

Populations in focus

Highlights



Great Yarmouth & Waveney

Supporting the health and wellbeing of carers: Carer Support Nurse pilot

Families and friends play a crucial supportive role as unpaid carers, but this comes at a cost: it can damage their own health and wellbeing and negatively impact their ability to continue 'caring'. Carers lack time to look after themselves and see NHS contacts as 'for the patient'. Despite NHS England's commitment to carers, time-pressed healthcare professionals prioritise the patients' needs. Carers' needs tend to be invisible until there is a crisis. This is worse for carers from disadvantaged backgrounds who often find accessing services difficult anyway.

This study has been working with over 100 stakeholders to develop a ground-breaking Carer Support Nurse role to address carers' health and wellbeing. Funded by Norfolk and Waveney ICS, the Carer Support Nurse will be in post in one of the NIHR ARC-EoE Populations-in-Focus for a pilot year from mid-October 2022.

Implementation of Opioid Deprescribing Toolkit across Waveney and Norfolk

Prescribing rates for opioid analgesics remain high in England, despite the lack of evidence for their long-term use in people with persistent long-term non-cancer pain. As of June 2022, Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board (ICB) remains among the top 10 highest prescribers of opioid analgesics, at a cost of over £2M every year.

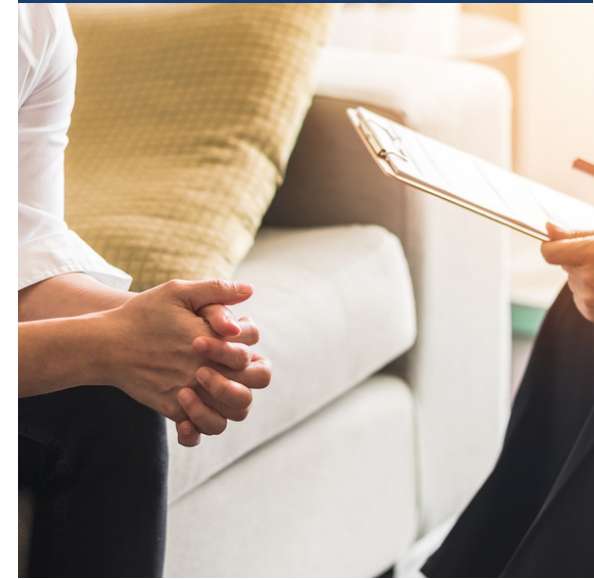
The opioid toolkit, developed as part of an NIHR CLAHRC funded project in 2018/19, aims to help organisations support prescribers to slowly stop opioids. The toolkit developers combined evidence from research trials and experts to identify six components essential for successfully stopping opioids. Eastern AHSN are working with the toolkit developers, ARC East of England and representatives from Norfolk and Waveney ICB to incorporate all six toolkit components into a system-wide opioid tapering pathway.

[Read more](#)

MINDS Study

The MINDS Study aims to improve the outcomes and experiences of those being discharged from mental health hospitals. This project will work closely with a Lived Experience Advisory Group, carers and healthcare professionals to co-produce and implement a Systemic Discharge Care Approach.

[Read more](#)



Great Yarmouth & Waveney

What makes communities age-friendly: a community survey in Suffolk

People are living longer. Yet for many, the opportunities afforded by a longer life are lost due to poor health and difficulty remaining involved in society. One promising approach is to design enabling 'ageing-friendly' environments that support people to live well. Currently, we know little of their effect on health and even less of their value to communities.

To understand this matter further, this project created a community survey for Suffolk residents (over 55 years old) with the intention to establish what they think makes a place, like Suffolk, age-friendly. Focused efforts made sure that they had responses from groups that are often underrepresented in research.

Survey findings were combined with interviews, focus groups and documentary analysis data to assess the preferences of older adults. The findings will be discussed with Suffolk stakeholders early November.

[Read more](#)

Valuing the outcomes of social connection interventions for use in economic evaluation

Social connection is the feeling we get from our relationships with other people and it affects our health and wellbeing.

Social connection created within groups is easy to talk about, yet it can be challenging to measure. This makes it difficult for decision-makers to compare and prioritise which groups should be funded. This study will show what feeling socially connected means to people over the age of 50 in the East of England. Information will be collected from people involved in delivering these interventions e.g., people with lived experience, funders, managers and host organisations.

This project will implement the intervention to support practitioners to incorporate Shared Decision Making into consultations in December 2022 and evaluate its effects in early 2023.

[Read more](#)

Walking with our communities

ARC researchers organised a series of walks in our Populations in focus to create new relationships with community groups and the community itself.

In April 2022, the ARC team partnered with **One Life Suffolk** for a walk at Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve in Lowestoft.

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Thurrock, Essex

Implementing shared decision making across Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System

The project was initiated by Thurrock CCG (now Mid and South Essex ICB) in response to NHSE's Long Term Plan to make Shared Decision-Making (SDM) routine practice by 2024. SDM is defined by NICE as 'a joint process in which a healthcare professional works together with a person to reach a decision about care'.

Mid and South Essex ICB have worked with the ARC EoE in the Ageing and Multi-morbidity theme to develop a project to implement SDM within the ICB by April 2023. This project has developed and distributed a theory-driven survey to diagnose and prioritise the key factors influencing whether practitioners routinely incorporate SDM into their consultations with patients. This survey has been requested by other ICBs to guide their implementation strategy for SDM. There are plans to implement the intervention to support practitioners to incorporate SDM into consultations in December 2022 and evaluate its effects in early 2023.

[Read more](#)

Connecting Communities Essex Local Learning: Understanding local connections & forming a model to engage local residents

Community Connections Essex Local Learning is a collaboration between Essex County Council, the University of Essex and residents and organisations living and working in four hyperlocal areas in Essex within the wider areas of Laindon, Dovercourt, Canvey Island and Parkeston, between January 2021 and June 2022.

This project seeks to understand the community connections and support between people at a neighbourly level, and the approach and resources that people think would help grow these connections. It uses co-productive and participatory methods to undertake conversations with people within a small local area.

It has been inspired by conversations in Thurrock and questions around how to include underserved people who don't normally take part in research.

[Read more](#)

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In June 2022, the ARC team partnered with **Tilbury Riverside Project** for 'A Newcomers introduction to Grays Heritage' walk in Grays Essex.

[Read more](#)



Stevenage, Hertfordshire

The CONNECT study: Applying person-centred principles when caring for people living with dementia

The CONNECT study, funded by Alzheimer's Society, will co-design an evidence-based intervention to promote person-centred care with people living with dementia admitted to hospital.

Applying person-centred principles in busy hospital environments is challenging. While previous research shows it is possible to work well with people living with dementia during constant observation, there is a reliance on the knowledge, abilities and attributes of individual staff. This means that the quality of care can vary between staff and across the day which impacts whether the person's experience is positive or not.

Through CONNECT, this study aims to reduce the variability of constant observation provision through an intervention that promotes a person-centred approach. Currently, they are co-designing the intervention with people from Stevenage, Nottingham and Leeds.

[Read more](#)

Stevenage Dementia Involvement Group

Stevenage Dementia Involvement Group was set up by researchers from the University of Hertfordshire in 2020 in collaboration with The Red Shed CIC.

The group meets monthly and provides opportunities for people with experience of dementia to have their voice heard and to have influence on research and the planning of new services. Each session the group discusses a particular topic relating to living with dementia or health and social care services in Stevenage.

Some of the topics discussed so far include: making Stevenage a dementia friendly community (with guest speaker from Stevenage Borough Council); GPS location devices, living well with dementia in care homes and experiences of hospitals.

"I am so pleased to be given the opportunity to be involved with the group and know that my thoughts and feelings are being listened to and hopeful that this may lead to positive change." **Anne, Group member**

Walking with our communities

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In May 2022, the ARC team partnered with **Stevenage Borough Council** for walk in Fairlands Valley Park in Stevenage.

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Peterborough & Fenland



The Peterborough Exemplar

The Peterborough Exemplar is a new community mental health care model and one of the 12 Early Implementer sites funded by NHS England.

Community mental healthcare is based on the provision of care within the community, where individuals' mental health and wellbeing can be supported by various professionals and service providers. Community mental healthcare has significantly grown since deinstitutionalisation. It gradually became an umbrella term referring to services ranging from early-intervention psychological therapies to treatment of complex needs and crisis support.

Despite progress, service fragmentation and gaps in service provision remain key barriers to effective community mental healthcare in England. Recent policies highlighted the need to transform service provision by developing patient-centred, joined-up community mental healthcare. In response to policy guidance and local strategy priorities, a system-wide community mental health care model was developed in Peterborough.

[Read more](#)

Evaluation of The British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA) intervention for bowel cancer screening in the Muslim community in Peterborough and Luton

Inequitable access to healthcare and preventive services leads to significant and avoidable disparities in health outcomes for some groups in society. In particular, ethnically diverse communities. Local health organisations are aiming to increase uptake of screening and reduce health inequalities.

This project hypothesises that culturally adapted interventions within faith institutions may improve participation in cancer screening in people with low uptake. Targeting local areas in the East of England, which has the highest proportion of Muslims (2011 census data) with a very low uptake of bowel cancer screening (e.g. Luton) has the potential to reach populations with a high risk of health inequalities. It also has the highest proportion of Muslims in the East of England.

[Read more](#)

Walking with our communities

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In July 2022, the ARC team partnered with **Vivacity Peterborough** for walk in Ferry Meadows Country Park in Peterborough.

[Read more](#)



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