Brighter futures
(new group name will be chosen by participants)

Men taking ownership of their lives and in turn taking up their position as fathers, brothers, partners and contributing to their respective communities

The Family Action Wandsworth WellFamily pilot has been operating from local GP’s surgeries for over 3 years and is an early mental health intervention model. Based on a solution focused approach it seeks to tackle some of the everyday issues which hinder people from fulfilling their potential and which in turn have a detrimental affect on the lives of their families and communities.

Our WellFamily staff team can help a person identify those everyday issues which can have a significant impact on the individuals mental health and well-being and provide helpful solutions to prevent deterioration, encourage recovery and aim towards positive outcomes.

Although the service is not primarily psychotherapy, it is nevertheless staffed by qualified psychotherapist/counsellors who have taken a Solution Focused Approach in helping individuals whilst working closely with the local Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT).

It became evident during the last three years whilst running the pilot within the GP surgeries that there was a significant number of men identified in the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment 2014 (JSNA-2014) as being in ‘Intensive need’. Most of these men had past convictions and were presenting with complex issues, who were isolated, lacked support and had no direction to achieve their personal goals i.e. ‘well-being’. In the report it was highlighted that...

“1000 people on the probation caseload, with direct health impacts for the offender, and indirect impact on the offender’s family and friends” and...

“A key vulnerable group of up to 5,000 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance. The local emphasis is on building skills to find work, and linking opportunities to the regeneration plans in Wandsworth”

“People directly affected by crime and lessons learnt from the two Domestic Homicide Reviews in 2013, and people’s fear of crime with the 67% of residents feeling safe in 2014”.

The idea for the “Brighter Futures” pilot is a direct result of the report. Our aim now is to support a selected group of 20 men who have past convictions and a desire to change and fulfil their potential.
How it will work

Family Action have run successful workshop programmes to support adults with mental ill health and we aim to use this experience to support some of these men within our community.

This pilot will enable us to extend existing partnerships with local GP and mental health services and develop new local partnerships with agencies such as Wandsworth Prison and Probation Services in order to promote their mental health and recovery to enable these men successfully reintegrate into their community.

What we will do

As part of the pilot we will deliver two workshop programmes. They will consist of a weekly therapeutic group session over an 8 week period. There will be 10 men in each programme. The group sessions will cover key issues which our facilitators have established through their close work with men with similar life experience. These areas are:

1. Lifestyles
2. Self-care
3. Living better with diagnosis
4. Employment, Training, Education
5. Finances
6. Housing/Homelessness
7. Improving relationships with family and friends
8. Improving worldviews and responsibility in their communities

Each session will seek to address the issues that prevent male ex-offenders from rebuilding their life and reaching their full potential. Our approach as summarised above aims to provide an unique opportunity for these men to come together to support each other, share experiences and receive the advice and support they need.
Our objectives

This project will:

- Help men to reintegrate with their families and improve the quality of their relationships
- Promote health and wellbeing and include support for isolated men within a neutral and inclusive environment.
- Support rehabilitation by encouraging community engagement and promoting self-empowerment.
- Help develop men socially and economically through raising aspirations and building the resilience of men at risk of reoffending or being excluded and isolated.
- This project will extend and add value to our existing WellFamily service by establishing effective models of working with ex-offenders with mental ill health.

The outcomes of this project will improve:

- Mental and emotional health and wellbeing
- Family relationships and social networks
- Increased resilience, confidence and self worth
- Living standards and employment opportunities
Referral Criteria

We are looking for men who:

1. Desire change (doesn't matter how small or big this is)
2. Will not be intoxicated when attending groups (drug and alcohol free on the day)
3. Have mental health challenges
4. Have past convictions and who have found this a barrier to moving forward or at risk of coming into contact with the Criminal Justice System
5. Are interested in trying something new and non stigmatising.
6. Have protective factors in their life such as family, friends or partners
7. Generally live in the Wandsworth borough (funding caters for at least 80% Wandsworth residents)
8. Committed to 8 sessions lasting up to 2 hours, ongoing evaluation and feedback about the project, and willing to participate in follow up work 3 months following the end of the groups.

Referrals can be made by GPs, Probation or Drug and Alcohol, Social Services and other community workers. Self referrals are accepted too.

For further information or to make a referral or to ask for a referral form contact wmhrs@family-action.org.uk or phone Michelle Facey or Süleyman Hüseyin on 020 8874 0730