Worcestershire Books on Prescription Scheme
2008 - 2011

Introduction:

In December 2004 the Department of Health published “Better Information, Better Choices, and Better Health. (DOH 2004)” This set out the NHS strategy for health information for patients and the public, including the concept of an ‘information prescription’. “Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction for Community Services (DOH 2006)” also refers to ‘information prescriptions’ in the form of a signposting service: Nationally there have been a number of small scale projects particularly in mental health involving GPs and Public Library services and the momentum for these types of projects is growing.

Bibliotherapy:

Bibliography has been described as ‘the guided use of reading, always with therapeutic outcomes in mind’ (G.Katz and J Watts1992). It is an expressive therapy that uses an individual's relationship to the content of books and poetry and other written words as therapy. Bibliotherapy consists of the selection of reading material, for a client that has relevance to that person's life situation.

There is a distinction made between the use of self-help literature and the use of imaginative literature. Self-help literature is used with adults with ‘mild or moderate mental health problems with little or no risk, and creative literature is generally used within ‘creative bibliotherapy projects covering a wider referral base including clients with a physical illness’. Either way, the emphasis is on the library service for delivery.

According to an audit by the Museums Libraries and Archives Council 2005 both forms of practice claim health benefits. They often involve different parts of the library structure and different stock. They are also supported by different partnerships, with the health sector focusing on increasing access to self-help reading rather than on developing creative practice. Over half of all English library authorities are now operating some form of bibliotherapy intervention.
The audit reveals that whilst some training is in place to support bibliotherapy provision, it is by no means universally accessible and is often operational in nature. The most common form of support is face-to-face training of library staff by health professionals to raise awareness of mental health issues and to outline the operational aspects of the scheme; awareness raising training for GPs is also relatively common.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence [NICE] guidelines for eating Disorders (February 2004) recommended ‘bibliotherapy’ as a first treatment option for bulimia and binge eating disorders, and the draft NICE Guidelines on Anxiety Disorders recommend it as an effective treatment for some anxiety disorders. The National Institute also published guidelines on depression, a paper that highlighted the need for a stepped care model. This stepped care model specifically indicates the need for a Books on Prescription service in regard to Mental Health promotion in the first level of the model. In May 2007 the NHS published a paper named ‘Commissioning a Brighter Future – Improving Access to psychological therapies’ which specifically highlights the need of this option being available for patients.

Resource limitations mean that treatment is usually pharmacological, despite the fact that psychological treatment would often be the treatment of choice. An innovative books on prescription scheme provides a way of offering a form of psychological therapy to the majority of adults who present in primary care with mild or moderate mental health problems.

It is argued that such schemes are not only highly cost-effective but can be cost saving. In line with current enthusiasm for increased patient self-monitoring and self-management, schemes such as this could represent an important strategy for facilitating more effective patient self-care across many areas of mental and physical health.

**National Pilot studies:**

Health sector interest is predominately at the self-help / books on prescription end of the scale resulting in a developing health and libraries partnership base largely based on the pioneering work of Neil Frude in Cardiff.
This first bibliotherapy service was introduced in 2003 with its award-winning Book Prescription Scheme. Neath/Port Talbot and Gwynedd soon recognized the benefits and introduced the scheme in their areas. Funding provided directly from the Welsh Assembly, and partnership working across the National Health Service (NHS) and Library Service, enabled the original Cardiff scheme to be enhanced and implemented across the whole of Wales, ensuring fairness in provision of this service to all people in Wales. The scheme also covers all prisons in Wales NHS Direct Wales is now issuing book prescriptions and a version of the scheme is available for children and families, therefore raising awareness and self-help across a range of ages. To improve accessibility further, the most popular books will be available on audio / CD.

The Cardiff scheme has been taken over by a national (all Wales) scheme - ‘Book Prescription Wales’ and similar schemes have been implemented in over 60 regions of the UK, with many more in active development. One GP in the Cardiff project stated that: “The biggest advantage of the book scheme is that patients are able to identify problems at an earlier stage and do something about it themselves... rather than coming in when they are breaking down or are in crisis.” The book prescription strategy is fully in line with current enthusiasm for:

- Patient self-management
- Doctor–patient collaboration
- The expert patient
- Health literacy.

Local initiatives:

In the West Midlands an Information Prescription Working Group was set up in 2006 to investigate the published evidence and audit ongoing / completed projects across the UK. The aim was to inform the development of “information prescriptions” by ensuring that organisations understood the concept and the extent of the evidence base to inform practice. The resulting evidence was written up in a paper and published. Chamberlain D. Heaps D. Robert I.' Bibliotherapy and information prescriptions: a summary of the published evidence base and recommendations from past and on-going Books on Prescription projects’. Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health nursing 15 1 p24-36.
In May 2007, a conference hosted by David Chamberlain (Worcestershire Health Libraries) regarding Books on Prescription and self help literature and a subsequent Redditch Steering Group was created from the workshops. This steering group included the Library Service, Social Inclusion lead, a counsellor within Redditch Psychology dept, a lead practice counsellor representative and the North Worcestershire Primary Care Team Clinical Coordinator and Gateway Worker and public library staff. A local project was designed using experience from the Worcester WiNN Project and the Cardiff BOP reading lists. The PCT Director of Public Health provided funding for this pilot.

**Outcomes of the Worcestershire pilot:**

After 8 weeks of the pilot commencing an evaluation was undertaken by the steering group.

- 46 prescriptions were issued, this included prescriptions with more than one book requested, 30 were taken to the library and book/s take out. (It is suspected other patients fetched books but did not leave prescriptions.)

- There were 140 issues to the public.

- Regular enquiries were made to library staff and prescribers as to where to buy the titles recommended.

- 82.6% of feedback forms received stated positively that they would use the scheme again.

Feedback from patients included:

- I now feel I have life skills/coping skills.

- I am able to use the self help knowledge’.
• I can now use the skills to support others.

• I felt more in control of my care’

Some patients stated they had read books they would never previously have considered reading and others had discovered a joy of reading for the first time.

Feedback from practitioners:

• ‘I felt I could offer my patients something immediately’ – GP Partner

• I knew it would support the work I had started with them’ – Practice Counsellor

• ‘I have read the book and I could honestly recommend it’ – GP Salaried Partner.

In general GP’s said they found the system easy to use within the time limit they have with patients.

Positive outcomes identified from the project

• Improved partnership working
• Multi-disciplinary team work established
• Improved communication with Primary Care
• Appropriate training designed and trialled
Conclusion:

Books on Prescription Schemes have been nationally acknowledged and accepted within Wales and have been used throughout the UK for over three years.
A successful pilot has now been implemented and evaluated in Redditch in the year 2007-08.
The Steering Group would recommend the expansion of this project to a County wide model taking into consideration the following points.

- The development of a formalized Steering Group and Terms of Reference
- GP representative on the Steering group. Achieved on 08/01/08, Dr Lee, Hill view Medical Centre, Redditch.
- Raising the profile locally of creative bibliography
- Development of training to raise awareness of creative bibliotherapy
- More effective targeting of county ‘hot spots’
- Developing a robust monitoring and evaluation system
- Better co-ordination of service developments
- Integrating BOP into existing or developing services – Public Health Information Service
- Expanding the themes covered by reading materials for example to include physical health
- Expanding the resources to include other formats such as talking books
- Expanding publicity and professional support resources
- Client involvement in the development and implementation of the scheme
- To model the scheme around the 21 local libraries in the county.
- To review the allocated book list every three months.
### Action Plan 2008-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target:</th>
<th>Objective:</th>
<th>Action:</th>
<th>Timescale:</th>
<th>Finance:</th>
<th>Whose responsibility:</th>
<th>Outcome:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To develop a strategic Countywide approach for the delivery of Books on Prescription.</td>
<td>1.1 Consolidate and further develop the Books on Prescription scheme across Worcestershire.</td>
<td>1.1.1 Review structure of BOP.</td>
<td>Jan Feb 08</td>
<td>In kind funding of partnership members</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Structure reviewed and agreed.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1.1.2 Create strategic steering group, TOR and time limited working groups.</td>
<td>Jan Feb 08</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Steering Group and appropriate time limited working groups convened.</td>
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<td>1.1.3 Identify formal links to other relevant county &amp; regional partnerships / systems e.g. Public Health Information system.</td>
<td>Jan Feb 08</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Links identified and mapped.</td>
</tr>
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<td>1.2 Develop and implement a monitoring &amp;evaluation framework to quantify project outcomes.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2.1 Develop framework for monitoring and evaluating all locality initiatives.</td>
<td>March 08</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Framework agreed</td>
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<td>2. To ensure sustainable</td>
<td>2.1 Short term: To work with</td>
<td>2.1.1 Identify partners for Worcestershire project.</td>
<td>Jan - March 08</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Partners agreed and engaged.</td>
</tr>
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<td>funding for the term of the business plan.</td>
<td>partner agencies to source adequate funding.</td>
<td>2.1.2 Identify sources of funding.</td>
<td>Jan-March 08</td>
<td>– as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group &amp; other partners</td>
<td>Funding identified.</td>
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<td>BOP Steering Group &amp; other partners</td>
<td>2.1.3 Apply for national / regional / local grants as appropriate.</td>
<td>Nov Dec 08</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group &amp; other partners</td>
<td>Applications submitted.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.2 Long term: To embed the initiative in the Local Area Agreement framework.</td>
<td>2.2.1 Influence the refresh process of the LAA.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Ensure BOP targets are covered in LAA.</td>
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<td>3. To develop a comprehensive delivery mechanism for BOP opportunities across all Districts of Worcestershire through a phased approach.</td>
<td>3.1 To develop local delivery in response to local needs regarding i) Mental Health issues. ii) lifestyle issues i.e. physical activity / diet</td>
<td>3.1.1 Identify and support the development of local schemes around local public libraries.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>£ 2500 Per scheme start up costs</td>
<td>Training group</td>
<td>Jan – July 08 to start 4 local schemes, around the public libraries. 4 more to be developed every 6 months</td>
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<td>3.1.2 Train Library and practice staff to implement scheme.</td>
<td>April 08 Then as required</td>
<td>£ 6000</td>
<td>Training group</td>
<td>Library staff support protocol in place and implement.</td>
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<td>3.1.3 Establish working relationship with Voluntary &amp; Community Sector through District Volunteer Bureaus and the County Library service.</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>In kind</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group.</td>
<td>Working relationship achieved with VCS in each locality.</td>
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<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Identify priority areas by locality or risk factor, e.g. geographic hot spots</td>
<td>July 08 Then ongoing</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Priority areas mapped and agreed. Implementation order agreed.</td>
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<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>Work with new PCMHS/Psychology/PC to identify the literature needs of their patients – loss of sight etc.</td>
<td>March 08</td>
<td>In kind</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Links established with Organisation that can offer literature in appropriate formats.</td>
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<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>Identify other NHS and partner agencies in those areas to develop BOP initiatives.</td>
<td>Jan 08 ongoing</td>
<td>In kind</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Multi agency links in priority areas agreed.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3.2.4</td>
<td>Establish and maintain links to workplace initiatives.</td>
<td>Autumn 09</td>
<td>In kind</td>
<td>BOP Steering group</td>
<td>2 workplace links established in each District per year. Community First [Big Lottery scheme] and Chamber of Commerce.</td>
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<td>3.2.5</td>
<td>Establish and maintain schemes in prisons.</td>
<td>Spring 09</td>
<td>£ 1500</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Links established with the 4 county prisons.</td>
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| 4.1.1 | Produce BOP literature to include publicity materials, and tool kits for practitioners. | Jan - June 08 ongoing | £6,000 | BOP Steering Group, Time Limited working party and Public Health information manager | Literature produced. |

4. To develop consistent and branded messaging to increase awareness of the
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>benefits of BOP across the general population</th>
<th>4.1.2</th>
<th>Produce BOP information pack to promote health benefits of reading.</th>
<th>Nov - Dec 08</th>
<th>£1,000</th>
<th>BOP Steering Group</th>
<th>Information pack produced.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.3</td>
<td>Promote public access to health libraries through the Inspire Project</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>POB Steering group / health librarians</td>
<td>Public Access promoted</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.2 To ensure quality of delivery through consistency of training.</td>
<td>4.2.1</td>
<td>Develop rolling programme of staff trainings for both health and library staff.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>£1,500</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group</td>
<td>Rolling programme in place.</td>
</tr>
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<td>4.2.2</td>
<td>Provide regular training and renewals for GP's and PCT staff.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>£1,500</td>
<td>BOP Steering Group/PCMHS</td>
<td>Regular training programme in place.</td>
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