being more active and meeting others.

Inclusion criteria: Older people aged 50+ living in East Brighton.

Length of Scheme: Volunteers accompany their scheme member for up to 12 weeks initially after which the partnership is reviewed and may be extended.

Transport: Activity Partners does not provide transport. Scheme members must be able to get out by bus, on foot or using their own mobility equipment.

Wheelchair users are welcome - if you are unable to transfer independently, or have other requirements we will discuss these with you to see if we are able to match you with an appropriate volunteer.

Expenses: Activity Partners does not cover the cost of activities that the Scheme member chooses to take part in or any travel expenses.

Support needs: Activity Partners is realistic when referring an individual to support people with high level of need, such as those with a wheelchair, or who are not fit to walk.

Potential Scheme members will be referred to the scheme if the scheme is suited to their needs.

About LifeLines Volunteers

All our volunteers:

- are aged 50+
- provide two referees and a contact number
- are provided with basic training
- are provided with out of pocket expenses

ACTIVITY PARTNERS MEMBER REFERRAL FORM (please refer to guidance notes over before completing)			
Details of the person being referred			
Name:		Date of Birth:	
Address:		Postcode:	
Home Tel:		Mobile:	
Details of the person making the referral			
Name:		Contact Tel:	
		Contact email:	
Relationship to referred:		Date of referral:	
Reason for the referral			
Is this person aware of the referral? (we would prefer them to be)			Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
			No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is this person supported by any other services? (If yes please detail)			
Is there any other information we should know before contacting them?			
Contacting the person referred			
Preferred method of contact:		Preferred time of contact:	
Access to where they live: (Do they live in a flat, do they live alone, is the intercom working, can they get to the door, are there pets or anything else to consider when visiting?)			
Thank you for this information. Please return this form by post or email to: [insert your details]			
Date received by LifeLines:		Actioned date:	
Comments:			Feedback provided to referrer?
			Y <input type="checkbox"/>
			N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

What is Citywide Connect?

The Citywide Connect Programme is co-ordinated by The Fed Centre for Independent Living. The work is overseen by a Partnership Board which meets quarterly.

With likely ongoing reductions in health and social care funding, and a growing demand for services, Citywide Connect brings together health and social care providers, voluntary and community sector activity providers (including faith groups) and private and independent providers, such as care homes, care agencies and services. Citywide Connect gives all these groups an opportunity to develop new and innovative ways of working together.

To find out more about Citywide Connect, email citywideconnect@thefedonline.org.uk or telephone the team on 01273 208934.

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact us.

www.thefedonline.org.uk

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