

Final Report

Project Details

Library Service	East Renfrewshire Library and Information Services
Title of Initiatives?	My Health
Please provide contact details for the project manager(name and email)	Graeme McWilliams graeme.mcwilliams@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

1. Background

Barrhead has just over 17,000 residents. In terms of health and the determinants of health, the Barrhead community shows poorer performance on a range of indicators. For example:

- The proportion of the working population income deprived is **16.1** per cent (13.9 nationally and 7.5 for East Renfrewshire).
- The percentage of people stating that their health is not good is **11.5** (nationally 10.1 and 7.5 for East Renfrewshire).
- Rates of low birth weight babies per 1,000 births are **35** (25 nationally and 19 for East Renfrewshire).
- The proportion of the population prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression and psychosis is **9.94** per cent (8.2 nationally and 8 for East Renfrewshire).
- The alcohol-related hospital admission rate per 100,000 is **754** (723 nationally and 450 for East Renfrewshire).
- Life expectancy at birth is around **70-71** years (nationally 73 and 77 for East Renfrewshire).

As our only town, Barrhead has an important part to play in the future development of East Renfrewshire. Consultants have produced a Regeneration Framework with a vision which charts new and better shops, public transport and leisure facilities, and a further education college/ public library.

In addition, a state-of-the-art health centre is planned for launch in 2010. As part of the regeneration plan Libraries are planning an innovative health information centre where *My Health* (Internet café and information point) will form the entrance and reception to the centre and will encourage a self help approach to health.

Library and Information Services already have a key partnership role on the Community Health Care Partnership Board. We have worked closely with them on the Healthy Reading bibliotherapy project and seen real successes in the partnership with GPs.

The health centre presents an excellent opportunity to take this involvement further. In the meantime this stage of the project aims to develop an infrastructure for health information in community libraries which can easily be transferred and built upon with the launch of the new health centre.

2. Objectives

In the short term, the project objectives were to create:

- A unique health information centre in Barrhead Library - **achieved**
- A self help website - **achieved**
- E-directory and hard copy health resources directory - **achieved**
- Staff training module - **achieved**
- Health literacy e-learning module - **achieved**
- Patient pathways - **achieved**

In the long term these deliverables will form the basis for an infrastructure for the *My Health* area and for health information provision in the new Barrhead Health Centre.

3. Scope

My Health will establish libraries as a key partner in health information and support services, contributing to health improvement and minimising exclusion.

Key objectives

- To develop self-help approaches to health
- To develop clear referral and treatment pathways and accept referrals/ information prescriptions
- To enhance access to health related services, resources and information
- To improve the life circumstances that underlie poor health incl. high levels of stress and isolation of older people through information and support e.g. signposting / prescribing social clubs, theatre, groups clubs befriending schemes, walks, community events
- To promote and support healthy patterns of living, eating and healthy environments through provision of information, resources, tasters and referrals.

Libraries are well-placed, with a knowledgeable workforce, to develop and support health literacy in our communities and support the health professionals. Indeed, the appointment of a Health Information Officer should go some way to achieving this. The Health and Information Officer handles health enquiries, holds health sessions with individual and group clients and is responsible for maintaining the health information points. In addition, she works with various agencies throughout East Renfrewshire and helps vulnerable client groups realise their potential.

The ultimate goal of the project is to improve the health of East Renfrewshire citizens by helping them to help themselves. We aim to open up access to health resources and detailed information and equip people with the knowledge and skills to improve their health and wellbeing.

4. Activities and Outcomes

Staffing and research

Two staff were seconded to post from September/October 2008. Initial research and networking were carried out in the following way:

- Meetings with Community Health & Care Partnership (CHCP), East Renfrewshire Information & Advice Forum (ERIAF), NHS partners
- Attendance at NHS and CHCP events
- Survey of local people's attitudes to health provision
- Extensive research into what was available online
- Research into Information Literacy (used the SLIC toolkit, the Open University learning space and Intute's Virtual Learning Space)

Hard copy directory/e-directory

The directory was to include the details of all information and advice groups and organisations in East

Renfrewshire. Given the diversity of the groups and subjects to be contained in the directory we were extremely keen to engage the active participation of our partners.

To ensure that there was a consistency between the directory and the website, we felt that both mediums should follow the same principles in relation to the way the information was structured.

An online version of the support directory was produced to encourage partners to contribute information which would be used to populate the hard copy directory.

This would:

- Enable easy collection of information
- Give agencies ownership of their information, allowing them to decide what would be printed about their service
- Would allow agencies to feel more involved in the project
- To ensure currency of information

In considering the design of the hard copy directory we looked to two other major directory projects produced by other East Renfrewshire Council departments. Both the "Active Ageing" and "Children's" directories were substantial and very comprehensive pieces of work, but unfortunately - as is the very nature of print - they went out date quite rapidly and no attempt has as yet been made to update the information contained within.

We wanted to avoid this, to ensure currency and allow for future updates to the printed directory, hence the re-imagining of the directory format.

The support directory follows the traditional route with distinct tabbed sections, an introduction and alphabetical list of local information and advice organisations. However, rather than opting for a traditional format of loose leaf pages, we produced a series of guides.

My Health is about empowerment and self-help. The production of the directory and its associated guides promotes this much better than a straightforward directory given solely to health professionals and partners would. Professionals still receive a copy of the directory, which can then be used to refer clients on. The professional, however, can also go to their stock of individual guides and pass a guide to an interested client. The client can also pick up a guide from displays at all Libraries, Sports Centres and Health Centres across East Renfrewshire. This approach offers the following distinct advantages:

- People can help themselves
- People can choose to pick up only the information that is relevant to them, thus cutting down on waste
- Access to *My Health* is provided for those who are not computer literate
- Large Print copies have also been produced offering access to those with a visual impairment, particularly elderly people who are also less likely to be computer literate
- Library-produced leaflets are now in different venues across East Renfrewshire giving us a greater opportunity to reach non-library users
- All leaflets can be made available in alternative formats/languages

Stock

Stock purchased for the health information point was based on criteria

- Recommendations from PERL
- Gaps in existing stock
- Key themes of the project

Website

The website is about self-help. We were extremely keen to ensure that we were not duplicating information which was already publicly available, therefore, rather than providing detailed health information a large part of our research involved identifying good quality websites and signposting to them via our website.

In designing it we felt strongly that it should be

- Easy to navigate
- Jargon-free
- Approachable
- Focussed locally, with information relevant to East Renfrewshire

In addition to national websites such as NHS 24, Health Information Plus and BBC Health we also included links to local information and advice organisations.

E-health module

The model for the E-health module was devised by the project staff and freelance developer Sue Smith. Content is based on the SLIC "Information Literacy Skills" toolkit, the Open University "Finding information in health and lifestyle" module and Intute's "Internet for Health and Wellbeing" tutorial. Designed in Flash by Sue, the module takes the user through 15 questions, where they can learn as they go about locating and evaluating health information. Once the module has been completed, the user can print out a certificate. It is an informative but novel approach to learning and is proving to be a popular component on the website.

Health Literacy Sessions

Our goal of delivering information-literate citizens can only be achieved with the help of our front-line staff. Three practical Health Literacy sessions have now taken place, training 27 staff members. The sessions were taken by Health Skills Development Officer, Lynne Currie, PERL Outreach Project Officer, Janice Blair and Information Officer for NHS Education, Rob Westwood.

In the course of the training we:

- Looked at how staff currently handle health information enquiries
- Used scenarios to suggest ways of dealing with enquiries
- Identified good online practice
- Suggested alternatives to using *Google* and brushed up on good *Google* practice
- Highlighted "good" websites for health information
- Discussed indepth *My Health* and *Health Information Plus* in more depth

This has been received very positively by staff:

"Really good and interesting training"

"More confident in answering questions"

"Very interesting and will give me more confidence"

"I think all staff should be trained"

We are currently laying plans to roll training out to all staff members.

5. Impact, Evidence and Evaluation

In our initial bid, we pledged to evaluate the project in the following way:

Qualitative impact

- A residents' survey at the outset to gain views of health information provision and again at the end of the project
- Partner and peer assessment

- Opinion meter will be used
- 2 user groups will be held
- We will work with Strathclyde University on the valuation

Quantitative

- Certificates in health Literacy e- module
- Number of partners/ contacts in the directory
- Library Visits
- Enquiries
- Health resources issued
- Hits on the *My Health* website
- Number of health Open Days – ongoing, presence already at LEAP

As the project was just launched at the end of March it is difficult to measure the impact at this stage, however, early feedback has been extremely positive and we will continue to measure the effectiveness of this project on an on-going basis.

Qualitative

- A survey was taken at the outset to find out where people preferred to access health information and to gauge demand for an online resource.
98% of respondents said they would use an East Renfrewshire health information website.
- An initial user group was held in planning the structure of the website
Members of the Causeway Mental Health 'Link Group' were positive about the My Health project and in a focus group aided in the organisation of the website.
- At the close of the project, an email evaluation was conducted with our partners in ERIAF and the CHCP – the closing date for this is Monday 28th April
100% of respondents so far would recommend the resources to their clients.
- Public Evaluation has been conducted in 6 of our libraries
*Two staff members spent the day in three libraries asking a variety of customers their views. Judging by the responses the project has been received favourably:
"Lots of information. Easy to use."
"Useful hyperlinks. Nice bright colours. Easy to navigate around."
"Easy to understand."*
- My Health suggestion boxes are in place in 8 of our 10 libraries
- Staff filled out pre and post-training questionnaires
Some staff before training said they did not feel comfortable giving out health information. At the end of training all but one member of staff said they now felt more comfortable dealing with health enquiries (the member of staff ticked "don't know").
- Opinion meter will be place in libraries by Monday 7th May
- Two additional user testing sessions will be held in May
- ERIAF meetings will act as an ongoing forum for improving *My Health* resources

Quantitative

- The number of certificates issued for the My e-Health module is being monitored is 247
- Members of the ERIAF group have pledged commitment to the project. New signups are permitted

at any time, so it is anticipated that further groups will register.

- Enquiries at the Health Information Point for April 2008 were 27. We anticipate growth in this area given the My Health promotional and branding activities.
- During the first month of the website being live the My Health website recorded 3,600 hits. The website was showcased on the homepage of www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk and we will continue our commitment to promote it.
- *My Health* has had a presence at three diverse community events thus far. The LEAP mental health day, Women Across the World and Tartan Day.

Ongoing

- *My Health* suggestion boxes
- Monitor opinion through the East Renfrewshire Council annual survey on public views of Council services
- Regular surveys of public knowledge of library services, both in libraries and in non-library locations
- ERIAF meetings are a good sounding board
- Libraries presence at CHCP meetings can be used to gauge opinion and ensure libraries are kept up-to-date on the health agenda

Future

In the initial bid we stated that Strathclyde University would be involved in the evaluation. The project is still very much in its infancy and we would be concerned, that were they currently involved, there would be little to evaluate other than the most basic qualitative and quantitative data. It is our intention instead, to enlist their services prior to the launch of the new Health Centre and feed results into the centre's design and content.

6. Project management, reporting and monitoring issues

At the outset we enlisted a number of key individuals to assist us with this project. After initial brainstorming sessions we were then able to take the project forward. It was important that we were not replicating any services that were being offered by other agencies but instead promoting them through our directory and website.

In addition, the Project Manager had a key role in promoting the My Health initiative to colleagues across the council. It was important to engage colleagues in the project and generate a level of interest in our work.

Furthermore, to ensure colleagues were kept abreast of project developments, the Project Manager reported to the CHCP communications group and to the ERIAF group periodically to give updates on which milestones had been reached in the project plan.

7. Quality management issues

My Health points the way to reliable health information, but as library staff we are not health professionals. To ensure a high standard of information was maintained throughout the project:

- We learned from respected and authoritative sites such as BBC Health, NHS 24, Health Information Plus, Direct.gov etc.
- PERL recommended books and checked the currency and quality of the leaflets at our health information points
- We invited professionals, where possible, to submit content for sites

- Before its publication, we emailed much of the content for the information guides to key contacts for feedback and quality control

After careful discussion with the PHRU it was decided that NHS E-Library factsheets and information would not be suitable for *My Health*, although staff have been shown e-library and advised that they can register to use it.

While the e-library is excellent, it is aimed at health professionals and thus is perhaps too technical for our purposes. We felt that both staff and members of the public would struggle to understand some of the terminology. Instead, we aim to use NHS Education's new resource, Health Information Plus, NHS 24 and to engage the services of the Public Education Resource Library in the event of more complex enquiries.

Access to E-Library will, however, be reappraised when the *My Health* area of the Health Centre is launched.

Public Health Resource Unit - Multilingual Health Information Resources

PHRU endeavor to produce their resources in a variety of languages. We will aim to retain a stock of leaflets for our growing number of Polish service-users. Online multilingual information is signposted from the *My Health* site and an accessibility statement appears on all library materials.

Having gone through the Chartermark process we realise that the customer is at the heart of everything that we do. With this in mind we have made provisions for customers to give feedback, demonstrated with suggestion boxes available in all of our libraries and a short feedback form on the My Health website. In addition, all of the literature follows our corporate accessibility guidelines and complements the other service publications available in our libraries.

We have made a strong commitment to staff training and development. This project has enabled our Health Skills development Officer to attend various conferences, networking events and steering groups. This valuable experience has given Lynne the ability and confidence to pass on key skills to other staff throughout the library service.

8. Staffing issues

The major staffing issue was the departure of Project Executive, Liz McGettigan, at the beginning of the project.

Liz wrote the initial bid and had forged relationships with key partners throughout her career at East Renfrewshire Council.

After some intensive research, however, we were able to build on the foundations that were already in place and continued to forge new partnerships with members of the ERIAF committee, NHS Education and the NHS Public Health Resource Unit.

The tight deadlines and other commitments outside of the project made for challenging times. However, staff were able to deal with this commitment and were adaptable to change and were able to 'learn on the job'.

9. Financial issues

The decision by SLIC to cut the project's marketing budget was initially perceived as a problem: We had already approached Traffic Design Consultants, with the intention of engaging them to produce branding in line with the existing Cultural and Sport divisional design manual, which they produced.

Although we felt that the "look@libraries" branding was strong, we felt it important that the project have its own identity, especially as *My Health* has a much broader scope.

This was resolved by developing the branding in-house to incorporate the look@libraries logo. Additional key design elements came at later date when the support directory was produced in collaboration with East Renfrewshire Council's PR department.

10. Sustainability issues and transferable solutions

Sustainability has been a key theme from the outset as the project seeks to guarantee a future role for libraries in the provision of health information and essentially provides a framework for library presence in the new Barrhead Health Centre.

Potential sustainability issues were identified and actioned for the following deliverables:

- Online resource
- Printed resource
- Health Information points
- Staff training

Online resource

The online resource primarily points the way to information advice locally, online and on the phone. This obviously involves a great deal of external information - phone numbers, opening times, URLs, email address - that will change over time. Weblinks and other data will be checked regularly by a member of the web team.

Our new health information officer will also be responsible for identifying new content for the website. The resource has the capability to expand and grow over time.

The online directory of local support is a key element of the site. As discussed in Section 4, by creating an area online where the groups themselves could register and manage their own information, we identified an effective solution that would save time and ensure currency.

This approach also offers groups a more active role, enabling them to feel "more involved" in *My Health* and goes some way to attracting the involvement of "new blood" in the future, wherein groups that are new to the site can follow a clear and simple route to getting involved and listing their services.

Printed resource

The support directory has been designed with three key factors in mind:

- to allow for a simple updating process
- to maintain consistency with the other project deliverables
- to cut down on waste

Again, as mentioned in Section 4, lessons were learned from previous directory projects that are now sadly out-of-date and have fallen by the wayside.

Information Literacy is of huge concern to East Renfrewshire Libraries and is a key objective in this project. Part of being information literate is finding suitable information that is timely and up-to-date. We therefore wanted to ensure currency and allow for future updates to the printed directory, hence the re-imagining of the directory format.

We established earlier how this promotes a more inclusive approach, but this also enables easy updating of the directory.

A database is held of all who have received a directory, a display unit or a stock of loose leaf guides. When a new guide is printed, it is simply sent to those individuals and replaces the previous version. This allows us to update all guides at once, amend just one guide or add a completely new guide.

These guides, and the coloured tabs by which they are divided, reflect the colour coding that appears on the *My Health* site. This:

- Assists the quick location of additional information across the two formats.
- Clearly signposts to the online resource where additional and more current information is readily available

Health Information Points

When we secured the funding for this project it was with the stipulation that we would create a framework for the new Barrhead Health centre and improve the current health information point at Barrhead Library.

This has been achieved, but we felt it was important that quality health information is available throughout our libraries and health information points and health sections are clearly designated. Consequently the *My Health* branding has been rolled out to all libraries and all East Renfrewshire Libraries have at least one display unit containing the range of guides.

Staff Training

East Renfrewshire Library and Information Service is a customer focused service, which depends on well trained staff who have opportunities for development. The *My Health* staff training programme adds to our commitment to assist staff to increase their skills, gain job satisfaction and achieve their maximum potential. The training element of this project contributes to our aim of investing in people which in turn will improve the performance of our organisation. The Library and Information Service is currently preparing for 'Investors in People' status; *My Health* training will enhance our commitment to this quality framework.

Staff are key to the success of the *My Health* project and indeed to East Renfrewshire Libraries goal of promoting information literacy to our customers

Three sessions have now taken place where staff were given practical training in improving their online information literacy skills. This has been received very positively by staff, and many agreed that further training in this vein would be welcome. Staff also agreed that they now, as a result of the training, staff now feel more confident in handling health enquiries.

This puts us on an excellent footing to make health information and health literacy core to our service in all communities.

Declaration

The information provided in this final report is correct to the best of my knowledge

Name		Signature	
Designation		Date	

Please return to The Director, Scottish Library and Information Council, 1st Floor Building C, Brandon Gate, Leechlee Road, Hamilton ML3 6AU by **Friday 25th April 2008**. Email: e.fulton@slainte.org.uk

Supporting Guidance

1. Background

This should provide the context and rationale for the development which was funded.

2. Objectives

Identify the short and long term objectives, and any targets which were set.

3. Scope

Explain how the initiative attempted to improve services to citizens.

4. Activities and Outcomes

This section should contain clear details of the range of activities carried out with the support of Scottish Executive funding and the outcomes of that activity, in terms of statistical data. Evaluative information should be included in the next section.