



**Pilmeny Development Project
North East Edinburgh Older Men's
Health and Wellbeing Project**



**NHS Keep Well Voluntary Sector Initiative
Evaluation Report**
(October 2008 – March 2009)



*“there's nothing more soul destroying
than one knife and fork, one cup -
setting a table just for one.”*

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June 2009**

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1. Summary

PDP was awarded NHS Keep Well Voluntary Sector funding to develop an initiative with PDP North East Edinburgh Older Men's Health and Wellbeing Project for a six month period from October 2008 until April 2009. This report demonstrates how successful this initiative has been.

The project included a programme of health promoting talks, events and social activities, along with the provision of a ten week nutrition and cookery course, which promoted and encouraged positive life-style changes among 34 older men in NE Edinburgh. The positive feed-back, comments and evaluations by the participants themselves (many of whom expressed their disappointment when the project came to an end), is evidence of the good practice which has been developed.

The project has gone a long way towards achieving 4 anticipated health outcomes identified at the outset:

- Improved access to primary healthcare for older men (45+) at risk of heart disease and diabetes and registered with GP practices in the most deprived areas of NE Edinburgh;
- Provision of support to older men with lifestyle changes addressing underlying issues including, poor diet, lack of physical activity, low income, depression, bereavement, loneliness, isolation and assistance to access other relevant community services/ support (e.g. smoking cessation);
- Increased awareness of activities and opportunities available for older men who regularly participate in activities that will lead to improved physical and mental health.
- Empowered local older men in influencing opportunities to improve help and support around mental/physical health and well-being issues.

A number of recommendations have now been made:

1. There is a need to continue to develop and expand this example of good practice with other older men in the area and to identify resources for this to be sustained.
2. Detailed information should be gathered from older men in the initial stages (i.e. regarding their current use of primary health care services) to enable a more robust evaluation to be developed on the project's impact.
3. There is a need to engage further with older men and try to determine why there is such a lack of interest in low level walking and what might be done to make this type of beneficial exercise group more appealing to them.
4. There is a need for more suitably experienced and qualified staff/tutors to assist with day time cooking, physical activity and healthy lifestyle activities with older people.

Introduction

Pilmey Development Project is a locally based Community Development project which is a Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee. It operated in the area since 1979 and primarily works with Older People, Young People and Adults. Work with Older People has an emphasis on wider determinants of health and well being (including mental health) and seeks to promote 'self help' as well as improving the quality of life of older residents.

PDP has developed North East Edinburgh Older Men's Health and Wellbeing Project which aims to increase the social integration of older men (50+) in the North East Edinburgh area, by developing opportunities for isolated older men and by providing activities which promote their mental health and well being. A holistic social model of health is adopted with a focus on older men.

The Project works inclusively with older men in the NE Edinburgh area, including those who may be recently bereaved, depressed, on low incomes or who may be deemed socially isolated/lonely and 'hard to reach'. It also targets Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) and Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (GBT) Community members. It specifically focuses on, and attempts to address the perceived needs of older men who, for one reason or another may be deemed to be vulnerable or at risk from a number of factors which may lead to, or, exacerbate poor mental or physical health in later life.

The project delivers health promotion through a range of activity including: a weekly programme, social activities, events, health promotion sessions on a wide range of health issues relevant to older men, trips and outings as well as a drop-in; where men can relax and/or play indoor table games etc.

PDP was awarded NHS Keep Well* Voluntary Sector funding to develop a joint initiative with PDP North East Edinburgh Older Men's Health and Wellbeing Project and NE Keep Well outreach work. This initiative was funded for a six month period from October 2008 until April 2009.

***NHS Keep well programme is an initiative funded by NHS Scotland. It seeks to reduce health inequalities in what are perceived to be the most deprived areas and communities. The main focus includes cardio-vascular diseases, their prevention, delay of onset and management. It is hoped that through a series of interventions enhancing primary care, among the target groups, that outcomes of a reduction in inequalities in such areas and a significant improvement in health within the target populations will be achieved. These interventions include: identifying and targeting people who are most at risk from often preventable disease, providing a Keep Well check; which may lead to the detection of hitherto undetected underlying chronic disease, offering follow-up and monitoring services, health promotion advice and relevant information. This initiative also seeks to work with other local community groups where appropriate.**

Project Aims & Objectives

Overall aim:

To improve the health & well being of older men at risk of heart disease/ diabetes, in NE Edinburgh and encourage access to primary healthcare and healthy lifestyle activities.

The project sought to build on existing work in the following ways:

1. Development of Gentle Exercise sessions and a small low level walking programme for older men.
2. Development of a series of Nutrition and diet related talks from specialist and health professionals (e.g. Keep Well Outreach worker, Community Dietician, Healthy Eating, Diabetes, Heart disease speakers, Community Food Initiative)
3. Development of local 'Cooking for Older Men' classes in Leith.
4. Development of an activities programme to encourage improved mental health and wellbeing of older men in NE Edinburgh.

This proposal sought to do this by increasing sessional hours to existing staff, by expanding some existing activities in relation to physical and mental health and well being as well as developing new activities in relation to diet and cooking skills.

The Project aimed to ensure up to 50 older men in North East Edinburgh were beneficiaries of the initiative

The proposed project development and activities were based on local older men's expressed interests/needs which had been assessed both formally and informally.

For the purposes of this initiative activities were available to men aged 45+ in NE Edinburgh area. We worked closely in partnership with the local Keep Well Outreach worker for the NE Cluster throughout the duration of this initiative and CEC Health & Social Care - Portlee Resource Centre.

Anticipated Health Outcomes:

1. Improve access to primary healthcare for older men (45+) at risk of heart disease and diabetes and registered with GP practices in the most deprived areas of NE Edinburgh
2. Provide support to older men with lifestyle changes addressing underlying issues including, poor diet, lack of physical activity, low income, depression, bereavement, loneliness, isolation and assistance to access other relevant community services/ support (e.g. smoking cessation)
3. To increase awareness of activities and opportunities available for older men who regularly participate in activities that will lead to improved physical and mental health.
4. Empower local older men in influencing opportunities to improve help and support around mental/physical health and well-being issues.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Informal monitoring and evaluation was undertaken throughout the duration of the Project. Specific monitoring and evaluation tools were developed using the LEAP for health evaluation tool. This included qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Participant feedback was utilised and included views and opinions of older men attending the project as well as individual case studies.

In addition, this evaluation report re the Keep Well initiative overall forms part of the evaluation process.

PDP - North East Edinburgh Older Men's Keep Well Initiative

This section of the report will consider the work of this project from October 2008 to April 2009, using the “learning evaluation and planning” framework (LEAP) for health, an evaluation tool which was used to, inform the progress and development of the project.

Objective 1

Development of Gentle Exercise sessions and a small low level walking programme for older men.

Inputs

Contact was established and maintained with a range of organisations including: Keep Well, Ageing Well and Edinburgh Leisure to arrange 2 gentle exercise sessions and low-level walking activities.

Outputs

Two seated exercise classes were held, one at Meadowbank and the other was held in the Centre at No 15 Buchanan Street. However, it was quite difficult to identify and arrange for appropriate, experienced tutors to undertake the sessions.

The first seated exercise class was organised as part of CEC Get Up & Go International Day of the older person celebration held at Meadowbank on 1st October 2008. 15 older men took part in this activity. In addition to the seated exercise class, this event had a wide range of information and interactive stalls: including quick health checks, a quick test for diabetes, information on adult education classes, sporting activities and walking groups - all directly relevant to this project.

The second seated exercise class was held in January 2009 in the centre at number 15 Buchanan Street and 18 older men took part. This session was taken by NE Ageing Well project assistant. All the exercises were “seated” but were quite active and, included ball-games.

There is an issue about the availability and capacity of tutors to continue these sessions. As one exercise tutor said ***“If you want me to come back, I will, but I can't do it very often. I am very busy with my own groups”***.

After both exercise sessions, older men were given information about local seated exercise groups and were encouraged to join them.

A low-level walking programme was not able to be established within the timescale. There was no enthusiasm from the older men and they may have felt less enthusiastic to go out in winter weather etc. However, older men were regularly provided with information about local walking groups run by NE Edinburgh Ageing Well project and are still being encouraged to take part.

Outcomes

This was the first time most of the older men had participated in any form of exercise session as regular gentle exercise is something that is not part of their current life styles.

The older men who participated were not only given seated exercises (many of which they could also do at home), they were also given information about local seated exercise groups and invited to join them.

All the older men who participated in these sessions said they enjoyed them. Comments included:

“I really enjoyed that - especially they games with the ball”

“that was really funny man! When we were playing the ball games, I thought it was gonnae get out of control. It was good”.

However, it is uncertain as to how many of the men actually continued to do these exercises at home. One older man said ***“I enjoyed that but I won't go to the exercise groups. It's alright coming here and having them now and again.”***

What has been learned

- This target group of older men is a difficult group to reach and draw into participation in physical exercise activities – particularly if outdoors during winter months.
- It is often difficult to arrange sessions with tutors from other organisations into an on-going programme.
- Older men did enjoy the gentle exercise sessions once they had attended them.

Objective 2

The development of a series of Nutrition and diet related talks from specialist and health professionals (e.g. Keep Well Outreach worker, Community Dietician, Healthy Eating, Diabetes, Heart disease speakers, Community Food Initiative)

Inputs

Contact was established with a community dietitian and NHS Keep Well Outreach worker to provide information and talks. However, this proved time consuming as not all the agencies approached could deliver talks within the time frame of the project.

Outputs

The intended outputs were delivered, with the exception of a visit to a food cooperative (due to lack of time) and one of the nutrition talks which was to be given by the cookery tutor. NHS Keep Well outreach worker gave a presentation to the group about the Keep Well initiative at the outset and outlined what the joint project hoped to achieve. Each session was attended by 18 - 20 older men.

Older men who attended these sessions all said that they had enjoyed them. The pre-project talk given by NHS Keep Well outreach worker, in which she gave an overview of the aims of the project, sparked off an interesting and informative discussion surrounding older men's health. Many of the group members said that they did not visit their doctor very often and did not have regular health checks at all, but they said that they were willing to take part in this project. As one older man put it ***"I never go to my doctor unless I'm really ill. I used to get the flu jag but every time I got it I still got the flu. I'm sure it was worse. I'm not getting it this year"***.

However, the benefit of regular health checks was emphasised by some of the older men themselves. An older man commented:

"I've had diabetes for a few years now. I didn't go to my doctor very often but one time I went for something else and that was what they found. I was lucky. It just shows you that as you get older, you should have a good check-up every year or two".

The healthy eating session given by a community dietitian and attended by 20 older men, was particularly interesting. She set the men a quiz on nutrition and healthy eating, after which, she began her talk on a healthy balanced diet, illustrated with examples of healthy and not so healthy foods and a food chart of a dinner plate with the recommended portions of fruit, vegetables and fibre etc that should be eaten daily.

Most of the men scored very high marks in the quiz and actively took part in the discussion which followed. The dietitian commented that **“everyone seems very knowledgeable about what constitutes a healthy balanced diet”**.

Despite this, none of the older men said that they cooked a meal from raw ingredients. Comments included:

“I cannae cook unless it comes in a tin. I can cook anything from a tin - I know it might no be so healthy but...!”

“I’m on my own, I get these frozen meals and you just need to put them in the microwave and they’re ready”.

“I use the ‘ding ding’ dinners as well! I cannae be bothered cooking something that’s gonnae take a long time just for myself”.

However, by the end of the session, many of the group said that they might cook a meal “from scratch” occasionally and most said that they would start to look at the ingredients on the packets of ready prepared meals. One man said:

“I’ll probably still usually eat micro wave dinners, but I’ll now look at the ingredients on the packets more carefully and cook the occasional meal from scratch.”

Although this example may be regarded as a somewhat modest change in life-style, it is still significant in that choosing healthier options, even when buying pre-cooked meals can lead to a reduction in the consumption of saturated fats, salts which go some way to reduce the risk of heart disease, strokes, diabetes and other health issues which can affect the older person.

The older men showed their appreciation of the session by giving the dietitian a vote of thanks, many of them thanking her personally as she left.

Outcomes

The health and nutrition sessions were designed to encourage the men to make positive changes to their lifestyles by providing health promoting information and discussing the relatively easy ways in which the older men could do this. Many of the men, said that they would try to make some changes to their diet based on the information that had been discussed.

The health and nutrition talks heightened the older men’s awareness of the actions that they could take regarding preventative health checks, smoking cessation, alcohol issues, diet and nutrition, which contributes to their overall improved physical and mental health.

Anecdotal evidence and sessional evaluations evidenced that, as a result of the work, many older men had a raised awareness of the need for lifestyle changes. For example, 2 or 3 are now cooking at home, others have made changes to their diet (e.g. reduced salt intake), one started swimming and 2 expressed interest in getting their own Edinburgh Leisure pass.

They all had increased social interaction and the initiative provided structure in and provided a sense of purpose for many.

Access to alternative therapies was provided (e.g. Indian Head massage & reflexology) which helped with stress and for some, was the first time in a long time, they had experienced any physical contact with another person.

What has been learned

- Despite most of the older men having a good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy balanced diet, none of them regularly cooked a meal from raw materials.
- Although advice and adverts for a healthier lifestyle are reaching their target audiences, in this case; the older person, they appear to be having little practical impact on helping older men to make positive changes to their lifestyles.
- This suggests the need for a practical, as well as educational approach, (e.g. health promoting workshops, opportunities for older men to cook and taste “real” fresh food)

Objective 3

Development of local 'Cooking for Older Men' classes in Leith.

Inputs

Contact was made with City of Edinburgh Council Health & Social Care Dept and a suitable venue – Portlee day centre (which has a small demonstration kitchen) was identified - for the classes to take place. The project worker and PDP manager worked closely with Portlee manager to develop an external user's protocol, contract, a visitor's policy and to ensure the group would comply with fire, health and safety regulations within Portlee building itself. In addition, the training kitchen was professionally cleaned; appliances serviced and new equipment that was purchased was sterilized in advance of the sessions themselves.

A tutor was recruited, but it should be noted it was quite hard to identify a cookery tutor to run a ten week nutrition and cookery course, who was available during the day and had any experience of working with older people,

Outputs

Publicity for the project was developed, mainly through leaflets and word of mouth. This perhaps could have begun earlier as it was initially quite time consuming and difficult to explain and engage local older men.

However, the older men's group worker was able to identify older men whom, it was thought would benefit from and who might be interested in the cooking group. He invited them to a pre evaluation meeting. This meeting was held with the older men's group worker, cookery tutor and the older men. The older men filled in a pre evaluation sheet, and discussed with the two workers their current diet and health issues. By the end of the session, a recipe that was healthy and economical was decided for the next 4 sessions. It was agreed that each cooking session would also involve educational information on nutrition and healthy eating. The tutor herself commented ***"I am glad to be involved and want to help make this a success as I believe there is a real need for this kind of project."***

The 10 week cookery course was held in CEC Portlee day centre. The sessions were delivered weekly and a time-slot was allocated within this to focus on diet and nutrition.

For health and safety reasons, the training kitchen at the Port Lee day centre could only accommodate five participants plus two staff at any one time. A target figure of 50 attendances was set. The overall attendance for the ten sessions was 34 - almost 75% of the target.

The initial 4 sessions took the course up to the Christmas break. A further 6 sessions then ran from January up to March. As with the on-going programme of events and activities, the older men decided on the meals to be prepared, with the sensitive guidance of the cookery tutor.

The ingredients to be cooked were purchased and brought to the centre on the day. A weekly protocol was established in which the men, having arrived, sat down to discuss the preparation of the day's meal, carried out the preparation, cooked the meal then sat down to share it within a friendly social atmosphere.

Not only did the older men prepare, cook and eat the meal together, time was also allocated for the fostering and promotion of nutrition and healthy eating. This was carried out when the meal was cooking and the men were waiting for it to be ready. It was usually based on the particular theme of the day, for example, cholesterol, saturated fats and the risk of heart disease. Sometimes this would take the form of a quiz set by the tutor. On other occasions, the tutor would bring items of interest and particular relevance to the course, e.g. a chart which shows how to determine the proportions of ingredients such as salt or fat content in prepared packaged meals. By the end of the course, the participants had a package which included ten healthy nutritious recipes and information sheets and charts.

The men cooked together nutritious, healthy, low-cost meals in a friendly supportive atmosphere. Throughout the 10 week course, they received advice on positive dietary changes and support and encouragement from the tutor and worker. For most of the men, this was the first time that they had cooked meals from scratch in thirty or forty years. Almost all of the older men who took part, heated chilled or prepared frozen meals in the microwave and rarely, if ever cooked a meal from basic ingredients.

By the third week of the course, the older men began to become quite confident and competitive in demonstrating their knowledge of what they were learning. Most of them said that they were trying to make some positive changes to their diet. For example, an Asian gentleman who has hypertension puts a lot of salt on most of his meals. By the fourth class, he said ***"I don't put salt anymore, the food has enough salt in it. Too much salt is bad for you."*** During the rest of the classes, he would go round making sure that the other participants were not using too much salt. Such simple changes in habit are significant, particularly for someone who suffers from hypertension. The same Asian gentleman,(who said that he never cooks), also, on several occasions asked if we could cook Chapattis and Dhal. He said ***"if you bring the ingredients I'll teach you all."*** This was agreed and a session was taken by him (with the help of the tutor). He listed the ingredients, explained the preparation of the meal and gave a practical demonstration of how to prepare and cook it. The meal of Chapattis and three types of Dahl was enjoyed by all.

All the older men who took part in this course not only enjoyed it, most said that they had benefited from it, in terms of learning about how to cook low-cost healthier meals from basic ingredients. Most were surprised by how quickly the meals could be prepared and how inexpensive they were. All of the participants said that they would try to make changes to their diet in terms of making healthier choices, especially when they bought prepared meals or sauces etc.

Older men who took part demonstrated, through their participant evaluations, comments and general discussions, that these sessions met a hitherto unmet need. This can best be illustrated by some examples of responses and quotes by the men themselves:

“I've benefited because I've never cooked anything like that...always cooked fast foods...what you would call unhealthy foods, now I've started going in for veggie stuff.”

“For me, it's brought back the urge to cook.”

“I've definitely benefited - I've learnt to cook different dishes and have the confidence to try them out at home and they're healthy and simple....”

In terms of benefit, speed and low- cost, one older man said he found this experience of cooking had highlighted: ***“Low cost ingredients; Easy to prepare; colourful, nutritious meals; one pot cooking; saving on fuel leading to the elimination of meal fatigue which can be a problem to the elderly and single person.”***

Issues of loneliness and isolation had a negative impact on all of the participant's lives and diet. All the older men who participated lived alone and usually cooked pre-prepared microwave meals. As one member said at the beginning of the course ***“I'm on my own, it's not worth it, going to all the bother of cooking a meal from ingredients just for myself, it's easier just to put something in the microwave.”*** However, halfway through the course, the same group member said – ***“I've learnt to cook different dishes and have the confidence to try them out at home and they're healthy and they're simple!”***

These issues of loneliness and isolation were frequently discussed throughout the course in relation to diet and cooking. As one group member said ***“there's nothing more soul destroying than one knife and fork, one cup - setting a table just for one.”***

Throughout the 10 week course it was apparent that the older men got as much, if not more pleasure, sharing these meals within this friendly social setting as they did from cooking them. A group member said ***“I've enjoyed it ...but I think it's the social aspect that's of great benefit to everybody. Sitting round the table and eating it....it's a meal that everybody's cooked themselves.”***

The tutor herself wrote in one of her evaluations ***“a few of the men stated one of the best parts of the day was actually setting the table for 'more than one person' and enjoying the company of other people while eating and cooking a meal...something I think most of us take for granted.”***

The social aspect of the course was so important to the men that as the classes were coming to an end, they began to express their disappointment and offering suggestions as to how it might be kept running:

“I'm really gonnae miss coming here.”

“could we no get funds to have a class maybe once a month?”

“What if we all bought the stuff could we not use the kitchen every so often?”

Outcomes

The purpose of this objective was to promote healthy eating and nutrition through 'Hands-on' practical demonstration and experience of cooking which was achieved.

The classes provided the men with the opportunity to learn how to cook meals from basic ingredients and also made them more aware of the benefits of a balanced healthy diet, through the time allocated for informal nutrition and diet tuition.

Older men prepared more nutritious healthier meals which were significantly lower in saturated fats, salt, E numbers and additives than they were used to cooking at home.

Older men gained confidence and were empowered through encouragement to construct and develop the sessions from the outset, by deciding on the recipes and in one of the weeks, a group member (with some help from the tutor), led a session himself!

They learned how they could make small, yet significant changes to their lifestyles and how it could help reduce their risk of heart disease, strokes and many other health problems

Issues of loneliness and isolation were frequently discussed throughout the course in relation to diet and cooking.

By the end of the ten session course, the participants had a collection of recipes for healthy low cost easy to prepare meals and hand-outs promoting healthy eating and nutrition.

Support was given to older men with respect to poor diet, low-income and eating together relieved loneliness and isolation.

What was learned

- There is an unmet need for sustainable day time cooking classes in appropriate venues for older men in this area
- Although older men were knowledgeable about healthy eating and nutrition through health promotion adverts etc, this seemed to have little impact on their life styles.
- A project like this provides 'hands on' practical experience for older men in preparing and cooking healthy meals and reinforces health promotion messages
- Need for more publicity in the early stages of the project was better thought out and more diverse. For example, much of the publicity for the project was by way of leaflet and word of mouth. This could have begun earlier and been more proactive.

Objective 4

Development of activities programme to encourage improved mental health and wellbeing of older men in NE Edinburgh.

Inputs

Pilmeny Development Project (PDP) North East Edinburgh older men's health and well-being group received funding through NHS Keep Well to run a 6 month project comprising 10 week cookery classes/nutrition course and an on-going health promoting programme of related talks and activities.

Outputs

Pre-project meetings with the project manager, the project worker and the Keep Well outreach worker were held to discuss the objectives, planning and direction the project would take throughout the six month period.

The on-going health promotion programme of events and activities ran concurrently with the cookery course and was determined by the participants themselves with some guidance from the project worker.

Older men themselves had much input into planning and delivering the programme of talks, events and activities. Three group members felt confident enough to do a talk to the group themselves and gave excellent presentations which were appreciated by all.

The programme of events and activities was organised and delivered. It comprised of 24 sessions, one per week, and included: seated exercises, healthy eating and nutrition talks, presentations on topics of interest to older men, alternative therapy sessions, trips and social outings.

15 older men (who attended the event in celebration of the day of the older person at Meadow bank), took part in quick health checks - i.e. a test for diabetes and smoking cessation and were provided with information by the project. The older men themselves have said that they will take part in the Keep Well Health check which is planned for the near future.

The men often expressed their appreciation of the sessions and activities and often revealed the positive impact that coming to the group was having on their lives.

This can be illustrated by the following quotes taken from an informal discussion session. The underlying themes which emerged and continued to run throughout this discussion were those of loneliness and isolation. One older man said:

“I’m on my own most of the time. I look forward to coming here on a Wednesday to see the lads and that. I’ve not got any structure to my day unless I’m coming here or something like that. I get up when I feel like it or when I can be bothered. Coming here gives me some structure. I often get lonely sitting staring at four walls or the TV. The men need something like this to get them out, interested. This is the only group for men. It makes a big difference coming here.”

Throughout the six months of the project, older men were invited to join other exercise and were provided with updated NE Ageing Well programmes, information about the local walking groups, new age curling as well as local services and activities. As a result 2 older men now attend weekly Ageing Well new age curling sessions. Information was provided about Edinburgh Leisure swimming and sports concessions for older people. Two older men subsequently joined up and now swim regularly. In addition, older men have begun to participate in a range of other activities in the community including: an art class, barbershop singing, bingo and a music class.

Older men have also begun to be empowered during the course of the project. For example, older men themselves (with support from the worker), determined the overall programme and cookery course. Older men also took part in “North East Edinburgh Care Action Group (NEECAG) - a forum which raises and discusses health and wellbeing issues relevant to local older people. Older men participated in the development of a new Intergenerational initiative and the steering group of the Older Men’s project itself now includes two older men representatives.

Outcomes

Older men had a greater awareness and had begun to participate in a wide range of local healthy lifestyle activities and opportunities by the end of the initiative.

Older men were provided with information and many opportunities which were designed to promote and maintain good mental health and well-being.

‘At risk’ older men felt less isolated and lonely as a result of attending the group and the sessions.

Participation in local community based activities has helped relieve social isolation and improve physical and mental health of local older men.

Many of the men have grown in confidence and some members have given talks to the group itself, or are participating in other groups.

What was learned

- Empowering older and in many cases, vulnerable, men, can lead to them gaining in confidence as well as taking some responsibility and ownership of the project.
- As the men themselves have mainly determined the project's programme - they seem to be more receptive to the provision of health promotion information etc.

Achievement of Anticipated Health Outcomes:

The project has gone a long way towards achieving the health outcomes identified at the outset. A summary of how we feel we have progressed is detailed below:

- 1. Improve access to primary healthcare for older men (45+) at risk of heart disease and diabetes and registered with GP practices in the most deprived areas of NE Edinburgh**

Access to primary health care is often dependant on the individual presenting a problem to his GP, or, being identified as having health issues by screening or outreach programmes such as the Keep Well initiative. It has not yet been possible to offer all older men individual Keep Well health checks within the six month time frame, but it is hoped they will be undertaken in the near future. The project will also be able to identify older men with heart disease or diabetes, how many have had KW health check & what current level of contact with GP is as it has begun to develop a data base of health conditions of older men with whom it has contact.

- 2. Provide support to older men with lifestyle changes addressing underlying issues including, poor diet, lack of physical activity, low income, depression, bereavement, loneliness, isolation and assistance to access other relevant community services/ support (e.g. smoking cessation)**

Support was provided through the provision of health related talks and activities. Anecdotal evidence and sessional evaluations evidenced that, as a result of the work, many older men had a raised awareness of the need for lifestyle changes and actions that they could take such as preventative health checks, smoking cessation, alcohol issues, diet and nutrition, which would contribute to improved physical and mental health. Most older men said that they will try to make positive, healthy changes to their life-styles. Even if these are modest changes they are still significant.

- 3. To increase awareness of activities and opportunities available for older men who regularly participate in activities that will lead to improved physical and mental health.**

Older men had a greater awareness of a wide range of local healthy lifestyle activities and opportunities available to them by the end of the initiative. Many have now begun to participate in a range of local activities that greatly contribute to their health and wellbeing.

4. Empower local older men in influencing opportunities to improve help and support around mental/physical health and well-being issues.

This outcome continued to be met throughout the project and older men were genuinely empowered throughout the 6 month period. As a result, many of the men have grown in confidence to the extent that some are contributing directly to this project and others are participating in other groups.

Conclusion

PDP North East Edinburgh Older Men's Health and Well-being project received funding from the Keep Well programme to improve the health & well being of older men at risk of heart disease or diabetes, in this locality and encourage access to primary healthcare and healthy lifestyle activities.

This report demonstrates how successful this initiative has been in attaining this overall aim. The programme of health promoting talks, events and social activities along with the provision of a ten week nutrition and cookery course promoted and encouraged positive life-style changes among older men in NE Edinburgh. The positive feed-back, comments and evaluations by the participants themselves (many of whom expressed their disappointment when the project came to an end), is evidence of the good practice which has been developed.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to continue to develop and expand this example of good practice with other older men in the area and to identify resources for this to be sustained.
2. Detailed information should be gathered from older men in the initial stages (i.e. regarding their current use of primary health care services) to enable a more robust evaluation to be developed on the project's impact.
3. There is a need to engage further with older men and try to determine why there is such a lack of interest in low level walking and what might be done to make this type of beneficial exercise group more appealing to them.
4. There is a need for more suitably experienced and qualified staff/tutors to assist with day time cooking, physical activity and healthy lifestyle activities with older people.

Acknowledgements

PDP older men's group would like to thank
NHS Keep Well and Elaine Farris for
making this successful project possible. Thanks to:-
Fiona Ross - tutor for cookery and nutrition sessions,
Alison McGhee (student),
Robina Brown (NE Ageing Well),
Anne Dey & Allan Bald (CEC Health & Social Care
Portlee Resource Centre)

Last but not least -

**Our warmest thanks must also go to
all the local older men who participated,
without whom, it could not have happened!**

Statistical breakdown

Number sessions	
24 plus 10 nutrition and cookery classes	34
Total number of attendances -	389
plus nutrition cookery classes	34
Total of attendances	<u>424</u>

Programme of Activities 2008 – 09

Wed 01st Oct	International Day for Older People Meadowbank	15
Wed 08th Oct	Outing to Museum of Transport Glasgow and Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum	10
Wed 15th Oct	Alternative Therapies	13
Wed 22nd Oct	Climbing Mount Everest with Eddy	15
Wed 29th Oct	Scottish Storytelling Centre, Jack Martin	13
Wed 5th Oct	NEECAG AGM	13
Wed 12th Nov	Keep Well	22
Wed 19th Nov	Outing to Callender House	12
Wed 26th Nov	Healthy Eating	20
Wed 03rd Dec	Christmas Social	19
Wed 10th Dec	NEECAG Christmas Party	
Wed 17th Dec	Christmas Lunch - Foot of the Walk	27
Wed 7th Jan	Drop – in	18
Wed 14th January	Seated activities with Robina	18
Wed 21st January	Talk by Arthur on Robert Burns	22
Wed 28th January	Talk from Simon on Planning Aid for Scotland	19
Wed 4th February	NEECAG Meeting – Gordon Court	18
Wed 11th February	History of Whaling – Robbie Summers	20
Wed 18th February	Alternative Therapy with Naseem	19
Wed 25th February	Talk on Old Edinburgh – Tommy Carson	18
Wed 4th March	NEECAG Meeting	12
Wed 11th March	Alternative Therapy	18
Wed 18th March	Outing with Alan McDonald	14
Wed 25th March	Everest Revisited	19

SHOWCASE OF OLDER MENS HEALTH & WELLBEING COOKING GROUP



SHOWCASE OF SOME OF THE GROUP ACTIVITIES



Talk and Slide-Show

Group Outing



Christmas Lunch

