Community is the best medicine: Introduction

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Community is the best medicine conference, The King’s Fund, London W1G 0AN
Communities are good for health

Surprise!
Prevention must be the heart of the NHS long-term plan

If we get the NHS long-term plan right, we will prevent 3 of the biggest killers, says CEO of Public Health England.
more ‘formal’ evidence has accumulated too

- Holt-Lundstad et al (2010), meta-analysis of 148 studies of social relationships and mortality, the source for the oft-paraphrased, ‘social isolation is as bad for you as smoking’, on mortality risk.

- Munford et al (2017), very well designed study, ‘...participation in community assets is associated with substantially higher HRQoL but is not associated with lower healthcare costs. The social value of developing community assets is potentially substantial.’

- Net benefit in terms of NICE cost-effectiveness threshold equivalent to £763 per participant per year
..and some helpful demystifying
Social prescribing as the poster child...

- A way in for some in the medical field to wider use/recognition of community approaches to health
- Practical, useful, formalisation of what has been going on in many places for years
- It’s not free, the referral endpoint (often VCS) needs paying
- Worries about the language and (success!) being the only face of communities of health
- Don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the good?
But, it is one of many approaches – KF explainer

**SERVICE FOCUSED**

- **Communities in pathways of care**
  Expanding the scope of services the health system is able to provide, to include social as well as medical models of care

**COMMUNITY FOCUSED**

- **Community development**
  Strengthening communities, so that they can improve their own health

- **Communities and service design**
  Involving communities directly in the choice and design of services

- **Community commissioning**
  Communities have greater control over the commissioning of services they receive
This conference

An opportunity to

- **Recognise** the many ways that local practice is supporting the roles of communities in health

- **Hear from** important health and care system leaders, on their role and how they can support

- **Learn, share and contribute** and take part in the diverse workshops, be inspired by something you hear

- Oh... and please do come back for the social prescribing conference!