

Get Set to GO



Get Set to Go

Interim report findings

Spring 2016

Mind

We're Mind the mental health charity working across England and Wales. We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. We campaign nationally to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. We won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets support and respect.

At a local level, we're a federated network of 140 independent local Minds that share our values, beliefs and branding. Local Minds deliver a range of services, from counselling and coffee mornings to sport and ecotherapy.

We're part of the Time to Change anti-stigma and discrimination programme in partnership with Rethink Mental Illness. Time to Change encourages us all to take simple steps to end stigma and to get more people talking openly about mental health.

You can find out more at > mind.org.uk or > time-to-change.org.uk

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Introduction

This report summarises interim evaluation findings from Get Set to Go. It is based on data collected by our independent evaluation team from the Institute of Health and Wellbeing at Northampton University. Additional data taken from progress reports submitted to Sport England in May 2016 is also included.

About Get Set to Go

Get Set to Go is funded by Mind, Sport England and the National Lottery. We were awarded funding in October 2014 for a three-year programme to support people with mental health problems to get physically active in their local communities.

The programme has three delivery strands:

1. Delivery in eight areas through our local Mind network.
2. Peer support to get active through our Elefriends online community.
3. National communications and campaigns.

This report covers all three delivery strands but mainly focusses on learning that can be shared from the local delivery strand of the programme. This delivery strand has received the most interest from partners and stakeholders and this is the area we will be scaling up in 2017 in 32 new areas. The programme funding comes to an end in October 2017.

About the evaluation

Get Set to Go is being independently evaluated by the University of Northampton's Institute of Health and Wellbeing.

Participants involved in strands 1 (local delivery) and 2 (Elefriends) completed a baseline monitoring form when joining the programme. These are followed up at three, six and 12 months.

The evaluation team is using validated scales to measure changes in physical activity and exercise behaviour, motivation, mental wellbeing and social support. The research objectives are to understand:

- The relationship between sport and mental health recovery.
- The effectiveness of the peer navigator model for encouraging sustained sports participation.
- The effectiveness of the national communications campaign.
- The impact of online peer support on mental health.
- The impact of online peer support on sports participation.

To ensure a close connection between our values² and the research methods, the evaluators at Northampton recruited a team of peer researchers who all have personal experience of mental health problems. The peer researchers are supporting focus groups, conducting phone interviews and supporting the wider research while at the same time developing their own research skills.

Final research findings will be published in autumn 2017.

² We place great importance on our activities being 'real', 'personal', 'compassionate' and 'courageous'. Wherever possible we invest and draw upon the expertise of people with first-hand experiences of living with a mental health problem.

I. Delivering Get Set to Go locally

Since launching in June 2015, Get Set to Go has engaged over 1,358 participants in a wide range of sessions and activities. Of these participants, 790 (58%) have completed the monitoring data and programme evaluation form.

About the participants

The gender split between registered participants is evenly split with 48 per cent female and 52 per cent male. Get Set to Go is open to individuals aged 18 and above with no upper age limits. Most participants are aged between 21-50 years with the majority being in the 41-50 age group. This could be attributed to the groups and demographics that local Minds currently engage with. Nationally, our focus has been on adult mental health, however we are exploring how children and young people's mental health features in new programmes from September 2016.

Relationship with sport and physical activity

For those participants who completed a monitoring form, just over a quarter (28 per cent) reported that they did not take part in any sport or physical activity when they joined Get Set to Go, while 34 per cent did not engage in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity in the last week. Of those that were currently active the most popular activities were:

- walking (N=115)
 - gym (N=29)
 - cycling (N=21)
 - swimming (N=15)
 - mixed activities (N=54).
- (N=number)

How Get Set to Go is delivered

The programme uses a mixed delivery approach with local Minds working with current and potential participants to ensure activities are appropriate, relevant and tailored to local needs.

To date, the eight areas have delivered 136 sports taster sessions and 787 weekly sports sessions. These have been a mix of in-house sessions delivered by local Mind sports coordinators, volunteers/coaches or directly with community partners such as Middlesbrough Football in the Community Foundation and local clubs and leisure providers such as Fusion Leisure.

At the programme outset there was a higher than anticipated demand for one-to-one peer support with people wanting support to access community-based sessions directly, for example women only ice-skating and home-based exercises, with people citing barriers such as low self-esteem and body confidence issues. Since the programme has become established more people are attending activities using group-based peer support.

Get Set to Go aspires to be a stepping stone into sustained participation in community-based sports and physical activities as outlined in the programme blueprint. Local Minds are starting to see participants exit the programme (N=139) using local opportunities such as parkrun, community sports clubs, leisure provision and re-engaging with the programme (as participants to take part in new activities or as volunteers).

We're privileged to work with Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind on the Get Set to Go project, as part of MFC Foundation's efforts to encourage social inclusion across Teesside. Andy and his team have allowed us to reach out to countless people, and the benefits of working with an organisation like Mind – who share our dedication to and enthusiasm for raising aspirations – cannot be overstated.

Claire Streeter, Social Inclusion Coordinator, MFC Foundation

Get Set to Go activities by popularity

To date the most popular activities are:

- gym and fitness based classes (N=174)
- football (N=146)
- boxing (N=79)
- badminton (N=77)
- rambling (N=56).

While participants are actively engaged in setting programme activities, the most popular activities are also influenced by the supply available from the sector and partners' ability/capacity to support sessions. For example Rochdale Mind has engaged with its local No Strings Badminton sessions through Link for Life (Rochdale Borough Council's leisure provider) and Herefordshire Mind has secured discounted gym memberships with its local leisure provider Halo.

Football has remained popular across the programme, however a recent upsurge can be attributed to a popular Dudley Mind football tournament.

Yoga and tai chi are also proving very popular as low intensity activities with mindfulness at their core. Multi-sport taster sessions are also very popular as they provide a one-stop shop of activities that cater for different interests.

The table below contains a summary of participants' desired activities as outlined in the registration form.

1st Preference	2nd Preference	3rd Preference
Football (N=55)	Swimming (N=34)	Swimming (N=21)
Swimming (N=52)	Cycling (N=25)	Badminton (N=21)
Walking (N=30)	Yoga (N=23)	Yoga (N=15)
Gym (N=30)	Football (N=20)	Tennis (N=10)
Tai Chi (N=21)	Badminton (N=17)	Walking (N=10)

Impact of the programme on participants' physical activity levels

Based only on participants who have completed the three-month and six-month follow ups (at the time of writing) we have seen the following trends:

- The number of days where participants engaged in 30 minutes of activity has increased for those engaged through local delivery and through the Elefriends online peer support community.
- There has been an increase in the number of days engaged in vigorous and moderate intensity activities for participants engaged through local delivery.
- Participants engaged in local delivery report a decrease in barriers to physical activity and an increase in feelings of wellbeing.
- Surprisingly, for local delivery participants, there has been an increase in the number of minutes spent sitting, which may be attributed to the additional activity undertaken at a moderate–vigorous level, leading to participants feeling tired.

Throughout the programme we have seen the impact that sessions are having on participants and those working with them. The following quotes illustrate how Get Set to Go is meeting four of the five DCMS outcomes for sport and physical activity.²

Mental health

The support and encouragement you have provided to help me back into exercise has been invaluable. I feel so much more hopeful and much better in myself! And I'm really enjoying my new exercise routine! I never thought I'd be able to do this again, and wouldn't have done so without Get Set to Go support – so, THANK YOU!

Physical health

I'm starting to feel more flexible, which has helped my arthritis. Now I have more stamina to exercise longer and my high blood pressure is also starting to lower. I love boxing so much I have signed up to a Crisis boxing session.

Individual development

I've always loved football but never had the confidence to join a team. I went along to the training session full of anxiety but it was fantastic. They made me welcome and encouraged me, even though I was extremely unfit and not much cop. I've lost weight and got fitter and even scored my first ever goal, 25 years after getting left out of the school team. My proudest possessions are now my football boots and the medals I've won. I can't begin to explain how this has helped my confidence and self-esteem.

Economic development

As a direct result of his involvement with the football sessions, one of our volunteers has secured part-time employment with MFC Foundation. They saw first-hand how he conducted himself in sessions and his skills engaging participants. This coupled with his previous work experience has resulted in his employment, working on an initiative called 'The Boot Room'.

² The Government's strategy for sport *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation* (2016) was produced by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). It focuses on five outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and finally economic development.

Effectiveness of 'peer sports navigators' for encouraging sustained sport participation

At the time of writing, Get Set to Go has trained 114 volunteer peer sports navigators (PSNs) who help participants to get physically active through a combination of one-to-one and group support. PSNs have first-hand experience of mental health problems – or have supported a close friend or family member to manage their mental health. PSNs are recruited through a range of methods including introductions by former participants, service users from the local Mind, and signposting by other volunteering schemes such as the local VCS and through higher/further education.

Four themes have emerged through PSN interviews to date:

1. Personal traits and characteristics of the volunteers is crucial

- Common PSN traits included empathy and compassion, as part of an agreeable personality type.
- Importance of a non-judgemental presence and the need to create a pleasant, friendly and welcoming atmosphere.
- PSNs take joy and pride in their roles and enable others to succeed in becoming physically active.

I want to be a friendly face to take the register, to see how service users are doing, how they're feeling, how are they interested in the project and if they want to go to any other sessions. I can just be a non-judgemental ear to just listen to more than anything, cos [sic] sometimes it just helps to get it off your chest.

Peer sports navigator

2. Perceptions of the PSN role

- PSNs identified that their role is about reducing the stigma around exercise and mental health, and using their empathetic judgement to help participants break down the barriers to exercise.
- PSNs all expressed the desire to act as role models for participants.

Being sensitive about a mental health problem involves being able to see things from participants' perspectives. For example, something like going swimming may seem casual to me, but it can be so threatening and scary for someone else. We need to be aware of this.

Peer sports navigator

3. The personal benefits of being a PSN

- PSNs all report the many benefits of being involved in the programme including: professional development, opportunities to attend courses, experiencing new situations which increases knowledge, competence, challenge, social confidence and increased employability.
- Many were motivated by their belief in the value of the programme due to personal experiences of using sport and physical activity to support their own mental health, while others could see how participants benefited from the activities and peer support.
- PSNs all reported that their wellbeing and mental health – specifically confidence, competence and social capital – has improved, and that they have experienced personal growth as a direct result of their involvement.

I do get quite a sense of wellbeing from being able to help effectively and I hope that will help me coach myself. It gives me confidence, it gives me purpose – potentially it gives me new skills and the social stuff as well. It makes me interact with the world in a better way, a more successful way.

Peer sports navigator

4. Personal challenges faced by PSNs

- PSNs tend to internalise pressure. For example some felt guilty or didn't want to 'let down' participants if they were unable to attend sessions. This for some caused stress and others perceived it as a weakness.
- Participant engagement was also identified as a challenge by PSNs. Low levels of participation and engagement was disheartening while large numbers turning up unexpectedly was difficult to manage and caused PSNs to worry whether everyone would be included or get a turn.

I just felt so guilty and bad because I don't want the person I support to feel like I'm not there for them. I think the stress comes from the fact you are meeting someone you're supposed to support.

Peer sports navigator

2. National communications and campaigns

To date, we have successfully delivered two national marketing communications campaigns to promote the mental health benefits of physical activity to those of us with mental health problems, as follows:

Campaign burst	Audience	People reached*	People engaged**	People taking action***
July 2015	Adults with mental health problems	2,361,273	14,399	2,070
April 2016	Women with mental health problems	17,226,408	64,135	23,487
Total	-	19,587,681	78,534	25,557

* Reached: the number of people seeing the campaign, for example viewing a tweet or Facebook post or advert.

** Engaged: the number of people who visit a webpage, or read a tweet or Facebook post, retweet, like or share.

*** Taking action: the number of people who do something as a result of the campaign, for example download content, visit GSTG website or join a project.

Through our national communications work we have developed the following resources:

- Dedicated webpages for sport and physical activity > mind.org.uk/sport
- A microsite to share real stories about real people using physical activity to support their mental health > getsettogether.mind.org.uk
- An information resource: *How to improve your wellbeing through physical activity and sport*, which available both online and as a booklet > mind.org.uk/physicalactivity

During the women's campaign burst we successfully supported 11 local Minds outside of the Get Set to Go programme to deliver sports taster sessions. We hope to build upon this model for our next campaign burst in year 3 aimed at BME communities. We also held our first physical activity Twitter Q&A with Mind ambassador Anna Williamson.

Our learning of what works and what doesn't when it comes to communications will be included in the forthcoming toolkit. For example, the importance of including people with personal experience telling real stories, ensuring the tone is supportive and empathetic and how to promote the mental wellbeing benefits of physical activity for everyone, along with tips around language and terminology.

3. Online peer support through Elefriends

Elefriends is a supportive online community for people with mental health problems where they can be themselves. Anyone aged 18 and above who struggles with their mental health can access peer support online from a community of 'Eles'.

Since the launch of Get Set to Go we have worked with the Elefriends community to develop the following:

- Animations to encourage people to get physically active with support from peers online (see table below for further details).
- 'Being active' themed pages – a dedicated area of the site for conversations about being active. Eles can tag posts as 'Being active' enabling them to search and support each other on this topic.
- Searchable interests so Eles can search for people with similar interests to them such as 'running' or 'cycling' (not yet implemented on site).

Animation	Total views	URL
Getting active	2,102	> https://vimeo.com/133339284
Stories from the herd	947	> https://vimeo.com/135653198
Staying motivated	1,609	> https://vimeo.com/135040228

Elefriends using the 'Being active' theme have been asked to join the programme evaluation. As outlined on page 6, the number of days engaged in 30 minutes of activity has increased for Elefriends' users taking part in the programme.

> elefriends.org.uk

4. Supporting the sport and physical activity sectors

Mental health awareness training

Through a co-design process with the sport and physical activity sector, local Minds and people with first-hand experience of mental health problems, we have created a bespoke three-hour training course: *Mental health awareness for sport and physical activity*.

The course is supported by sports coach UK and Sport England. Since February 2016 we have delivered the course nine times to representatives from over 21 organisations including NGBs (national governing bodies) such as Table Tennis England and British Sailing, County Sport Partnerships and local authorities, clubs and community sports partners.

Participants complete a short pre-course evaluation at the start and end of the training course to measure changes in confidence, knowledge and understanding of mental health. The University of Northampton is contacting participants three months after the course to see how the training has been implemented in their setting. To date, participant evaluation data shows that:

- All attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the training and that it was useful and relevant to their needs.
- 87% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge of mental health had improved as a result of attending the training.
- 80% of attendees told us that their attitudes and beliefs regarding mental health had changed.

I'm more aware of medication.

It highlighted the importance of adapting sessions and taking time to think about how a session is set up before running it.

I'm more positive about how physical activity can help.

Course participants

- 87% of attendees stated they would make some changes in their approach to mental health.
- Intended changes focused on the following themes:
 - session preparation and interaction with individuals
 - increasing openness to mental health as part of their sessions.

Design my sessions with Mind branding and involvement. Be open about presenting and including conditions.

Treat every individual personally, give them the opportunity to express themselves and look to break down barriers.

Be more prepared.

Course participants

The course is currently being delivered by the eight local Minds delivering Get Set to Go and has been made available as a business opportunity for the wider local Mind network to deliver from September 2016 as a pilot training product.

Contact us at sport@mind.org.uk for further details.

5. Next steps for Get Set to Go

Support for the sport and physical activity sectors

- Developing a toolkit to support the sector.
- Delivering Mental Health Awareness for Sport and Physical Activity training as a pilot through our local Mind network.
- Seeking to embed learning within sector.

Scale up the learning to 32 new areas of England

- Developing a toolkit to support local Minds and other mental health organisations.
- Delivering workshops to local Minds and mental health partners.
- Providing mentoring support to 32 areas and support to develop sports and physical activity programmes.

We will be reviewing the impact of the Get Set to Go programme and our wider sport work, including the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation, using learning from the University of Northampton final evaluation report. We will host a national event in October 2017 to share the learning and good practice.

We would like to thank the following for their support in collating this information:

Brent Mind

Dudley Mind

Herefordshire Mind

Institute of Health and Wellbeing – University of Northampton

Lancashire Mind

Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind

Mind in Croydon

Rochdale and District Mind

Tyneside and Northumberland Mind

Further information

Web: > mind.org.uk/sport

Email: > sport@mind.org.uk

Hashtag: #GetSetToGo