



Pip Norris

Job Title: First Contact Practitioner
Advanced Clinical Practitioner
Locality: Greater Manchester Wide
Project Title: Targeted Work Absence Support

Project Aim

To tackle economic inactivity to improve health outcomes and reduce inequality. The target group was patients who are registered with Tregenna Medical Practice, in Wythenshawe, who are off sick, at risk of falling out of work, or economically inactive.

What did I do?

Using a service improvement model, we implemented three Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) strategies:

- PDSA 1. Developed a simple referral pathway to the Growth Company (GC). A social enterprise who delivers work and health programmes to support people into work and people who are struggling with employment due to a health condition
- PDSA 2. Trained GP and clinic staff at Tregenna Medical Practice on the benefits of work well input and the risks of re-issuing repeat fit notes.
- PDSA 3. Created a text response for fit-note requests and a questionnaire for patients to offer work well input and referrals to GC.
- PDSA 4. Text a questionnaire to all patients registered at the practice to offer work well input and a referral to the Growth Company. Results demonstrated sound implementation from June to November 2024, with 36 referrals made in total.

What did I learn

Work is crucial for health outcomes. Manchester's economic inactivity has worsened since the pandemic, affecting quality of life. We must rethink health management at the population level to ensure equity. Patient questionnaires revealed concerns about managing health at work and openness to access support. GP engagement was challenging, highlighting the need to disrupt entrenched systems for a proactive, effective health system.

Has this changed how you work?

I always consider health inequality as a barrier to engagement. For some communities' health care is not accessible or realistic. I hope to redesign the delivery of musculoskeletal (MSK) services. I am motivated to act now and try to do things differently. I value the importance of the patient's voice and lived experience. Community engagement is key, and we must work collaboratively with communities to improve the health inequality gap and not widen it.

What happens next?

This pilot project was used as part of the NHS GM national Work-Well partnership vanguard site to collaboratively deliver low intensity, evidence-based work and health support for the Manchester Foundation Trusts MSK waiting list. The project runs until March 2026, and we are committed to a joint partnership to do things differently.

To read more about Pip's journey, scan the QR code below

