

Connect

News from your Federation

December 2023

If you have anything you'd like to see included in the next issue, please send it to us at: comms@boltongpfed.co.uk

Menopause - Pause and Empower Event



in the community
One Club, One Community, One Town

On 1 October we held a joint event on menopause with Bolton Wanderers in the Community, in the McGinley Suite at the Toughsheet Stadium.

Dr Bev Matta and Dr Julie Hall from Unsworth Group Practice in Westhoughton, were our guest speakers, sharing education and insights about all things menopause.

The informal event was organised to raise awareness and share support information to help women (and men!) to understand the journey of menopause.

We were able to arm women with advice on maintaining good health, tips on how to reduce anxiety and signpost to social prescribing interventions. Our nursing team were also there to give women free basic health checks on the day.

**'I loved being part of this event.
Raising awareness often starts with the
conversations needed, and we really
do need to talk more about
women's health'**

Francesca Austen
Fundraising and Events Executive
Bolton Wanderers in the Community

**'Fantastic event, really
enjoyed speaking. Looking
forward to more!'**

Dr Bev Matta
Bolton GP Federation



**WORLD
MENOPAUSE
DAY**



Cancer awareness

September was a busy month for our staff! Here are some of the highlights from the fantastic activities we organised for cancer awareness.



Macmillan Coffee Morning



We raised
£137.50
at our coffee
morning!

Staff at HQ took part in the annual Macmillan's Coffee Morning on Friday 29 September.

5k Your Way!

Some of our team joined '5K Your Way' at Leverhulme Park on Friday 29 September.

Trotting through mud and tackling the infamous Cruella Deville the Hill!



On 20 September the team set up a health and wellbeing event at Bridge Church to share information and provide advice on cancer.



If you are involved in providing health and wellbeing support to people living in Bolton and are interested in partnering with us, please get in touch at: hq@boltongpfed.co.uk

Our people in the spotlight



Mercedes Maher
Office Manager

I have been the Office Manager at Bolton GP Federation since 2020 and have most recently returned from 10-months maternity leave.

On my return I was in awe of the significant expansion of the organisation! I have enjoyed meeting and working with my new colleagues and learning about their roles and how my role can support theirs.

I look forward to growing and developing my skills and knowledge over the next year.

Mercedes can be contacted at: mercedes.maher@boltongpfed.co.uk



Sumaya Mulla
Personal Assistant

I joined Bolton GP Federation in January 2023 as Personal Assistant, supporting the service managers and providing ad-hoc administrative tasks for head office. I work closely with senior managers and develop positive relationships with our partners to ensure all their meetings are run efficiently.

I am proud to represent the federation and really like interacting with and getting to know colleagues from across Bolton and Greater Manchester.

I have some previous NHS experience and have worked in various industries including education and transport providing secretariat support to Managing Directors and Managers.

I have ambitions to develop my career further, in particular in the area of project management. Thanks to the support from the fed, I am given opportunities to test out my skills and learn more about this.

Sumaya can be contacted at: sumaya.mulla@boltongpfed.co.uk



Mabs Rahman
Chief Finance Officer

I joined Bolton GP Federation in early 2018 when it was in its infancy, and I have watched it grow; in size, in staff and in maturity throughout the move of CCGs to the ICB and during the development of five-year framework for GP contract reform. This five-year plan has really presented the Federation with its purpose as it is in a unique position to deliver true primary care at scale.

My background is that I am qualified chartered accountant with over 18 years accounting and finance experience both within NHS and outside, national, and international and in private as well as non-profit sectors. I have a 'big four' background and my NHS experiences have exposed me to work within Strategic Health Authority, Department of Health, Foundation Trusts, and CCGs. I have also worked as a CFO in two other roles.

My role and responsibilities cover all aspects of finance from the ledger management to financial reporting to statutory returns. The areas of 'add-value' for me are where I get involved in project implementations and value-for-money exercises as it is always my objective to ensure that funds are best used for their intended purposes. Another significant area of work is where we provide hosted services for Primary Care Networks and other bodies. This is a growing niche and one where we can demonstrate our diligence to our core values which include transparency, value for money and customer service.

Mabs can be contacted at: mabs.rahman@boltongpfed.co.uk

Walk-in Clinic for people with learning disabilities

We ran a walk-in health clinic in partnership with Sapphire Partnership for people with learning disabilities and their carers on Friday 29 September between 10am-3pm.

We ran the clinic in a way to make every contact count. People who attended could have a smear test, covid vaccine or a general health check and advice. In offering more than just smear tests for people with learning disabilities, they and their families or carers were also able to access services at the same time, without having to make an appointment.

Case Study

Family members

Dad A
Child B
Child C
Child D

Ages

A = 59
B = 26
C = 18
D = 17

Genders

3 Female
1 Male

Target group

Additional Needs
and Disability

Background Information

This family is known to us as child B attends Sapphire. She has a diagnosis of a moderate learning disability and Autism. She also has speech, language, and communication barriers. She lives in a single parent family situation with 2 other siblings C and D, who both also have additional needs. We have a close working relationship with Dad and primarily offer support to help the family by working with B on a number of key personal and social development outcomes.

One of the key areas that Dad struggles with is getting the children to access primary health care services, child C suffers from Germophobia, and often refuses to leave the house. She has not attended secondary school for 3 years due to this condition. In September this year she started a post 16 Special School on a part time basis. This behaviour often impacts on what B and her other sibling D can access with support from dad.

Dad relies heavily on the support services that have been put in place. This is a complex social care support package, which includes a Nursing assistant linked with the Community Learning Disability team. Sapphire is named as part of the package that supports child B. We are the main agency providing a personalised programme helping to develop strategies that equip her with the life skills she will need for her to become a more independent young adult.

Like many of the vulnerable individuals who attend Sapphire, she lacks confidence in areas of her life and has a particular anxiety of facing health related concerns in a clinical setting. The personal hygiene, personal care and safety aspects of her life are major barriers to her making significant progress towards her independence. Our work on social and emotional resilience provides a safe space for her to acknowledge her feelings and respond positively which reduces her anxiety.

The family took part in the Covid health clinics that were delivered in partnership last winter. They all had covid boosters and health checks. When we advertised the latest health clinic we sent home a personal invite to the family and followed that up with a text message a few days before the actual date.

On the day of the clinic they all attended and had their covid vaccinations. Following the vaccinations Dad and Child B stayed whilst she made her own lunch, child C and D went into town to get something to eat.

During dad's feedback he included the following statement: **"Thank you so much for offering this at Sapphire, I wouldn't have got all 3 children to have this done at the same time without your help, particularly with C as she knows and trusts you here"**

The impact

The offer of the vaccination to all the family at the same time, in familiar surroundings, with familiar faces and have it done with no time pressure, reduced the level of anxiety for each of the family members.

We know that the families we support often feel socially isolated and loneliness can be a factor for poor health and poor decision making about the health care they receive.

Using a familiar surrounding like Sapphire as a community asset and bringing together people with additional needs and disabilities, who are bound by the common experiences they face, provided an informal setting that offered a positive approach to primary care. Engagement into the service was a positive experience and they are more likely to re-engage in future initiatives.



SMEARS MEANS YEARS

Why live just for today?

Walk-in clinic for people with learning disabilities

- Smear tests
- Health checks and advice
- Covid vaccines

Friday, 29 September 2023
10 am – 3 pm

Sapphire Partnership
St George's House
2 St George's Rd
Bolton, BL1 2DD

No appointment needed

Got a question ahead of the clinic? Email our Chief Nurse:
kath.arrowsmith@boltonpafed.co.uk

BOLTON GP FEDERATION

Well woman workshop

Changing Life Directions

Well Woman Workshop

Wednesday, 8 November
10am till 12pm

105 Halliwell Road
Bolton, BL1 3NE

We're here to help you understand your health.

Pop in and speak to one of our health professionals. Receive a warm welcome and a free health check.

- Health Improvement Practitioners
- Dietetic Practitioner
- Answer Cancer representatives

Get the support and advice you need.

We're supporting women to live happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives.



 BOLTON GP FEDERATION



18
Health checks
on the day

Halliwell PCN held a Well Women Workshop at Changing Life Directions on Wednesday 8 November, between 10am-12noon.

Following the success of the menopause clinic held at the venue back in May, we held another event which included more of our staff so we could reach and meet the health needs of more women.

From conversations with attendees of the gym, the ladies said that they were open to discussing all topics related to health, and highlighted diabetes as being one of the biggest concerns, with so many new ladies coming in being borderline diabetic.

We carried out 18 health checks on the day. Women were also able to speak with a wider range of staff, including our Social Prescribing Link Worker and Care Coordinator, a Dietetic Practitioner and Health Improvement Practitioner from Bolton NHS Foundation Trust and staff from Answer Cancer.

Dementia drop-in event

On 3 October, Rumworth PCN ran a Dementia drop-in at Slaterfield Community Centre.

What a great turn out to our first Dementia Drop-in!

We are very grateful to have had so many external organisations attend to raise awareness of Dementia, provide advice, health checks and memory assessment.

Lots of information was given, lots of fun had on the games, especially the Caron Board and not forgetting the whopping 32 health checks!

What a great morning! We will definitely be holding further dementia drop-in events.



We carried out 32 health checks!





What it's like to work for us

Work experience placement

In this issue we caught up with Lucy Hay who shared her experiences of her time working for Bolton GP Fed.



During my time at Bolton GP Federation, I have been provided with some excellent experiences and given many opportunities that I can take forward with me.

When I first arrived at the federation, I was apprehensive about entering a different environment and wasn't sure what to expect. However, upon arrival I was greeted and instantly felt very welcome. Clear instructions were given to me and there was always someone around to offer help and guidance if it was ever needed. Everyone works together to create an excellent workspace and a positive attitude towards their work and I immediately felt like part of the team.

I spent most of my time in the executive and Primary Care Network offices completing a variety of different tasks, like completing important training courses that I can take forward with me and working on a research project regarding barriers the NHS face providing healthcare and what can be done to break these down. I spent a day at Bolton Health Hive observing Covid vaccinations taking place and completing surveys with patients afterwards. The nurses were keen to demonstrate their roles to me and I am thankful to have been given this experience as it has exposed me to more career ideas to consider for the future.

I also got given the chance to take part in a Charity Committee meeting with several members of the Federation where they discussed different charities in and around Bolton to fund and support. This impressed me as it showed me how eager the Federation are to aid and grow the community around them.

I completed a session of Communications Training with members of staff which enabled me to learn how to communicate better with others and understand different perspectives on people's opinions and actions. This is one of many things the Federation has provided me with that will be useful to me throughout my next steps in life.

I am so thankful for everything Bolton GP Federation has done for me over the past week and I hope that one day I will be able to work in such positive conditions with colleagues that are as passionate about their work and care for their colleagues in the same way all of the staff do here.

Key take-aways from learning

I spent a day at Bolton Health Hive observing Covid vaccinations taking place and completing surveys with patients afterwards. The nurses were keen to demonstrate their roles to me and I am thankful to have been given this experience as it has exposed me to more career ideas to consider for the future.

I hope to work in such positive conditions with colleagues that are as passionate about their work and care for their colleagues in the same way all of the staff do here.



Our recent accreditations

Disability Confident Accreditation

On 5 October we received the fabulous news that we have gained our accreditation for Disability Confident Committed!

We are now working through the levels to become Disability Confident Leaders, so watch this space!

The Disability Confident scheme helps employers recruit and retain great people. It also:

- challenges attitudes and increases understanding of disability
- draws from the widest possible pool of talent
- helps employers recruit high-quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working
- improves employee engagement and commitment by demonstrating fair treatment



At Bolton GP Federation, we are fully committed to inclusion and diversity in the workplace.

Good Charter Accreditation

SUPPORTER



Bolton GP Federation are delighted to be granted GM Good Charter supporter membership and we are now working towards becoming fully accredited members.

The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme which has been created to improve employment standards across all GM employers, regardless of size, sector or geography.

We take our responsibilities as an employer in Bolton seriously. We are keen to have diverse, equal and truly inclusive working conditions for our staff – in Bolton and across Greater Manchester.

The GM good employment charter is helping us to embrace the seven characteristics of good employment in ways that ensure fair pay, opportunity and progression to all, while at the same time, promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Living Wage Accreditation

Bolton GP Federation was also accredited as a Living Wage Employer by the Living Wage Foundation on 19 October.

The real Living Wage rates are higher than standard because they are independently-calculated based on what people need to get by. The living wage is good for people and for business as it improves employer brands, boosts staff productivity and motivation to work. It also helps employers to be competitive, retain existing, and attract new staff.

At Bolton GP Federation, we have voluntarily committed to paying our employees a wage to better meet their everyday needs - we are very proud to be a socially responsible employer and to have this recognised with our accreditation.

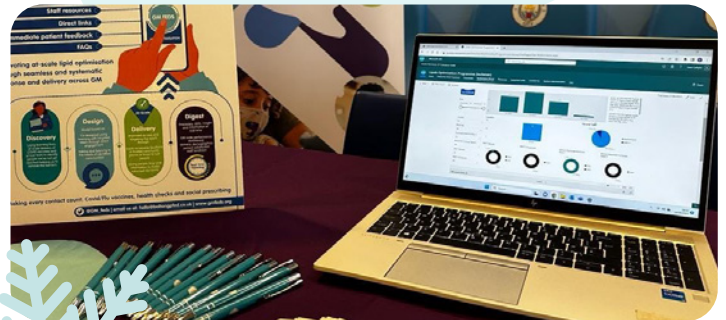
We are a
Living Wage
Employer

[Click here for details on the Living Wage Foundation](#)

Heart of the matter

On 14 September members of our senior team attended the 'Heart of the matter' event at the Etihad Stadium.

Dawn, Kristy, Jenny and Kath showcased our GM Feds Lipids Optimisation Programme. They shared how we are streamlining data with our GM app for staff and also making every contact count for people in Bolton.



Pharmacy meeting

Our lead Pharmacist Hafeeza Bhaiyat, Network Manager Heather Porter, Pharmacy Techs and Pharmacists from across all 7 of our networks attended a pharmacy meeting held at the Octagon on 19 September.

The Bolton GP Federation Pharmacy meeting was arranged to enable staff to discuss workload and the requirements of the Network Contract DES, obtain feedback and discuss ways of working. It was amazing to see so many of our staff who work within pharmacy from across our networks at the meeting.

The team found the meeting very useful and enjoyed the opportunity to interact with peers face-to-face.



Thanks to the success and effectiveness of this meeting we will be holding further meetings in the future, with the next pharmacy meeting being held at **Bolton CVS, The Bolton Hub on 12 December.**



PCN Development Day

On Tuesday 28 November, we held our first face-to-face PCN Development Day for the Bolton-wide Primary Care Networks.



Here Dr Dharmesh Mistry, Clinical Director, talks about the day: "It was clear to see by the noise, chatter and enthusiasm, people appreciated getting in a room. It was a practical example of the Federation facilitating and getting the networks together.

It encompassed three important things that networks are about. Health Inequalities, neighbourhoods, and staff wellbeing. The speakers we had, helped people, we had Practice Managers and the deputies who were all able to take something away."

Speakers included:

- Working Well spoke about working people with disabilities and giving them opportunities. We always talk about 80% of people's care is non-medical.
- The Deaf Society spoke about the challenges they face in practice. Everyone had time to think about how they can change the way we communicate to include people with hearing impairments.
- Neighbourhoods. Everybody knows about them, but nobody really knows what they are. We were introduced to what's going to happen which hopefully gave people reassurance that actually the direction of is what we want.
- We had a great example of what our Chorley Roads Primary Care Network did for inequalities and sharing the outcomes from this.



It was great to see some of the doctors talking about how they want to interact and seeing the people involved nodding and agreeing.

In the afternoon, we had a staff wellbeing session, which is extremely important. This got everyone thinking 'what are we in it for?', 'What should we be doing?' this is called a PCN development day, and this session it helped us think about what we should be doing.





Chorley Roads Primary Care Network hosted its first Multicultural Community Health and Wellbeing event at Brownlow Fold Community College on 2 November.

There was lots to see and do, including stalls from our partners, dancers and health checks for attendees.

Don't just read about it... hear from Dr Sheetal Sagger here.



Bereavement Cafe

We were delighted to show our support for a local Bolton charity, The Bereavement Cafe CIC at their fundraising event on 3 November. They do amazing work to support people in their time of need following a bereavement.

Most people experience grief when they lose something or someone important to them. Bereavement, grief and loss can cause many different symptoms and affect people in different ways.

The Bereavement Cafe is a pop up service moving around Bolton, Wigan and surrounding areas. The service was set up to help people dealing with a bereavement by providing peer-to-peer support, the opportunity to meet other local people who are going through similar situations, friendship, advice and hope.



Communication Skills Training



STANDOUTMEDIA

On 22 November we concluded our Communications Skills Training with our creative partners from Standout Media at Bolton Lads and Girls Club.

Over the month of in-person and online training, 103 of our head office, PCN and ARRS staff attended to benefit from a range of topics designed to enhance and positively affect our relationship with ourselves, each other and how we communicate. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with people in particular appreciating and enjoying the opportunity to come together in person. "Taking more time to listen and understand" and "Being more mindful of my triggers and focusing on calming down" are just two brilliant things members of the team will be doing differently following the training.

In December we will be launching a new section on our website which will have all the topics covered in training with additional exercises, tool-kits and following specific requests, inspirational quotes and book/further development recommendations. Thank you to everyone for showing up and making the most of the opportunity.

"Taking more time to listen and understand"

"Being more mindful of my triggers and focusing on calming down"



Vaccinations during pregnancy campaign



NHS
Greater Manchester

“
I knew how vulnerable pregnant women were, it was not a question of not getting protected, for me.
”

Don't let your questions about **vaccinations** during pregnancy go unanswered

A 6-week paid digital burst will be running from Friday 3 November 2023, and the campaign will be advertised organically through our social channels throughout the winter.

Why is this campaign running?

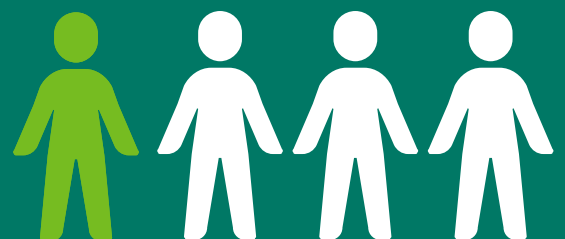
- To provide reassurance to pregnant women and those of childbearing age that vaccinations during pregnancy are safe (for mum and baby)
- To inform that vaccinations during pregnancy is the best way to protect mum and baby against becoming serious ill and preventing health complications
- To increase the number of vaccinations during pregnancy, including Covid-19, flu and whooping cough
- To signpost to trusted sources for more information about vaccinations
- To encourage conversations with 'trusted voices' including healthcare professional, friends and family.

Healthy Minds, E- Module

The Royal Society for Public Health and Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership have developed a new mental health and wellbeing eLearning for the residents of Greater Manchester. Aimed at all adult members of the public, the short eLearning encourages you to take a proactive approach to caring for your mental health and wellbeing. The eLearning is FREE to use, accessed via the RSPH website, and is open to all residents of Greater Manchester to try! We would like to encourage you to use it to promote mental wellbeing with your staff and patients, service users, clients, communities, friends and families.

[Click here](#) to find out more and to sign up for it yourself!

RSPH
ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
VISION, VOICE AND PRACTICE



Mental health and wellbeing support in Greater Manchester

Whether or not Christmas is part of your life, your mental health and stress levels might be affected by everything else that is happening around you. It's a time of year that we can feel under pressure and this can affect our mental health and wellbeing in lots of different ways. Here we are sharing what help and support is available in Greater Manchester

Free online wellbeing programmes

SilverCloud – aged 16 years+

Online programmes to help ease your levels of stress, sleep better or to build resilience. You can choose to use any of the programmes. They are self-help, confidential and secure. Instant access to self-help support:

www.gm.silvercloudhealth.com/



Living Life to the Full

Online courses to help improve low mood, overcome stress, sleep better and build confidence. Materials have been designed to improve feelings and beat stress. Instant access to self-help support is available online and totally free of charge if you live in Greater Manchester.

The resources are available in 18 languages.

www.gmlifeskills.com



Shining a Light on Suicide

Whether you're feeling suicidal, worried someone else is, or have lost someone to suicide, you're not alone. Whatever you're going through, we'll help you get the advice and support you need.

www.shiningalightonsuicide.org.uk



Greater Manchester Bereavement Service

This service is available for anyone living or working in Greater Manchester who has been bereaved or affected by a death by whatever cause, no matter how long ago. No-one needs to feel alone as they deal with their grief

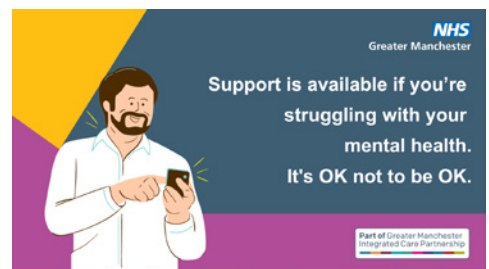
www.greater-manchester-bereavement-service.org.uk/



Crisis mental health helpline in Bolton

If you feel you need mental health support, please contact one of these 24/7 helplines - they're available to anyone of any age.

0800 953 0285 (freephone)



Self-harm and young people

NHS Greater Manchester has produced information resources for young people and their parents and carers which explain why people may self-harm, how to talk about it and strategies to help young people manage their emotions before they reach a crisis, while highlighting sources of help.



Free digital mental wellbeing support

Join the community and access free, safe and anonymous professional support online. There are no waiting lists for support and no referral needed. Access to these platforms is available instantly 24/7.

Support available includes:

- Live chat or messaging with qualified mental health professionals
- Self-help tools and activities
- Online community

Kooth (for ages 10 to 25) www.kooth.com

Qwell (for ages 26+) www.qwell.io/

kooth

**Ages
10-25**

Qwell

**Ages
26+**

Festive message from our Chief Officer

As we near the end of the year, I want to take a moment to thank all our employees, PCNs, practices, volunteers and partner organisations for your hard work, dedication and for supporting GP Federation to continue to do more for our communities. This year has been filled with challenges and opportunities, and I am proud of everything we have accomplished together.

I wish you all a wonderful time over the festive period and look forward to us continuing to do more together in 2024!



Michael Smith

**If you would like any
of your messages elevating
or stories sharing please
send them through to
comms@boltongpfed.co.uk**

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