The fight against social isolation starts at home

Anna Garrod, Head of Health and Resilience Policy
Amanda Palin, Service Manager, Independent Living Services for the North West of England
What did we already know about loneliness?

9 million adults often or always feel they lack meaningful connections

An increased risk of a range of health conditions

200,000 older people not had a conversation with a friend/relative for more than a month

Can affect people of all ages

Major life events or transitions can be key triggers for loneliness

Can’t be eliminated… but can do more to stop becoming chronic

The power of kindness
What the British Red Cross is doing to tackle loneliness

Health and social care services across the country helping hundreds of thousands of people live independently at home and recover after a stay in hospital

Joined forces with the Co-op to tackle loneliness and social isolation in the UK head-on:

- Over 30 Community Connector services.
- Research on loneliness, Trapped in a Bubble, which focussed on the experience and triggers of loneliness, Barriers to Belonging, exploring loneliness among people from BAME backgrounds, Fulfilling the Promise, which focussed on how to ensure social prescribing effectively tackles loneliness
- Policy and advocacy (Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, APPG on Loneliness and the Loneliness Action Group)
What are Community Connectors?

Referral into service and/or participants identified through outreach activities

Person-centred conversation with ‘connector’ (job titles may vary)

Key priorities identified (including aims for social connection or relationships)

Tailored support to meet goals and make connections

Independent participant connection with community or support services
What works

• Helped over 10,000 people
• Over two thirds felt less lonely*
• Half were no longer classed as lonely at the end of support
• 76% of people had improved wellbeing**
• £2.04 of social value for every £1 invested
• Biggest positive impact felt by the most lonely, as well as those experiencing a ‘life transition’

*Using the UCLA measure
**Using the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale
What needs to happen next?
Questions?
Thank you

Find out more at redcross.org.uk/lonely

Get involved by emailing LonelinessAction@redcross.org.uk

#TacklingLoneliness