

The Royal Free Neurorehabilitation Centre (NRC) MS Coffee Mornings: A Novel Approach to Supporting People with Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

The NRC offers a community and outpatient service for people living with neurological conditions in Barnet. The service support over 350 people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Supporting self management is a fundamental component of the service.

What we did

A focus group was facilitated with service users known to the community service at the NRC; service users were keen to have access to a local forum where they could access specialist advice and support.

A follow up meeting with service users helped to agree on starting a monthly coffee morning; the first coffee morning was held in February 2019.

The aim for the coffee morning was to provide a forum for learning, connecting and sharing experiences.

The coffee morning proved to be popular, facilitating people to gain the tools and skills to manage their MS better.

The coffee morning has adapted due to the pandemic and is now delivered virtually

Sponsored by local MS charities

Every coffee morning includes a guided exercise session



Coordinated by MS Nurse and Rehab Assistant

Specialist talks and taster sessions

Promoted via email, word of mouth, local MS Society 'link' newspaper



"By attending I have got to know my MS is not something I should be worried about but instead learn to live with it by making the most of the services available to me which I wasn't even aware of."



"Its is a chance to meet other people with the same condition and share our experiences."

"Since going to the coffee mornings run by the NRC at Edgware Community Hospital I have learned a lot more about my MS."

Challenges

- Appropriate space to accommodate the coffee morning when running face to face sessions.
- Information Governance when forming virtual coffee morning.
- Availability of staff.

What's next.

- Evaluate the impact of the coffee morning on reducing frequent need to access 1:1 healthcare support / intervention.
- Diversify speakers and topics covered
- Support other services looking to develop a similar provision.
- Looking to developing sessions that alternate between face to face and virtual to accommodate need.