

## Ffrind i Mi/Friend of Mine

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**Rationale;** Loneliness and social isolation can affect anyone. Age UK (2015) reports loneliness is as harmful to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. People with a high degree of loneliness are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's as those with a low degree of loneliness. Loneliness increases the chances of an early death by 45%. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has a clear message: **Loneliness Kills**, both people and communities. Recently, loneliness is recognised as a public health issue and 'growing epidemic'.

**Project Details;** Funded through the Health Technology Wales Scheme and 1,000 Lives, Ffrind i mi (or Friend of mine) is a new initiative that Aneurin Bevan UHB and its **partners** are developing to ensure that anyone feeling lonely or isolated are supported to reconnect with their communities. Working with **Community Connectors** and existing volunteer befriending services, the project aims to recruit as many volunteers as possible to support those affected, seeking to match the interests of people to volunteers with the same interests e.g. gardening, watching sport, dog walking etc.

### Intended Outcomes;

- Agreed with ABUHB Executive Team the develop a 'Prescription for Loneliness' service
- Established a multi-agency Partnership Board
- Spoke to people at risk of loneliness and isolation
- Made public awareness films where people affected by loneliness/isolation tell their stories
- Set a **#CountMeIn** challenge to ABUHB staff- how many would be willing to spare an hour a week to support a lonely person (152 staff)
- Planned an engagement event

**Time-frame;** the project is ongoing with no fixed time limit having been built into the Health Boards IMTP. Funding will continue to be sourced from all avenues, including charitable funds for volunteer expenses

**Future Development Planned;** Expansion of the service to include other projects based on the need to tackle loneliness across age ranges

**Commissioning / Funding;** currently through the Health Technology Wales Scheme and 1,000 Lives, Ffrind i mi (or Friend of mine) is a new initiative that Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and its partners –see overleaf

**Evaluation / Reporting;** Monitoring will be undertaken by the Ffrind i mi operational leads on a weekly basis. The Partnership Board will receive reports every two months. Progress will be reported through ABUHB's Patient Experience Committee and through partners own internal committees. Monitoring information will include:

- Number of referrals to the Ffrind i mi scheme
- Number of volunteers recruited
- Number of training sessions delivered for volunteers
- Number of befriending matches
- Number of hours of befriending delivered each week/month
- Equality/diversity monitoring
- Feedback from service users, volunteers and referral agents

An annual evaluation will be undertaken and reported through agreed committees and to the Health Technology Challenge (Wales) Scheme.

Evaluation will include using the outcome information and other information gathered to make judgements about the Ffrind i mi service and its outcomes and will include:

- Whether the service has been successful in achieving its objectives
- Whether there have been any unexpected outcomes
- The impact of the scheme
- Does the evidence indicate that there is still a need for the service, or even a need for expansion?
- Are more resources needed to deliver the service?

## Supporting Documentation



FINAL Ffrind I Mi Service Specification.



AWCIC Awards May 2017.docx

## Partners;



**Acknowledgement;** mail to [Ffrindimi.abb@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Ffrindimi.abb@wales.nhs.uk) tel:01495 241257