

# Evaluation of the Wakefield District Housing Mental Health Navigator scheme

Positive impact for tenants, their housing provider and local healthcare systems

## Where and when?

Wakefield District Housing (WDH) and the local NHS trust have been working together to deliver a **Mental Health Navigator (MHN) scheme** since 2015



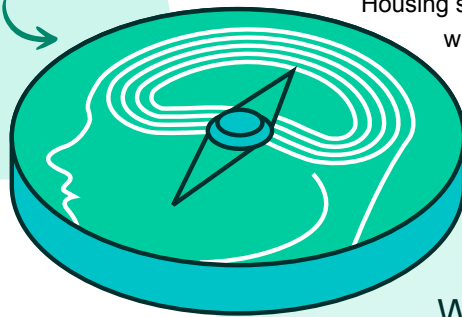
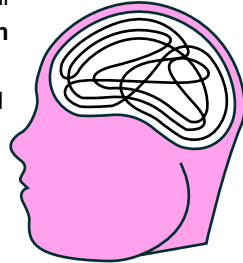
**3 NHS mental health professionals** are embedded within WDH

## Why?

**4 million** households in England live in rented social housing; **1/3** include someone with **poor mental health**

Housing support officers can **struggle** to deal with mental health-related problems

These can **escalate to clinical crisis** or terminated tenancies



## Who and what?



The scheme aims to help people **sustain their tenancies** and improve their **health and wellbeing outcomes**



**Professionals provide specialist advocacy, signposting and support** to tenants experiencing mental health difficulties

## Why does the scheme work well?



**Navigators' interpersonal skills**



**In-person visits**



**Ongoing support** offered to tenants



**WDH and NHS partnership**



**Signposting and referrals** to services available in-house and the local community

## Impacts of navigators for tenants

**Feeling supported and comfortable to share problems**



I've had a weight lifted off my shoulders... the navigator was very understanding. I felt quite relieved that I could tell somebody and not feel ashamed of myself."

**Danielle**

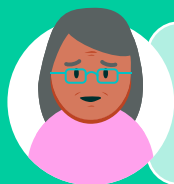
**Finding out about services**



People I never realised were there that I can reach out to get help. I didn't have a clue."

**Paul**

**Connecting with family**



The navigator tried to help my family understand... I can open up a little bit more to my family if I need to, like I did the other day."

**Rav**

**Tenants' survey scores showed significant satisfaction improvements in six of eleven variables by the scheme's end:** mental health, job situation, leisure activities, personal safety, medication and meetings with a mental health professional.<sup>2</sup>

# Impacts for WDH and South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust



New relationships between NHS and housing enable more holistic support for tenants experiencing mental health and housing difficulties



Improved job satisfaction and confidence among housing staff



The partnership is paramount. We can make sure our customers are getting the right type of support."

**WDH manager**



We would struggle to deliver services if we didn't have those professionals working with customers and giving specialist advice."

**WDH manager**



May reduce secondary care use



There was a decrease in drug and alcohol-related and self-harm attendances in local emergency departments. This trend was not found in comparator sites.<sup>2</sup>



Can save money

Evidence suggests that the scheme will produce economic savings for public services, if it is delivered successfully.<sup>3</sup>

Tenants, housing staff, the NHS and external support services recommend the scheme continues and is rolled-out elsewhere.

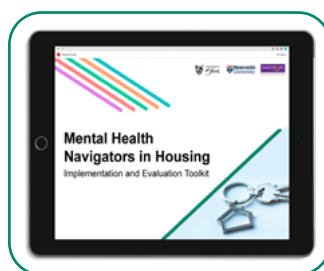


The impact for our residents and teams is unbelievable. It needs to continue or we're going to have more tenancy failures...if anybody asked me if they should implement it in their organisation I would say definitely!"

**WDH manager**

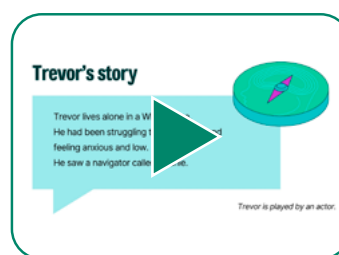


## Considering implementing a MHN scheme?



Read the **Mental Health Navigators in Housing Implementation and Evaluation Toolkit** below:

[Click to view](#)



Watch these **short videos** about the **impact for tenants and staff**:

[Click to watch](#)

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The Consortium is led by the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration North East and Cumbria (ARC NENC) and the Applied Research Consortium Yorkshire and Humber (ARC YH). The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care. For more information, please contact Dr Sarah Blower at: [sarah.blower@york.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.blower@york.ac.uk).

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<sup>1</sup>The Universities of York, Manchester and Newcastle were funded to evaluate the scheme.

<sup>2</sup>More research is needed to explore whether improvements were caused by support from navigators. We do not yet know if this was caused by the Mental Health Navigator scheme or something else, like a change in policy.

<sup>3</sup>Based on the evidence available.