



Health Education
North West London

PLANT A SEED, GROW WELL

PROJECT COORDINATOR
AMY CHRISP



Who We Are

- Award winning local charity which last year celebrated its 30th Anniversary.
- Four pocket park/greenhouse/school farm sites and delivers gardening education to local schools. The charity also runs on-going health and wellbeing projects, including:
 - **Grow Well** (therapeutic gardening sessions for carers and supported gardening sessions for people who need additional support).
 - **Get Out There!** (working with adults who have been long term unemployed, learning rewarding new skills in environmental management).
- Extensive experience of working with hard to reach groups, including those at risk of homelessness and from BME backgrounds.
- Work with volunteers who have complex health needs and greatly benefit from regular engagement in the environmental projects.



Plant a Seed, Grow Well

- Small grant in 2013 from Hammersmith United Charities - strategic developmental work targeting local GP's and other health centre providers.
- April 2014 HCGA received funding from Health Education for North West London to pilot the Plant a Seed - Grow Well project.
- Working with health professionals through CPD training, bespoke site based activities and referrals from GP's to promote social prescribing.
- Providing the knowledge and tools to develop therapeutic gardening and food growing projects within a health care setting.





Project Outcomes

- In the first 12 months of the project we worked with various health professionals, including:
 - Practice Managers
 - GP's
 - Clinical Psychologists
 - Occupational Therapists
 - Speech and Language Therapists
 - Dementia Support Workers
 - Hostel staff
 - Social Workers
- Delivered regular CPD workshops and worked with individual teams on a bespoke basis.
- St Vincent's OT's were inspired after attending our Ecotherapy Awareness Training and as a result have now organised a Nature Therapy Group for their patients.
- Piloting a weekly patient gardening group with two local GP surgeries.
- The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Score (WEMWBS) used to evaluate sessions.





Key Challenges

- Exact outcomes of the project are dependent on the response and level of buy in from health professionals.
- Often difficult for health professionals to attend training sessions due to busy schedules. Incorporating team training with monthly team meetings has therefore been successful.
- All training sessions and workshops have to demonstrate clinical outcomes for NHS staff to gain authorisation to attend.





Key Opportunities

- Good synergy between Plant a Seed - Grow Well and HCGA's other projects:
 - **Get Out There!** offers practical support and assists with any construction work.
 - **Grow Well** is a weekly session that health professionals can refer patients to.
- Physical infrastructure – Phoenix Farm and the Glasshouses
- High level of support from the CCG and the Project Advisory Group.
- Information on the project regularly circulated to numerous NHS teams, Programme Directors, Practice Managers and GPS's across the triborough.
- Two voluntary ambassadors appointed to help support upcoming events and workshops.
- Highly skilled team of freelance health and wellbeing facilitators; including horticulturalists, a mindfulness leader, yoga teacher and medicinal herbalist.
- Sessions delivered on a bespoke basis depending on the requirements of each team.





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