

Date: 16 April 2025

Freedom of Information Response – FOI 59-2425

Your Request:

1. Can you confirm that the joint BCC/PHA Healthwise Physical Activity Referral Programme is still in operation?
2. Do patients presenting with mental health issues have a right to request referral to the programme from their GP?
3. Please provide details of its operation, including participating GP practices and leisure centres, how information and awareness is promoted, level of uptake, funding and future rollout plans.
4. We have had reports of people having to wait lengthy periods following referral for an initial pre-exercise assessment in the leisure centre. Has BCC/PHA identified this as an issue and if so, what steps are you taking to address it?
5. Please provide copies of any evaluations carried out of the programme to date.

The PHA received your request on 19 March 2025 and it was handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

Our response

The PHA has considered your request for information and questions below. Our response is as follows.

Healthwise FOI 24.03.25

1. *Can you confirm that the joint BCC/PHA Healthwise Physical Activity Referral Programme is still in operation?*

Yes, the joint BCC/PHA Physical Activity Referral Programme (Healthwise) is still in operation.

2. *Do patients presenting with mental health issues have a right to request referral to the programme from their GP?*

Any patient has a right to request referral onto the programme. GPs will consider the request in line with the scheme's inclusion / exclusion criteria i.e:

Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS) Specification for Implementation 24/25

1. Inclusion Criteria for PARS

Clients must be:

19 years or over **and**

Inactive (not currently meeting the PA guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week) **and** motivated to change.

In addition only the clients who fit within the following criteria should be referred:

Living with overweight or Obesity (with a BMI of $\geq 25\text{kg/m}^2$ and $< 40\text{kg/m}^2$) **and have** one or more of below:

- Hypertension
- Hyperlipidaemia
- Impaired glucose levels or diabetes
- Family history of heart disease
- Asthma, bronchitis or COPD
- Musculoskeletal conditions
- Mild or moderate mental health conditions.

2. Absolute Contraindications to Exercise

The referrer must confirm that the client has no absolute contraindications to exercise. Patients with any absolute contraindications should not exercise until such conditions are stabilised or adequately treated.

Absolute Contraindications to Exercise.

Patients with any of these absolute contraindications should not exercise until such conditions are stabilised or adequately treated.

Category	Contraindications
Cardiovascular Conditions	1. A recent significant change in a resting ECG, previous myocardial infarction or other acute cardiac event. ³
	2. Cardiomyopathy.
	3. Symptomatic severe aortic stenosis.
	4. Acute pulmonary embolus or pulmonary infarction.
	5. Acute myocarditis, endocarditis or pericarditis.
	6. Suspected or known dissecting aneurysm.
	7. Resting Systolic Blood Pressure $\geq 180\text{mmHg}$ / Diastolic Blood Pressure $\geq 100\text{mmHg}$.
	8. Uncontrolled / unstable angina.

	9. Unstable or acute heart failure.
	10. New or uncontrolled arrhythmias.
Respiratory and Other Conditions	11. Dyspnoea/Shortness of breath at rest.
	12. Unstable COPD patients.
	13. Uncontrolled or poorly controlled asthma.
Metabolic Conditions	14. Uncontrolled or poorly controlled Diabetes.
Psychiatric Conditions	15. Acute uncontrolled psychiatric illness.
Blood Disorders and Illnesses	16. Cancer or blood disorders: when treatment or disease cause leucocytes below $0.5 \times 10^9/L$, haemoglobin below $8.0g/dl$ or platelets below 50×10^9 .
	17. Uncontrolled resting tachycardia ≥ 100 bpm.
	18. Febrile illness.
	19. Any acute severe illness.
Physical Limitations and Symptoms	20. Chronic muscle/joint bone conditions that impede ability to take part in physical activity.
	21. Other rapidly progressing terminal illness.
	22. Experiences significant drop in BP during exercise.
	23. Experiences pain, dizziness or excessive breathlessness during exertion.
	24. Any unstable, uncontrolled condition.

³Appropriate guidance on this should be provided either by the patient's cardiologist or cardiac rehabilitation team.

3. Please provide details of its operation, including participating GP practices and leisure centres, how information and awareness is promoted, level of uptake, funding and future rollout plans.

Overview of scheme operation

The PARS (Healthwise) scheme is the 12-week local Physical Activity Referral (PARS) programme under the Regional PARS scheme which helps inactive people increase their physical activity levels. Participants can be referred by their GP or Healthcare professional to a local Leisure Centre or Healthy Living Centre of their choice to participate in the free 12-week programme. Following enrolment, the specialist exercise referral coaches will prescribe safe and achievable exercise with the aim of adopting an active lifestyle to help manage various medical conditions.

Participants will have unlimited access and can avail of activities such as swimming, gym, small group-based classes, walking/cycling groups and much more. The Healthwise programme is suitable for all fitness levels provided you meet the inclusion / exclusion criteria for the programme.

GP Practices making referrals:

- Albertville Surgery
- Andersonstown Road Surgery

- Antrim Road Medical Centre
- Ardmore Medical Centre
- Ballygomartin Group Practice
- Ballyowen Health Centre
- Ballyowen Health Centre
- Ballysillan Group Practice
- Balmoral Surgery
- Bangor Health Centre
- Belvoir Surgery
- Botanic Medical Centre
- Brook Street Surgery
- Bryson Street Surgery, City East
- Carryduff Surgery
- Castlereagh Medical Centre
- Cherryvalley Health Centre
- Cherryvalley Health Centre
- Church View Medical Practice
- Clifton Street Surgery
- Cliftonville Road Surgery
- Comber Health Centre
- Cregagh Surgery
- Crocus Street Surgery
- Crumlin Road Family Practice
- Crumlin Road Health Centre
- Dr McKenna's Practice
- Duncairn Medical Practice
- Dundonald Medical Centre
- Dunluce Family Practice
- Dunluce Health Centre
- Dunville Health Centre
- Eastside Surgery
- Falls Road Surgery
- Falls Road Surgery
- Falls Surgery
- Finaghy Health Centre
- Gardiner Family Practice
- Glengormley Practice
- Greenway Practice
- Grosvenor Road Surgery
- Grove Medical Practice
- Hillhead Family Practice
- Hollywood Arches Health Centre
- Hollywood Arches Health Centre
- Hollywood Arches Health Centre
- Hollywood Road Surgery
- Kensington Group Practice
- Kerrsland Surgery

- Knock Medical Centre
- Lewis Square Practice
- Ligoniel Health Centre
- Linen Court Surgery
- Lisbane Medical Centre
- Lisburn Health Centre
- Lisburn Health Centre
- Lisburn Health Centre
- Lisburn Health Centre
- Malvern Family Practice
- Mount Oriel Medical Practice
- Mountainview Surgery
- North Parade Medical Centre
- Northgate Family Practice
- Notting Hill Medical Practice
- Oldpark Group Practice
- Ormeau Park Surgery
- Ormeau Road Health Centre
- Parkside Surgery
- Priory Surgery
- Rosehall Medical Practice
- Saintfield Health Centre
- Salisbury Medical Centre
- Shankill Surgery
- Springfield Medical Centre
- Springfield Road Surgery
- Springvale Medical Practice
- Station Road Health Centre
- Templemore Medical Centre
- The Carrick Hill Medical Centre
- The Group Surgery
- The Hill Medical Group Practice
- The Maureen Sheehan Centre
- The Mount Group Practice
- The Rowan Tree Family Practice
- Tramways Medical Centre
- University Health Centre At Queens
- University Street Surgery
- Vere Foster Medical Group
- Whitehouse Medical Group Practice
- Willow Medical Practice
- Willowfield Surgery
- Woodbrooke Medical Practice
- Woodstock Medical Centre

Participating Leisure/Community Centres on Clinical Communication Gateway (CCG) system for Belfast City Council Area

BCC / GLL sites:

- Andersonstown Leisure Centre
- Ballysillan Leisure Centre
- Belvoir Activity Centre
- Brook Activity Centre
- Falls Leisure Centre
- Girdwood Community Hub
- Grove Wellbeing Centre
- Indoor Tennis Centre And Ozone Complex
- Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre
- Olympia Leisure Centre
- Shankill Leisure Centre
- Templemore Baths
- Whiterock Leisure Centre
- Maureen Sheehan Centre

Lower Ormeau Resident's Action Group (LORAG) sites:

- Dee Street Community Centre (LORAG)
- Shaftesbury Recreation Centre (Lorag)
- Short Strand Community Centre (Lorag)
- The Hanwood Centre (Lorag)

How information and awareness is promoted

The PARS team developed a newsletter which was sent all practices via the GP Federation and to all referring AHPs via the AHP leads. The newsletter has not been delivered directly since COVID as staff were being inundated with information, instead were available on the GP intranet. We hope to produce an updated newsletter in the coming weeks to give a summary of 2024/25 performance and any required updates.

At a local level in Belfast Awareness is promoted via the following website link

[Pledge 4 - Strengthen connections to and within the health sector - Making Life Better Together](#)

BCC/GLL have a site-specific leaflet for the Healthwise programme. This is available to access on the website link above. Maureen Sheehan Centre are currently updating their site-specific leaflet.

Physical Activity Referral Care Pathway for Belfast along with the Healthwise referrers leaflet and poster is available to view in the link.

On the commencement of the Regional model in 2019 each GP practice in the Belfast area received a referrers poster for Belfast.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust promote the Healthwise Level 3 Programme via the internal loop system to engage further referrers for the programme.

Promotion is ongoing via local health fair days across the city which targets participants and increases awareness to the programme.

Local Providers work closely with HSC physical activity specialists and key referral partners to promote sustainable partnerships and encourage uptake of the programme.

Level of Uptake

PARS level of uptake for Belfast City Council (BCC) area for 2024/25 from 01/04/24 to 20/03/25:

- There were 3564 referrals:
 - 2558 from 93 GP Practices
 - 1006 from Other Hospital and Community Sources
 - to 18 Leisure Centres/Health Living Centres

Funding - 2024/25

- PARS (Healthwise) funding across BCC area: £166,705.87 2024/25 year.
- Enhancement of £48,031.80 was awarded due to the increased uptake in the 24/25 year.

Future role out plans

The PHA plan to continue the PARS programme across the BCC area.

4. *We have had reports of people having to wait lengthy periods following referral for an initial pre-exercise assessment in the leisure centre. Has BCC/PHA identified this as an issue and if so, what steps are you taking to address it?*

In April – June 2024, there was 519 clients on the waiting list, followed by 603 clients waiting in July – September 2024. By October – December 2024 this had reduced to 396 clients.

PHA have received reports from GLL (GLL operates the leisure centres across Belfast on behalf of Belfast City Council) that there are a high number of inappropriate referrals being received for the following reasons:

- Clients not meeting the inclusion/exclusion criteria,
- Lack of client contact information from the referrers,

- Concerns from PARS coaches navigating the system and archiving old referrals (PARs online system can be temperamental and needs improved for efficiency and user friendliness of coaches). This causes delay in enrolling appropriate referrals.

These issues have been highlighted with PHA Regional Leads and we are currently reviewing the Regional IT database to alleviate these issues.

PHA funds an equitable commissioning of physical activity referral schemes across N.I per head of population who are living with overweight/obesity in line with the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the programme. Belfast experienced an increased referral demand/pressure in 2024/25 which has contributed to an increase in the local waiting list. PHA provided a non-recurrent in-year service enhancement for an additional 340 completers to address increased demand.

5. *Please provide copies of any evaluations carried out of the programme to date.*

Copies of Evaluations are attached under the following appendices

- Appendix 1 - 2014.05.15 BHDU Final Report compiled from CENI
- Appendix 2 - Final Healthwise Evaluation Report
- Appendix 3 - HPA physical activity referral scheme Final Report June 2008

We would advise that we have removed any personal information from the above Appendices in accordance with Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (see Appendix 4 for further details). For information, the PHA does not release the names of staff below Assistant Director.

Next Steps

We trust our response addresses your information requirements however, if you are not satisfied with our response you can ask us to review our response. If you want us to carry out a review, please let us know within 40 working days.

If you are still dissatisfied after our internal review, you can complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office](https://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints) (ICO). You should make complaints to the ICO within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints or, if you prefer, by post: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Your Ref: PMcL E758938

Our Ref:

Date: 10th April 2025

Name Letitia Fitzpatrick
Email Address fitzpatrickletitia@gmail.com

Dear Letitia,

RE: FOI REFERRAL PROGRAMME

Thank you for your email dated 19 March 2025, requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, information on **Referral Programme** by Belfast City Council.

I can confirm that the Council does hold the information you have requested. For ease of reference, I have separated and numbered your requests and provided the Council's response directly below.

1. Can you confirm that the joint BCC/PHA Healthwise Physical Activity Referral Programme is still in operation?

Response: Yes, confirmation that the joint BCC/PHA Physical Activity Referral programme (Healthwise) is still in operation.

2. Do patients presenting with mental health issues have a right to request referral to the programme from their GP?

Response: Any patient has a right to request referral onto the programme. GPs will consider the request in line with the scheme's inclusion / exclusion criteria i.e. Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS) Specification for Implementation 24/25

Inclusion Criteria for PARS

Clients must be:

- 19 years or over; and
- Inactive (not currently meeting the PA guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week); and
- Motivated to change.

In addition only the clients who fit within the following criteria should be referred:

Living with overweight or Obesity (with a BMI of $\geq 25\text{kg/m}^2$ and $< 40\text{kg/m}^2$) and have one or more of below:

- Hypertension
- Hyperlipidaemia

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- Impaired glucose levels or diabetes
- Family history of heart disease
- Asthma, bronchitis or COPD
- Musculoskeletal conditions
- Mild or moderate mental health conditions.

Absolute Contraindications to Exercise

The referrer must confirm that the client has no absolute contraindications to exercise.

Patients with any absolute contraindications should not exercise until such conditions are stabilised or adequately treated. (Appendix 1)

Appendix 1

Absolute Contraindications to Exercise.

Patients with any of these absolute contraindications should not exercise until such conditions are stabilised or adequately treated.

Category	Contraindications
Cardiovascular Conditions	1. A recent significant change in a resting ECG, previous myocardial infarction or other acute cardiac event. 3
	2. Cardiomyopathy.
	3. Symptomatic severe aortic stenosis.
	4. Acute pulmonary embolus or pulmonary infarction.
	5. Acute myocarditis, endocarditis or pericarditis.
	6. Suspected or known dissecting aneurysm.
	7. Resting Systolic Blood Pressure $\geq 180\text{mmHg}$ / Diastolic Blood Pressure $\geq 100\text{mmHg}$.
	8. Uncontrolled / unstable angina.
	9. Unstable or acute heart failure.
	10. New or uncontrolled arrhythmias.
Respiratory and Other Conditions	11. Dyspnoea/Shortness of breath at rest.
	12. Unstable COPD patients.
	13. Uncontrolled or poorly controlled asthma.
Metabolic Conditions	14. Uncontrolled or poorly controlled Diabetes.
Psychiatric Conditions	15. Acute uncontrolled psychiatric illness.
Blood Disorders and Illnesses	16. Cancer or blood disorders: when treatment or disease cause leucocytes below $0.5 \times 10^9/\text{L}$, haemoglobin below 8.0g/dl or platelets below 50×10^9 .
	17. Uncontrolled resting tachycardia $\geq 100\text{ bpm}$.
	18. Febrile illness.

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	19. Any acute severe illness.
Physical Limitations and Symptoms	20. Chronic muscle/joint bone conditions that impede ability to take part in physical activity.
	21. Other rapidly progressing terminal illness.
	22. Experiences significant drop in BP during exercise.
	23. Experiences pain, dizziness or excessive breathlessness during exertion.
	24. Any unstable, uncontrolled condition.

Appropriate guidance on this should be provided either by the patient's cardiologist or cardiac rehabilitation team.

3. Please provide details of its operation, including participating GP practices and leisure centres, how information and awareness is promoted, level of uptake, funding and future rollout plans.

Response: Overview of Healthwise scheme

The PARS (Healthwise) scheme is the 12-week local Physical Activity Referral (PARS) programme under the Regional PARS scheme which helps inactive people increase their physical activity levels.

With the contract that BCC holds for physical activity referral level 3, Greenwich Leisure Limited, Better Centres, are the delivery provider for the contract.

Participants can be referred by their GP or Healthcare professional to a local Leisure Centre or Healthy Living Centre of their choice to participate in the free 12-week programme. Following enrolment, the specialist exercise referral coaches will prescribe safe and achievable exercise with the aim of adopting an active lifestyle to help manage various medical conditions.

Participants will have unlimited access and can avail of activities such as swimming, gym, small group-based classes, walking/cycling groups and much more. The Healthwise programme is suitable for all fitness levels provided you meet the inclusion / exclusion criteria for the programme. Please note the activities offered are site dependant.

Participating GP Practices making at least one referral:

- Albertville Surgery (Z00052)
- Andersonstown Road Surgery (Z00113)
- Antrim Road Medical Centre (Z00085)
- Ardmore Medical Centre (Z00159)
- Ballygomartin Group Practice (Z00104)
- Ballyowen Health Centre (Z00092)
- Ballyowen Health Centre (Z00156)
- Ballysillan Group Practice (Z00070)
- Balmoral Surgery (Z00146)

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- Bangor Health Centre (Z00253)
- Belvoir Surgery (Z00148)
- Botanic Medical Centre (Z00166)
- Brook Street Surgery (Z00257)
- Bryson Street Surgery, City East (Z00018)
- Carryduff Surgery (Z00006)
- Castlereagh Medical Centre (Z00029)
- Cherryvalley Health Centre (Z00037)
- Cherryvalley Health Centre (Z00038)
- Church View Medical Practice (Z00105)
- Clifton Street Surgery (Z00103)
- Cliftonville Road Surgery (Z00093)
- Comber Health Centre (Z00273)
- Cregagh Surgery (Z00164)
- Crocus Street Surgery (Z00116)
- Crumlin Road Family Practice (Z00073)
- Crumlin Road Health Centre (Z00055)
- Dr McKenna'S Practice (Z00111)
- Duncairn Medical Practice (Z00060)
- Dundonald Medical Centre (Z00031)
- Dunluce Family Practice (Z00132)
- Dunluce Health Centre (Z00140)
- Dunville Health Centre (Z00064)
- Eastside Surgery (Z00030)
- Falls Road Surgery (Z00053)
- Falls Road Surgery (Z00084)
- Falls Surgery (Z00094)
- Finaghy Health Centre (Z00151)
- Gardiner Family Practice (Z00062)
- Glengormley Practice (Z00337)
- Greenway Practice (Z00003)
- Grosvenor Road Surgery (Z00075)
- Grove Medical Practice (Z00083)
- Hillhead Family Practice (Z00114)
- Hollywood Arches Health Centre (Z00001)
- Hollywood Arches Health Centre (Z00017)
- Hollywood Arches Health Centre (Z00028)
- Hollywood Road Surgery (Z00015)
- Kensington Group Practice (Z00145)
- Kerrsland Surgery (Z00014)
- Knock Medical Centre (Z00016)
- Lewis Square Practice (Z00020)
- Ligoniel Health Centre (Z00098)
- Linen Court Surgery (Z00019)
- Lisbane Medical Centre (Z00254)
- Lisburn Health Centre (Z00224)
- Lisburn Health Centre (Z00227)
- Lisburn Health Centre (Z00230)

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- Lisburn Health Centre (Z00231)
- Malvern Family Practice (Z00096)
- Mount Oriel Medical Practice (Z00136)
- Mountainview Surgery (Z00072)
- North Parade Medical Centre (Z00165)
- Northgate Family Practice (Z00074)
- Notting Hill Medical Practice (Z00440)
- Oldpark Group Practice (Z00080)
- Ormeau Park Surgery (Z00147)
- Ormeau Road Health Centre (Z00153)
- Parkside Surgery (Z00066)
- Priory Surgery (Z00252)
- Rosehall Medical Practice (Z00336)
- Saintfield Health Centre (Z00198)
- Salisbury Medical Centre (Z00086)
- Shankill Surgey (Z00068)
- Springfield Medical Centre (Z00081)
- Springfield Road Surgery (Z00079)
- Springvale Medical Practice (Z00071)
- Station Road Health Centre (Z00330)
- Templemore Medical Centre (Z00010)
- The Carrick Hill Medical Centre (Z00061)
- The Group Surgery (Z00058)
- The Hill Medical Group Practice (Z00232)
- The Maureen Sheehan Centre (Z00057)
- The Mount Group Practice (Z00024)
- The Rowan Tree Family Practice (Z00143)
- Tramways Medical Centre (Z00438)
- University Health Centre At Queens (Z00157)
- University Street Surgery (Z00154)
- Vere Foster Medical Group (Z00101)
- Whitehouse Medical Group Practice (Z00431)
- Willow Medical Practice (Z00063)
- Willowfield Surgery (Z00032)
- Woodbrooke Medical Practice (Z00222)
- Woodstock Medical Centre (Z00033)

Participating GLL Leisure Centres under the PHA/BCC contract –

- Andersonstown Leisure Centre
- Ballysillan Leisure Centre
- Belvoir Activity Centre
- Brook Leisure Centre
- Falls Leisure Centre
- Girdwood Community Hub
- Grove Wellbeing Centre
- Indoor Tennis Centre and Ozone Complex

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- Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre
- Olympia Leisure Centre
- Shankill Leisure Centre
- Templemore Baths
- Whiterock Leisure Centre

Participating other delivery sites under PHA in the Belfast area

Participating Healthy Living Centres

- Maureen Sheehan Centre

Lower Ormeau Resident's Action Group (LORAG) sites below:

- Dee Street Community Centre (LORAG)
- Shaftesbury Recreation Centre (Lorag)
- Short Strand Community Centre (Lorag)
- The Hanwood Centre (Lorag)

How information and awareness is promoted

The PHA informed BCC that a PARS level 3 newsletter was developed and sent to all practices via the GP Federation and to all referring AHP's via the AHP Leads on the commencement of the regional model in 2019. Following covid this information has been made available on the GP intranet.

At a local level in Belfast, ***awareness is promoted*** via the following website link

[Pledge 4 - Strengthen connections to and within the health sector - Making Life Better Together](#)

BCC/GLL have a site-specific leaflet for the Healthwise programme. This is available to access on the website link above, also via posters, roller banners and online and social media posts. Maureen Sheehan Centre are currently updating their site-specific leaflet, this will be uploaded to the Pledge 4 website when the final draft is received.

Physical Activity Referral Care Pathway for Belfast along with the Healthwise referrers leaflet and poster are available to view in the link.

On the commencement of the regional model in 2019 each GP practice in the Belfast area received a referrers poster for Belfast.

BCC has promoted the local Healthwise scheme via the latest edition of the City Matters magazine which is distributed to every household.

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Healthwise

January is a popular time to increase our physical activity levels.

We support a local Physical Activity Referral programme called Healthwise. The programme enables GPs and other healthcare professionals to make referrals directly to Healthy Living and Leisure Centres.

The free 12-week referral programme offers:

- Small group-based classes
- Swimming, gym, walking/cycling groups
- Support and guidance from a specialist referral coach

24 City Matters Winter 2024

Here's some feedback from some recent participants who have benefited from the programme.

00 Having been diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, I was enduring a lot of pain and mobility issues and doubted my ability to be active. Once I spoke to my coach Jim, I felt more confident he understood my limitations and needs. The programme we devised allowed me to work at my own level while providing exercises that were varied and tailored. Overall, my range of movement has improved, and most importantly, I am experiencing less pain and stiffness.

00 Thanks to the time and patience of my coach Paul, my confidence, motivation and ability to be active have increased massively. I enjoy having access to my local Better Centre as it is a space I find easy to be motivated in. I am very happy with the results and would recommend undertaking the Healthwise programme.

i If you feel you need support to get active while managing your condition, ask your GP or healthcare professional if you're eligible for a Healthwise referral.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust promote the Healthwise Level 3 Programme via the internal loop system to engage new health professional referrers to register and make referrals to the programme

Promotion is ongoing via local health fair days across the city which targets participants and increases awareness to the programme.

The PARS service specification stipulates that - Local Providers work closely with HSC physical activity specialists and key referral partners to promote sustainable partnerships and encourage uptake of the programme.

Level of Uptake

BCC/GLL Healthwise referrals breakdown from 01/04/2024 to 20/03/25.

Andersonstown Leisure Centre	444
Ballysillan Leisure Centre	167
Belvoir Activity Centre	49
Brook Activity Centre	208
Falls Leisure Centre	280
Girdwood Community Hub	208
Grove Wellbeing Centre	346
Indoor Tennis Centre And Ozone Complex	45
Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre	498
Olympia Leisure Centre	343
Shankill Leisure Centre	119
Templemore Baths	313
Whiterock Leisure Centre	129
Grand Total	3149

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Funding

Belfast City Council/GLL funding allocation received from PHA for 24/25 was £95,644 which is broken down in KPI terms of 677 Healthwise Level 3 completers at a rate of £141.27 per completer.

An enhancement of £48,031.80 was awarded due to the increased uptake in the 24/25 year.

Future role out plans – Belfast City Council will be advised by PHA regarding future funding/KPI's.

4. We have had reports of people having to wait lengthy periods following referral for an initial pre-exercise assessment in the leisure centre. Has BCC/PHA identified this as an issue and if so, what steps are you taking to address it?

Response: Waiting lists

In Qtr. 1 there was 519 on the BCC/GLL waiting list, followed by 603 clients waiting in Qtr. 2 and a steady reduction to 396 clients waiting in Qtr. 3 of 2024/25.

BCC has reported to PHA that GLL have a high number of inappropriate referrals being received which is causing a back log for the following reasons;

Clients not meeting the inclusion/exclusion criteria, lack of client contact information from the referrers, concerns from PARS coaches navigating the system and archiving old referrals (PARs online system can be temperamental and needs improved for efficiency and user friendliness of coaches) This causes delay in enrolling appropriate referrals. These issues have been highlighted with PHA Regional Leads and we are currently reviewing the Regional IT database to alleviate these issues.

Steps to Address:

PHA funds an equitable commissioning of physical activity referral schemes across N.I per head of population who are overweight/obese in line with the criteria for the programme. Belfast is allocated funding and completer targets from PHA. Belfast experienced an increased referral demand/pressure in 24/25 which has contributed to an increase in the local waiting list. BCC reported this to the PHA who provided an in-year service enhancement for an additional 340 completers to address the increased demand.

The PHA will decide the long-term plan to address the increased referral demand for Belfast

5. Please provide copies of any evaluations carried out of the programme to date.

Response: Please see the evaluations attached.

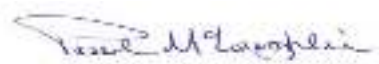
Please note if this information is to be published it should be attributed to being Belfast City Council's response to a freedom of information request.

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Email: leisure@belfastcity.gov.uk

If you are dissatisfied with how the Council handled your request for information, you have the right to request that the Council formally review this decision. If you wish to do so, please write to the Records Manager, Information Governance Unit, Legal and Civic Services, Belfast City Council, City Hall, Belfast BT1 5GS or send an email to foi@belfastcity.gov.uk.

Should you remain dissatisfied following the Council's internal review, you can seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for an independent review should be made in writing to: The Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. However, I would advise you that the Information Commissioner has indicated that a review will not be undertaken unless the Council has first had an opportunity to re-consider its decision.

Yours sincerely



Paul McLoughlin
Partnership Manager
City and Neighbourhood Services Department