

Randomised controlled trial with economic and process evaluations of domiciliary welfare rights advice for socioeconomically disadvantaged older people recruited via primary health care (the Do-Well study)

Catherine Haighton,¹ Suzanne Moffatt,¹
Denise Howel,¹ Mel Steer,¹ Frauke Becker,²
Andrew Bryant,¹ Sarah Lawson,¹ Elaine McColl,¹
Luke Vale,² Eugene Milne,^{3,4,5} Terry Aspray⁵
and Martin White^{1,6*}

¹Institute of Health & Society, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

²Health Economics Group, Institute of Health & Society, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

³Public Health Directorate, Newcastle City Council, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

⁴School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health, Durham University, Durham, UK

⁵Institute for Cellular Medicine, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

⁶Medical Research Council (MRC) Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

*Corresponding author martin.white@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk

Declared competing interests of authors: All authors received a grant of £28,000 from the North East Strategic Health Authority in 2012 to cover the costs of delivering the intervention, associated training and other non-research costs of this study. Elaine McColl has been a subpanel member of National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Programme Grants for Applied Research and Programme Development Grants since June 2008. She was also an editor for the NIHR Journals Library Programme Grants for Applied Research programme from July 2013 to March 2016. Luke Vale has been a panel member of the NIHR Health Technology Assessment Clinical Trials Board since 2014, a panel member for NIHR Programme Grants for Applied Research from March 2008 to June 2016, and Director of the NIHR Research Design Service for the North East of England since April 2012. Martin White is a member of the NIHR Journals Library Editorial Board. He is Programme Director of the NIHR Public Health Research programme and Editor-in-Chief of the NIHR *Public Health Research* journal (he has held both roles since October 2014).

Dedication: We dedicate this report to Emma Noble, the lead researcher on this project, who died tragically, aged 46, in the second year of the study. Emma was a registered general nurse who worked in the NHS for 14 years prior to her appointment to Newcastle University in September 2004. Emma worked as a researcher in the School of Neurology, Neurobiology and Psychiatry, and the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, before she was appointed as a Research Associate in the Institute of Health & Society. Emma worked on the Do-Well study from its inception and was central to establishing the trial. She was a highly valued member of the team. Her sudden and unexpected death was a shock, not only to her family, friends and colleagues, but also to study participants to whom she was a great source of support. She is greatly missed.

Published January 2019

DOI: 10.3310/phr07030

Plain English summary

The Do-Well study

Public Health Research 2019; Vol. 7: No. 3

DOI: 10.3310/phr07030

NIHR Journals Library www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Plain English summary

Poorer older people are more likely to need extra money and equipment to help them remain at home and cope with poor health. Welfare rights advice services can support those eligible to claim benefits, but we do not know if receiving these benefits improves health. This study evaluated advice given at home to people aged ≥ 60 years from general practices in poorer areas. The service was provided by local government or voluntary organisations in North East England. Seven hundred and fifty-five people received the service immediately or after 24 months. We measured health and well-being before the service and 12 and 24 months later.

Among the 381 people who received the service immediately, 84 were eligible for additional benefits. Those who received new benefits were in poorer health and were less physically active than those who did not. We found no evidence that the service improved health or well-being during the period of the study, but there was some indication that it resulted in access to more care. However, those who received benefits valued them and told us how they felt their health and well-being had improved. On average, the new service cost £44 per person, £17 per person more than usual care. Although we are uncertain whether this service promotes health, the social and financial gains for those who received new benefits or care are clear. Longer-term follow-up of study participants or further evaluation using different types of research may help to find out whether or not the service can improve health.

Public Health Research

ISSN 2050-4381 (Print)

ISSN 2050-439X (Online)

This journal is a member of and subscribes to the principles of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (www.publicationethics.org/).

Editorial contact: journals.library@nihr.ac.uk

The full PHR archive is freely available to view online at www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/phr. Print-on-demand copies can be purchased from the report pages of the NIHR Journals Library website: www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Criteria for inclusion in the *Public Health Research* journal

Reports are published in *Public Health Research* (PHR) if (1) they have resulted from work for the PHR programme, and (2) they are of a sufficiently high scientific quality as assessed by the reviewers and editors.

Reviews in *Public Health Research* are termed 'systematic' when the account of the search, appraisal and synthesis methods (to minimise biases and random errors) would, in theory, permit the replication of the review by others.

PHR programme

The Public Health Research (PHR) programme, part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), evaluates public health interventions, providing new knowledge on the benefits, costs, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health. The scope of the programme is multi-disciplinary and broad, covering a range of interventions that improve public health. The Public Health Research programme also complements the NIHR Health Technology Assessment programme which has a growing portfolio evaluating NHS public health interventions.

For more information about the PHR programme please visit the website: <http://www.nets.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/phr>

This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by the PHR programme as project number 09/3009/02. The contractual start date was in December 2011. The final report began editorial review in April 2016 and was accepted for publication in October 2016. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The PHR editors and production house have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors' report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the final report document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

This report presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the PHR programme or the Department of Health and Social Care. If there are verbatim quotations included in this publication the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the PHR programme or the Department of Health and Social Care.

© Queen's Printer and Controller of HMSO 2019. This work was produced by Haighton *et al.* under the terms of a commissioning contract issued by the Secretary of State for Health. This issue may be freely reproduced for the purposes of private research and study and extracts (or indeed, the full report) may be included in professional journals provided that suitable acknowledgement is made and the reproduction is not associated with any form of advertising. Applications for commercial reproduction should be addressed to: NIHR Journals Library, National Institute for Health Research, Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre, Alpha House, University of Southampton Science Park, Southampton SO16 7NS, UK.

Published by the NIHR Journals Library (www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk), produced by Prepress Projects Ltd, Perth, Scotland (www.prepress-projects.co.uk).

NIHR Journals Library Editor-in-Chief

Professor Ken Stein Chair of HTA and EME Editorial Board and Professor of Public Health, University of Exeter Medical School, UK

NIHR Journals Library Editors

Professor Ken Stein Chair of HTA and EME Editorial Board and Professor of Public Health, University of Exeter Medical School, UK

Professor Andrée Le May Chair of NIHR Journals Library Editorial Group (HS&DR, PGfAR, PHR journals)

Professor Matthias Beck Professor of Management, Cork University Business School, Department of Management and Marketing, University College Cork, Ireland

Dr Tessa Crilly Director, Crystal Blue Consulting Ltd, UK

Dr Eugenia Cronin Senior Scientific Advisor, Wessex Institute, UK

Dr Peter Davidson Consultant Advisor, Wessex Institute, University of Southampton, UK

Ms Tara Lamont Scientific Advisor, NETSCC, UK

Dr Catriona McDaid Senior Research Fellow, York Trials Unit, Department of Health Sciences, University of York, UK

Professor William McGuire Professor of Child Health, Hull York Medical School, University of York, UK

Professor Geoffrey Meads Professor of Wellbeing Research, University of Winchester, UK

Professor John Norrie Chair in Medical Statistics, University of Edinburgh, UK

Professor John Powell Consultant Clinical Adviser, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), UK

Professor James Raftery Professor of Health Technology Assessment, Wessex Institute, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton, UK

Dr Rob Riemsma Reviews Manager, Kleijnen Systematic Reviews Ltd, UK

Professor Helen Roberts Professor of Child Health Research, UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health, UK

Professor Jonathan Ross Professor of Sexual Health and HIV, University Hospital Birmingham, UK

Professor Helen Snooks Professor of Health Services Research, Institute of Life Science, College of Medicine, Swansea University, UK

Professor Jim Thornton Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Nottingham, UK

Professor Martin Underwood Warwick Clinical Trials Unit, Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick, UK

Please visit the website for a list of editors: www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/about/editors

Editorial contact: journals.library@nihr.ac.uk