

NEWSLETTER



Welcome

As the days grow longer and brighter, we're excited to bring you uplifting updates, fresh wellbeing inspiration, and community highlights to help you step into the new season with energy and optimism. We hope this spring edition adds a little warmth and renewal to your day.

This year we've continued to grow our skills and strengthen our community offer, with newer team members becoming Dementia Friends, Orange Button Holders, and Bereavement Champions. You may have spotted us supporting KICC's monthly *Brewed for Wellbeing* events, at Westmorland Bite, or providing free blood pressure checks for Leisure Centre members. A few standout moments include working with Eden PCN and Westmorland and Furness Fit4All partnership to help deliver a temporary community exercise timetable, and presenting our Better Health work at Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB Board Meeting.

Healthwise: Member of the month

A Kendal resident joined Healthwise in 2022 after multiple health diagnoses, including early Parkinson's. Starting with swimming, they soon found confidence in Aqua Aerobics and circuit classes, appreciating the friendly, pressure-free environment. Their progress has been remarkable; pre-diabetes reversed, weight stable, and specialists believe regular activity is slowing Parkinson's progression. **"I always feel the benefit. I'm so grateful for this facility."**

New smiles onboard

Joe – HAF Lead, Penrith Leisure Centre

Bringing experience in sports coaching, swim teaching, and SEND support, Joe is passionate about helping children stay active and healthy. In his HAF role, he looks forward to creating safe, engaging holiday sessions, introducing new activities, and inspiring children through sport, healthy lifestyles, and creative fun.



Danny – Health Referral Facilitator, Kendal Leisure Centre



Danny has a wealth of health-focused knowledge and skills from Exercise Referral with Wigan Council, previously working with people with physical, learning, neurological, and sensory needs. His development of community dementia cafés and work as a Progress Coach also makes him a great addition to our team.





Age Friendly South Lakeland

Momentum is building across AFSL. Walking audits of parking machines, pavements and public conveniences will soon be underway, and recruitment for Premises Award volunteers has begun. Chatter Matters groups continue to act as valuable social prescribing hubs, welcoming organisations to share how their services can support members. There are just four weeks left for the farming community to contribute their views on future health and wellbeing projects. Simply scan the QR code to take part.



Under 18's

We've recently developed an exercise on referral pathway for young people, offering safe, supportive activity tailored to individual needs. Working with health professionals, families and local partners, we aim to build confidence, enhance physical and mental wellbeing, and encourage long-term healthy habits. We're pleased to see a growth in our junior members, showing young people are taking healthy steps to being active and growing up in good health.



Escape Pain

Since launch in 2022, 60% of 640 enrolled participants have completed Escape Pain, with some reporting reduced reliance on medication. The initiative has also contributed to shorter NHS waiting times, delayed and, in some cases, removed the need for surgical interventions. To date, this has generated an estimated £505,000 in net savings for the NHS.

Visit from Minal Bakhai MBE – NHS England Director for Transformation and Innovation

We were thrilled to host Minal in February, who observed key programmes including ESCAPE-pain, Chatter Matters, and the co-located NHS iMSK department. She noted the high participation across sessions, and discussed how ESCAPE-pain continues to contribute to reductions in routine procedures and medication use. Chatter Matters attracted more than 30 participants, demonstrating strong social prescribing benefits.

Discussions were held around shared NHS-leisure spaces, collaboration with Social Prescribing Teams and Primary Care, and the capabilities of the new Live Better App. Attendees heard a powerful story from Hilary, an iMSK patient who avoided surgery and now actively participates in walking groups thanks to ESCAPE-pain and Healthwise. ICB partners presented their fantastic approaches to the Neighbourhood Health Agenda (NNHIP) as well.

In her summary, Minal highlighted prevention-focused investment, co-production, data challenges, system-wide commissioning needs (including leisure), and the importance of Social Impact Investment. She encouraged use of the 43-partnership NNHIP network, shared national best practice examples, and offered ongoing support from her department.



Introducing Six New Additions to the Better UK App

We're excited to announce six powerful new features now available through the Better UK app. Members can enjoy on-demand **wellbeing videos**, a **personalised Healthy Habits Coach**, exclusive offers, **virtual health advice**, wellbeing partner content and **24/7 GP support with prescriptions**, all included in your direct debit, or available for £9.50 per month for non-members and Pay-As-You-Go users. These features strongly support NHS England's focus the shift from analogue to digital.

Early health insights highlight why these tools matter. 41% of new users report two or more long-term health conditions and almost one third of users are using this platform to support their mental wellbeing. With the new app experience, members can take meaningful steps toward better daily wellbeing and access additional support to live longer in better health.

