

NEWS RELEASE

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New service toes the line!

Pilot success expanded in Pendle/Rossendale/Ribble Valley/Burnley/Hyndburn

IT might appear straight forward and undramatic – but a simple toe-nail cutting service pilot project in **East Lancashire** has made a huge difference to hundreds of people's lives – with an unexpected spin-off into the bargain.

The scheme was targeted at older people and given pump-priming cash backing by **East Lancashire Primary Care Trust**.

Within months, more than 175 people have been seen by the not-for-profit service provider CareMart in partnership with the PCT as the pilot was focused on townships and villages throughout **Pendle**.

Now, the on-going pilot has been hailed a major success and the scheme is now under way in **Burnley** and surrounding areas and is being rolled out in **Rossendale** and the **Ribble Valley**, with plans in the pipeline to introduce the scheme imminently in **Hyndburn**.

The PCT's Older People's Commissioning Manager Elaine Nixon is delighted with the scheme's success and says that in addition to the service benefits there are hidden spin-offs too.

She says: "Clients not only have regular attention and contact but they also often show a marked improvement in confidence and a general improvement in their sense of well-being.

"If they attend a group session, with their actual nail-cutting in private of course, they meet other people and interact with them. They feel less isolated and lonely.

"The foot care assistants are also trained to identify other health and social care problems or concerns and will refer on to other agencies if this is appropriate or required.

"In any case, people feel better after their toe nails have been cut. They can wear footwear more comfortably and get out and about more safely. It's an integral part of our falls prevention programme too."

Rosemary Acton, Lead of the PCT's Falls Prevention Team, said: "Toenails don't stop growing and can cause major difficulties if they are not regularly cut. The toenail-cutting service is contributing to the prevention of falls by allowing older people to wear correctly-fitted footwear and increasing their mobility. I am very pleased that the service is now up and running."

- In **Pendle**, the initial 175 people on the books are being seen at regular intervals of every five weeks. The Pendle Senior Group, representing older residents throughout the area, provided evidence of the need for the service through their own research, linking this to the PCT's fall prevention work in the area. The PCT acted and worked with CareMart to provide the pilot service, primarily in group sessions where older people gather, for example at luncheon clubs or community venues, or through home visits.
- In **Burnley**, home visits are under way both in the town and in surrounding rural areas, with the PCT and CareMart in the process of setting up community venues for group sessions.
- In **Rossendale**, the PCT and CareMart are working with Valley representatives from the Falls Steering Group to build up a potential client list and to find suitable venues for group sessions, which health professionals and interested organisations would like to see under way as soon as possible.
- In the **Ribble Valley**, the area's Older People's Forum expressed its keenness to embrace the scheme and for it made available for local residents. Work is going on to compile a potential client list and to find suitable venues and organisation's meetings to offer the service to interested groups.
- **Hyndburn** has shown initial interest and the partners are keen to roll out the programme in the near future. Efforts are being made to create a client list and start up the service with home visits and group sessions.

The aim is to provide a low-priced service for older people, with voluntary sector and community volunteers helping to identify those who need the service.