

# Getting to Zero 18-month interim report

April 2024 – December 2025

## Living Well's Connect Well mental health support:

Counselling, life coaching, hypnotherapy. Poor uptake of group workshops in Y1 led to reallocation of resource to one-to-one interventions.

270 referrals made from 24 boroughs (55% self-referrals, 45% HCP/VCS/PSW)

145 people supported via 627 counselling, 104 life coaching, 94 hypnotherapy sessions

Across these three services:

75-95% of service users reported reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation

“I didn't realise how isolated I'd become until I finally felt connected again.”

84-90% reported improved ability to manage their mental health and emotional wellbeing

“I understand my thoughts differently now and I'm kinder to myself.”

79-93% reported increased confidence, motivation and sense of personal agency

“I'm finally putting myself first and setting boundaries.”

Outcomes were particularly strong within individual interventions.

Following counselling, 75% reported feeling less isolated, 87% improved confidence, and 84% felt better able to manage wellbeing.

Following life coaching, 93% reported improved confidence, 86% increased motivation and planning ability, and 100% reported learning something new.

Following hypnotherapy, 90% felt more able to manage wellbeing, 81% improved confidence, and recommendation scores averaged 9-10 out of 10.

Overall service satisfaction exceeded 90%.

In qualitative feedback, clients repeatedly emphasised the importance of HIV-specific care:

*“Not having to explain or worry about stigma made all the difference.”*

## Learning to live well with HIV Courses, THT/Metro/Pos East/Pos UK:

For people who are newly diagnosed or experience difficulties adjusting to diagnosis.

6 courses delivered in person, online and hybrid, over 2-day weekends, 3 weekly afternoon sessions or 4 evening sessions.

55 people supported from 25 boroughs, of varied ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and location of diagnosis. 80% had received their diagnosis within the last 3 years.

Twice as many people registered as attended, mirroring Connect Well's challenges in translating groupwork interest into attendance. This was particularly noted for female participants, who made up less than 30% of attendees.

Improvements were reported across: knowledge and understanding of the diagnosis, levels of self-acceptance, how to link to further support and new peer connections.

Greatest improvements seen in indicator 2: Do you feel you have enough information to manage your HIV?

*“Just wanted to say thank you for all your support and kindness this weekend. Was really good to see everyone and hear everyone’s varied experiences. It’s still all new and raw for me but good to know I’m not alone.”*

Positive East & Food Chain integrated advice service for people attending FC’s ‘Eating Together’ service, aiming to reduce barriers to accessing PE’s housing, welfare benefits and immigration advice.

Of 236 individuals accessing Eating Together, 62 (from 26 boroughs) engaged with the advice service over 213 interactions (whether in person or by telephone and email). Many service users presented with complex needs, generating a wide range of issues to deal with.

£4975 was raised in hardship payments to cover emergencies and essential items.

6 people were rehoused, and 4 cases of disrepair were resolved.

13 people received Universal Credit and 2 people had their immigration applications granted.

With immigration advice limited to Level 1, there was a significant amount of unmet need, with extremely limited capacity to make external referrals.

## **Welfare Advice Service, Positively UK:**

Delivered by a full-time post, split between two workers providing support in-house and at four NWL/NCL clinics.

550 individuals supported over 1868 interactions (1,277 hours in total).

Personal Independence Payments accounted for 55% of work, 35% on Universal Credit, 5% on pensions and 5% on crisis support for food/housing/emergencies.

£1,156,954 benefits secured to date, excluding pending applications. It is likely the total secured benefits is much higher, since feedback on outcomes was not possible for all clients.

Main challenges related to the high volume of people transitioned to Universal Credit during this period, the complex needs of around 20 clients who required high-intensity ongoing support, oversubscription of service.

## **Housing & Immigration Advice Service, Positively UK:**

Initiated in May 2025, following clear concerns from all Getting to Zero partners as to the high degree of unmet needs. Support delivered by employing a full-time Housing Advisor (at Positively UK, with outreach at three NWL clinics), with external immigration support via RAMFEL.

### **Housing:**

102 referrals, with 74 receiving housing advice (over 308 hours) and 28 currently on waiting list.

75% of clients needed rehousing, 25% support for disrepair, landlord disputes and other issues.

10 individuals have secured long-term housing solutions to date. Others obtained improvements to housing conditions, temporary accommodation, advocacy with local authorities, assistance with viewing via DSS-friendly estate agents. Additional positive outcomes expected with time.

### **Immigration:**

21 referrals received for immigration support. 7 taken on by RAMFEL, 2 referred to external providers, 3 received non-qualified immigration advice (<L3) and 9 await referral/signposting.

RAMFEL anticipated capacity for 12 referrals, but the complexity of cases necessitated reducing capacity to 7. This meant that the service had to close to new referrals, while many external services also closed referrals due to oversubscription.

Clients referred to our service are often referred due to complex immigration challenges, requiring Level 3 IAAS/OISC immigration advisors or solicitors to successfully manage immigration issues. Organisations that offer these services are currently oversubscribed therefore some clients are still awaiting a referral opportunity.

### **Re-engaging people in care programme, Terrence Higgins Trust with 4MN, Food Chain, AAF:**

Aiming to re-engage in care 80% of patients referred by Guys & St Thomas', Kings College, Lewisham & Greenwich, St George's, North Middlesex and Hillingdon Hospitals, by providing flexible outreach, reducing barriers to care and linking people to support to address unmet needs.

97 referrals, of which 21 had completely disengaged from their clinic and were still not contactable by the THT service, despite multiple varied attempts.

76 who were inconsistently engaged and considered to be at high risk of disengagement engaged with the coordinator.

29 have been successfully followed up, with regular attendance to clinical care.

Additional 47 being contacted to update records.

Demographics: 36 Black African, 10 Caribbean, 9 White British, 13 White Other, 8 not reported. 58% women, 42% men.

25 referrals to Food Chain, with 117 food deliveries and 4 attending Eating Together sessions. 95% of health objectives achieved by end of service.

18 referrals to 4M Network for peer support and groupwork

10 referrals to African Advocacy Foundation for advice and mental health support services

*"I loved the grocery service and enjoyed all the food that was sent. I really miss the service and wish it could continue. I would like a copy of the shopping orders, so that I can continue to buy the same food. I would give the grocery service 5 out of 5 but I would really like to give it an even higher score than that! My friend commented on how I was now eating healthier foods. I have*

*been buying more fruit and vegetables and trying not to give in to cravings for takeaway food as often.”*

## **In-Clinic Peer Support in NW and NC London, Positively UK (with Plus Health & NAZ):**

Providing one-to-one in-person, virtual and telephone peer mentoring support and linkage to community support via Positively UK and partner organisations.

290 individuals (out of 345 total referrals) were supported in ChelWest Clinics, along with 156 newly diagnosed patients, over 960 appointments.

For North Middlesex, 51 people (out of 57 referred) received support over 79 appointments, along with 9 newly diagnosed patients.

Breakdown per clinic, showing referrals:

- Dean St - 47
- Kobler - 182
- W Middlesex - 62
- 10 Hammersmith B'way - 45
- Other (ward, Harlow, Stevenage) - 9
- North Middlesex - 57

Breakdown per clinic, showing new diagnoses:

- Dean St - 49
- John Hunter (Kobler) - 32
- SH Hounslow (W Midd) - 32
- 10 Hammersmith B'way - 24
- Other - 3
- N Middlesex - 9

Referrals to external support from all sites related to Groups/Activities (27), Mental Health/Wellbeing (18), Benefits/Housing (14 each) and smaller numbers (<10) for Adjusting to Diagnosis, Food/Nutrition, Advocacy, Immigration, Domestic Abuse, Substance Use, Employment.

Referrals were predominantly to Positively UK (50), followed by Food Chain/Sophia Forum (4), NAZ (3), Living Well/CHIVA/THT (2) and individually to a wide range of other services.

Referral monitoring processes are in development and will be strengthened to ensure greater consistency across sites.

*“You have no idea how much comfort you provided me. I’m really glad I kept our meeting.”*

## **Metro In-Clinic Peer Support in SE & SW London:**

62 people supported over 620 appointments (F2F, Virtual, phone)

55% required ongoing support for complex needs, 33% had only one session, 7% two, 3% three, 1% four sessions

Breakdown by clinic:

- Queen Elizabeth Hospital – 37%
- Kings College Hospital – 20%
- Guys & St Thomas’ – 15%
- Kingston – 10%
- Lewisham & Greenwich – 8%
- St George’s Hospital – 5%
- Croydon – 4%
- St Helier – 2%

Referrals to external support: 106 to Metro’s Advice & Advocacy service for welfare benefits, housing and immigration advice. 39 to Positively UK’s women’s group, 34 to talking therapies, 27 to AAF, 18 to Positive East, 16 to Positive Journeys, 12 to Food Cycle. Smaller numbers (<10) to faith-based, social, drug, Food Chain, newly diagnosed support.

### **Positive East in-Clinic Peer Support in NE London:**

Providing one-to-one peer mentoring support in clinic, linking to community support and groups at the Positive East offices and partner organisations.

Total referrals 186, with 158 people seen, 28 who did not respond to take up referral. Most follow-up was at Positive East or by phone, with 51 people re-seen in clinic over 97 appointments.

Breakdown by clinic:

- Barking - 29
- RLH - 118
- Newham - 9
- Sir Ludwig Guttman - 2 (HIV service for Newham ‘stable’ patients)

Plus additional outreach to Mildmay (3) and home visit (3)

New diagnoses: 41 (inc. 4 ED diagnoses)

Gender/Sexuality: 114 (M), 39 (F), 1 (Trans). 73 Heterosexual, 68 Gay, 9 Bisexual, 8 undisclosed

Ethnicity: 57 Black African, 24 White British, all other ethnicities <10 each.

Referrals to external support: 58 to Positive East in-house advice and groups, 16 to HIV clinical services, 14 Food Chain, 6 food bank and sundry other local HIV and non-HIV support services.