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What has Fulfilling Lives achieved

**Evaluation of
Fulfilling Lives:**
Supporting
people with
multiple needs

August 2019
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This is the fourth in a series of briefings on multiple needs, drawing on data and insight from The National Lottery Community Fund's Fulfilling Lives: Supporting people with multiple needs programme. Multiple needs are defined as experience of two or more of homelessness, substance misuse, reoffending and mental ill-health.

To show the baseline position we use data from the first three months of beneficiaries' engagement with the programme. This is the best data available to us and provides an indication of people's behaviour and needs before the programme has had time to have an impact. To show how things change we have compared this with data from approximately one year later, and where we have enough data, two years on. As a result, the statistics in this briefing are based on groups of beneficiaries of varying sizes – from approximately 500 to 3,000 people.

The results provide a unique and valuable addition to the evidence base on multiple needs. Further information, including data tables, can be found in the accompanying method notes. This briefing also links to true stories of Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries collected by partnerships for the first Multiple Disadvantage Day on July 3rd 2019. Full stories are available from www.multipledisadvantageday.org

Key messages

- Over the first four years, the Fulfilling Lives programme has engaged over 3,000 people with multiple needs. What is more, the programme has been successful in achieving its aim of working with those with the most complex needs and affected by the most severe forms of disadvantage.
- After a year on the programme people have improved self-reliance and independence and are engaging better with services. Progress is made with emotional and mental health, managing accommodation and building relationships.
- Relapses and set-backs are part of the journey towards a fulfilled life. And although roughly a third of people have dropped out, more have left for positive reasons. The programme has a lower drop-out rate than some other projects working with people with less-complex needs.
- After a year with Fulfilling Lives there is a reduction in the number of people who are homeless and the number who are rough sleeping. People are also less likely to use crisis services, such as A&E, and to be involved in the criminal justice system.
- A fulfilled life is more than just addressing basic needs such as accommodation. Over time, Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries are also increasing participation in positive social, cultural and wellbeing activities. And more people are beginning to give something back through volunteering.

What do we mean by multiple needs and why does it matter?

The Fulfilling Lives programme defines multiple needs as experience of two or more of homelessness, offending, substance misuse and mental ill-health. In 2015 it was estimated that there were at least 58,000 people in England annually who had contact with homelessness, criminal justice and substance misuse services.¹ Many also had experience of mental health problems.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential. People with experience of homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill-health and the criminal justice system also have expertise, skills and assets to offer. Yet many of their interactions with public services are negative and/or avoidable and few receive the treatment they need.

In the [first briefing in this series](#), we showed how a lack of effective support for this group results in substantial costs to the public purse, serious social and economic impacts and a tragic waste of human life. Our [second briefing](#) described the characteristics of people with multiple needs. The [third](#) explored the different patterns of progress beneficiaries make over their first year with Fulfilling Lives, what type of support appears to make the most difference and who needs extra help. In this, the final briefing in the series, we celebrate the achievements of the Fulfilling Lives programme so far in supporting people with experience of multiple and complex needs to move towards a fulfilled life.

What is the Fulfilling Lives programme?

The National Lottery Community Fund has invested £112 million over 8 years in local partnerships in 12 areas across England, helping people with experience of multiple needs access more joined-up services tailored to their needs. The programme aims to change lives, change systems and involve beneficiaries. The programme is not a preventative programme, but instead aims to better support those with entrenched needs who are not otherwise engaging with services. The programme uses coproduction to put people with lived experience in the lead and builds on their assets to end the revolving door of disjointed care for adults. The programme has a strong focus on systems change so that these new ways of working can become sustainable.

Fulfilling Lives projects take a personalised approach, working alongside mainstream services to better coordinate the support that people receive. Key features of the programme that we know make a difference to beneficiaries include:

- **Persistent and ongoing support** is essential for engaging chronically excluded people. Staff don't give up on beneficiaries or close the case if someone misses appointments.
- Complex and entrenched needs take time to address. Fulfilling Lives partnerships are **free from the time-limits** that restrict some other commissioned services.
- The long-term approach, coupled with **small case-loads** for workers, means they can **build personal relationships based on trust** with beneficiaries. This is a key ingredient in providing effective support.
- Partnerships work to provide **holistic support** and **focus on beneficiaries' priorities**, rather than working to externally set targets.

Fulfilling Lives partnerships began working with beneficiaries between May and December 2014. In this briefing we set out some of their key achievements to date.²



3,480 people with experience of multiple needs have been supported by the programme

Fulfilling Lives has...

Engaged over 3,000 people with multiple needs

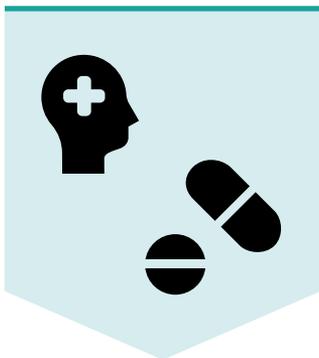
In total, 3,480 people with experience of multiple needs have been supported by the programme since its start – a substantial achievement. Fulfilling Lives partnerships work hard to engage people who may have dropped out of or been excluded from services previously. Much initial engagement is through street outreach – going where people are rather than expecting them to come to the service. Workers find a low-key approach is effective, avoiding pressuring people or asking intrusive questions.³ They get to know the person, their routine, interests and priorities. This helps to build trust. The flexible and persistent approach of Fulfilling Lives means the programme can make the most of windows of opportunity – being there when someone reaches rock-bottom and seeks help.⁴

Supported those with the most complex and entrenched needs

The programme aims to work with those with the most severe needs. It's clear that the programme has been successful in achieving this aim. 94 per cent of people supported present with at least three of the four defining needs, and over half (52 per cent) experience all four.⁵

90 per cent of Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries are affected by mental ill-health and substance misuse.⁶ This can mean people face particular challenges in getting support, as services are often set up to work on these issues in isolation. Intoxication can be an exclusion criterion for mental health services,⁷ even in crisis situations.⁸

So there are significant barriers to be overcome for Fulfilling Lives projects in supporting people to get the help they need. As we demonstrated in briefing 3 in this series, despite high levels of need, few beneficiaries are getting help with mental health when they join the programme. For example, Jessica uses substances to block out the trauma she has experienced. She has tried to seek help and has a history of accessing drug, alcohol and mental health services. But when her mental health is poor, she struggles to keep appointments and has been signed-off from some services as a result. Working with Fulfilling Lives, Jessica feels she has someone on her side. Read Jessica's story here: www.multipledisadvantageday.org/jessicas-story



90 per cent of Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries have experience of both mental ill-health and substance misuse

Additional context

We have collected data from a small number of projects supporting people with multiple needs in other, similar areas of England that are not part of the Fulfilling Lives programme – we call this the comparison group.⁹ These projects are mostly specialist housing and social-care providers and homelessness charities. They provide a range of services including supported housing, emergency accommodation, one-to-one support and education and training. These projects are not necessarily representative of the wide range of services providing support to people with multiple needs. Like Fulfilling Lives, all of the people in the comparison group have experience of at least two of the four needs, although comparison group projects may not be set up to specifically target people this group. Comparison group projects may be working with other, more disadvantaged beneficiaries but not have permission to share their data with us. Despite these limitations, the comparison group provides information that helps to put the achievements of the Fulfilling Lives programme into context.

Compared to our comparison group, Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries:

- are more likely to have at least three of the four needs – 94 per cent compared to 66 per cent of comparison group of beneficiaries¹⁰
- are more likely to have a disability or long-term health condition (other than mental ill-health)¹¹
- have lower levels of employment, are less likely to have any qualifications and more likely to have a problem with literacy¹²
- have higher levels of need and risk.¹³

Although we cannot say for sure that Fulfilling Lives is reaching people that other organisations are missing, the evidence adds weight to the claim that Fulfilling Lives is working with people affected by particularly severe forms of multiple disadvantage.

**Fulfilling Lives is
successfully engaging
those with the most
complex needs**

Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries are...

Engaging better with services, reducing risky behaviour and improving self-reliance

After approximately a year with Fulfilling Lives, **beneficiaries overall have lower levels of need and risk.**¹⁴ Areas of improvement include:

- reduction in unintentional self-harm,
- reduction in levels of housing need
- improved impulse control, and
- better engagement with services.

Those with a substance misuse need are more likely to experience improvements in their level of risk to others. Those with a history of offending are more likely to improve in impulse control. And those with experience of all four needs are more likely to show reduced levels of housing need.¹⁵

Beneficiaries also improve their levels of self-reliance and independence over the course of their first year with the programme.¹⁶ Progress is made with:

- emotional and mental health
- managing tenancies and accommodation
- substance misuse, and
- social networks and relationships.

Several true stories from Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries demonstrate how the persistent support provided by frontline staff and the ability to develop relationships based on trust are vital in encouraging them to engage with the services they need. Lisa explains how the belief others had in her ability to manage her own accommodation made all the difference. Since moving into her flat she has reduced her drinking and is making plans for studying. Read Lisa's story here: www.multipledisadvantageday.org/lisas-story



Homelessness drops from 57 to 45 per cent after a year and to 37 per cent after two years

Less likely to be homeless

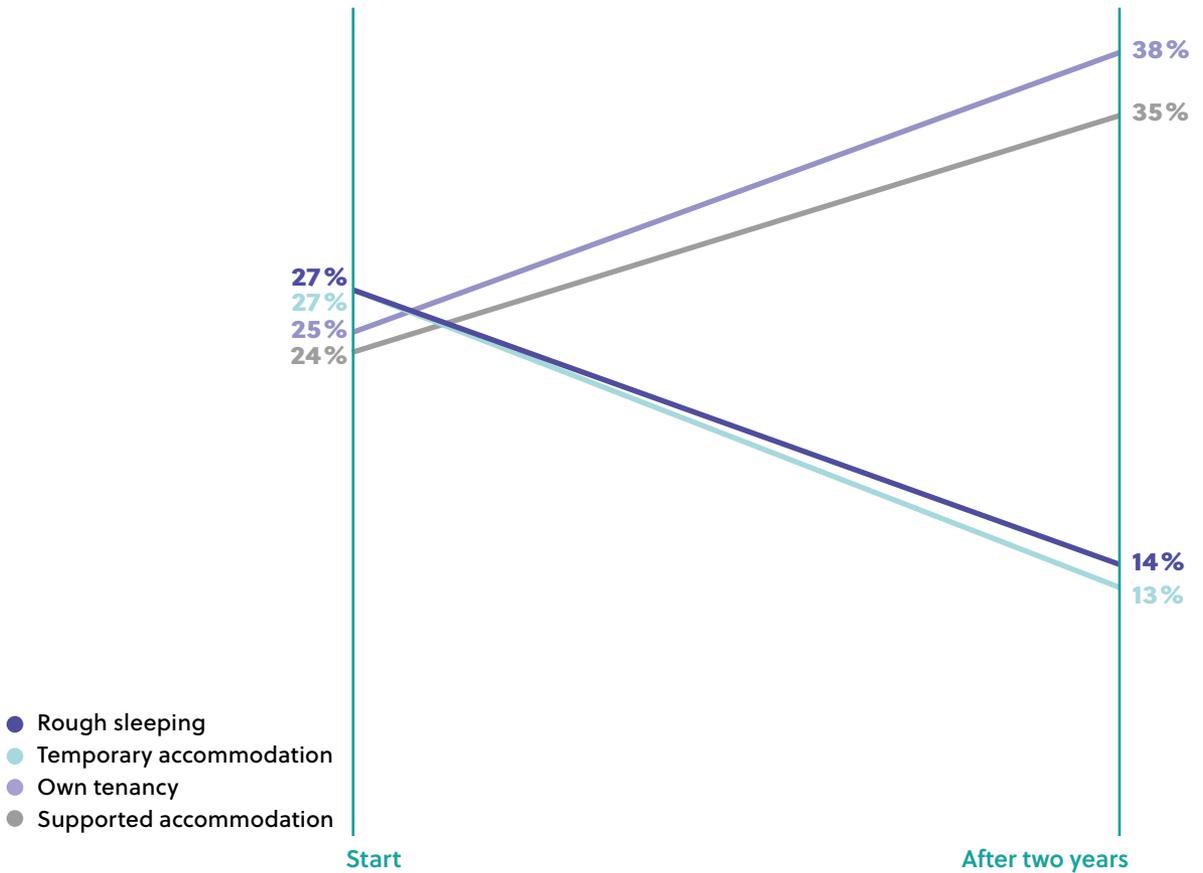
After a year with the programme there is a **reduction in the number of people who are homeless, and particularly the number of people rough sleeping.**

In their first three months with Fulfilling Lives, 57 per cent¹⁷ were homeless for at least part of that time. This drops to 45 per cent after a year with the programme and then to 37 per cent after two years.

27 per cent were spending at least some time rough sleeping during their first three months with Fulfilling Lives. After a year on the programme, this drops to 18 per cent, and after two years, drops further to 14 per cent.¹⁸ Similar reductions over the same time period are evident in the number of people in temporary accommodation such as hostels.

In line with the reduction in homelessness, there is an increase in people living in their own tenancies (private and social), rising from 25 per cent in the first three months to 32 per cent after one year and 38 per cent after two years. A similar rise is seen in the proportion spending time in supported accommodation.¹⁹

After two years, rough sleeping decreases while more people have their own tenancy



A number of partnerships have implemented a Housing First model – a person-centred and evidence-based approach.²⁰ Beneficiaries are helped to get their own tenancy and are provided with unconditional, ongoing support to help them maintain it. Some partnerships have also used personal budgets to help people pay a deposit or buy furnishings. Where Fulfilling Lives partnerships have used the Housing First approach it has resulted in a high level of tenancy sustainment. Housing First beneficiaries have also improved their physical and mental health and reduced substance misuse and other risky behaviours.²¹

A home can provide the stability people need to then work on other issues. Matthew had been homeless in Bristol for over ten years when the Bristol Fulfilling Lives partnership, Golden Key, first began working with him. Matthew had a long history of trauma, repeated involvement with the police, long-term alcohol dependency and several serious physical health conditions. In particular he struggled with high levels of anxiety and a difficulty being indoors and around other people. Fulfilling Lives worked not just to secure him a flat but also to support him to adjust to life indoors. He is now settled in the flat, getting help with his health issues and has had no contact with the criminal justice system since being housed. Read Matthew's story here: www.multipledisadvantageday.org/matthews-story

Less likely to use negative and crisis services

After a year with the programme, there is an encouraging **drop in the number of people who have interactions with negative and crisis services**. The proportion of people who were arrested at least once drops from 28 per cent to 20 per cent.²² In the first three months working with Fulfilling Lives 27 per cent of people attended A&E at least once. After a year this has gone down to 24 per cent. Perhaps more importantly, the average number of attendances per person also goes down.²³ On average, there are also fewer police cautions,²⁴ convictions,²⁵ and evictions from tenancies.²⁶

Many Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries join the programme with histories of avoidable service use. Sarah's experiences of multiple trauma, including racial and sexual abuse, contributed to difficulty engaging with services and she moved in and out of hospital, offending and street homelessness. Since working with Inspiring Change Manchester to co-produce her support, she has built a positive relationship with her worker, moved into her own tenancy and has had no involvement with the police. Read Sarah's story here: www.multipledisadvantageday.org/sarahs-story

For further information on the use of public services and the associated costs, see [briefing 1: Why we need to invest in multiple needs](#).



**37 per cent
of beneficiaries
have left with
a positive
destination**

Leaving the programme to positive destinations

More people have successfully moved on from Fulfilling Lives than have dropped out. Of those who have left the programme, over one third (37 per cent) have left with a positive destination²⁷ – either they no longer require the support of the programme or are getting support from other services.

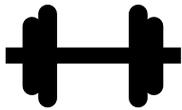
Additional context

Fulfilling Lives partnerships work hard to keep people on board and avoid closing cases. Information on our comparison group helps to put the Fulfilling Lives achievements in context. Although the comparison group members appear to have less complex needs, a greater proportion drop out compared to Fulfilling Lives – 45 per cent compared to 32 per cent. A greater proportion also left to an ‘unknown’ destination (14 per cent compared to just 2.5 per cent) – suggesting departures from projects that are not planned.²⁸

As we pointed out in briefing 3, relapses, drop-out and set-backs are part of the journey to a fulfilled life and it is important that support services recognise this. Fulfilling Lives appears to be doing well in creating the trusting, person-centred relationships that mean people are less likely to drop-out.

SJ developed drug and alcohol problems at a relatively early age and was a regular offender. He struggled to get help and seemed to be stuck in an endless cycle of spells in prison, discharge and homelessness. After joining Blackpool Fulfilling Lives he made slow progress, and had some minor relapses. However, intensive support following his latest discharge from prison has really helped and he has since represented the programme at a number of local and national events talking about his experiences. Read SJ’s story here: www.multipledisadvantageday.org/sj-story

Beginning to get involved in positive activities



Participation in sports and fitness activities increases after two years



Literacy problems drop from 31 to 26 per cent after a year

A fulfilling life is about more than the basics and there is a gradual increase in people taking part in social activities and volunteering. Evidence on multiple disadvantage shows the importance of developing positive identities, meaningful roles and the value of 'feeling normal'. Social activities and networks can be important sources of emotional support, inspiration and encouragement.²⁹ With the right help and support, and given the necessary time, beneficiaries can begin to engage in positive social, cultural and wellbeing activities. Participation in sports and fitness activities increases from just 4 per cent of beneficiaries during the first three months on the programme to 16 per cent two years later. Taking part in arts and cultural activities increases from 7 per cent to 20 per cent over the same time period.³⁰ These are important indicators of the progress beneficiaries make with Fulfilling Lives in working towards a genuinely fulfilling life, and not one characterised by crisis.

There has also been an encouraging increase in the number of people on the Fulfilling Lives programme who volunteer. This increases after a year from 2 per cent to 9 per cent, although there is no further increase after two years.³¹ Beneficiary involvement is central to Fulfilling Lives and partnerships offer a range of opportunities for beneficiaries and people with lived experience of multiple needs to contribute to the design and delivery of services. This includes acting as a peer mentor to others. Peer mentors can act as role models for recovery, help to build trust and provide a bridge between services and beneficiaries. Peer mentors also benefit from being able to develop skills and confidence as well as helping others.³²

There has also been success with addressing literacy problems of beneficiaries. 31 per cent reported problems with literacy at the start of the programme; this drops to 26 per cent after a year.³³

Trevor spent long periods of his adult life in prison after becoming heavily involved in criminal activity, compounded by substance misuse and mental ill-health. Despite looking for support, he struggled to access services due to his substance misuse. When Trevor started working with Opportunity Nottingham, he accessed therapy and support for his drug addiction and for the first time accepted and began to deal with this. He now regularly attends the gym, practices Buddhism and has been working as a volunteer peer researcher. Read Trevor's story here: www.multipledisadvantageday.org/trevors-story

Conclusions

The Fulfilling Lives programme set out to change the lives of those with the most severe needs who would not otherwise be engaging in services. Four years on, it appears the programme has been successful in this aim. Not only have partnerships worked with a substantial number of people, beneficiaries have a particularly complex set of needs and are often in a state of crisis and chaos when they join the programme. Progress is slow, and a sizeable proportion of people drop-out, but more leave with a positive destination. And, overall, those who remain with the programme continue to make progress, beginning to take part in activities that characterise a full and fulfilled life. There is much still to be done, not least in continuing to tackle the barriers beyond the programme that stop people progressing further. But the achievements so far, of the partnerships, their staff, volunteers, supporters and most importantly their beneficiaries, should be cause for celebration.

Further information about Fulfilling Lives

For more information about the Fulfilling Lives programme visit <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/strategic-investments/multiple-needs> or contact laura.furness@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

For more information on the evaluation of Fulfilling Lives, including local partnership evaluations, visit www.mcnevaluation.co.uk or contact rachel.moreton@cfef.org.uk

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1. Bramley and Fitzpatrick (2015) *Hard Edges: Mapping severe and multiple disadvantage* Lankelly Chase Foundation.
2. Based on data up to September 2018. See method notes for further information.
3. Moreton, R. Welford, J. Mulla, I. and Robinson, S. (2018) *Promising Practice: Key findings from local evaluations to date* CFE Research.
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5. n=2,850, see Table 1 in method notes.
6. See Table 2 in method notes.
7. Public Health England (2017) *Better care for people with co-occurring mental health and alcohol/drug use conditions: A guide for commissioners and service providers* London: PHE.
8. House of Commons Home Affairs Committee Report (2015) *Policing and Mental Health*. HC202. London: The Stationery Office.
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10. See Table 1 in method notes.
11. See Table 3 in method notes.
12. See Table 4, 5 and 6 in method notes.
13. As measured by the NDT assessment and Homelessness Outcomes Star. See pages 4–6 and Tables 8 and 9 in the method notes.
14. As measured by the NDT assessment, n=955, see pages 5–6 and Table 10 in method notes.
15. See Table 18 in the method notes.
16. As measured by the Homelessness Outcomes Star. n=829, see pages 4–5 and Table 11 in method notes.
17. n=488, see Table 12 in method notes.
18. n=488, see Table 13 in method notes. Results for the reduction in rough sleeping are slightly different to those reported in briefing 1 as here we are tracking change over two years and are therefore looking at a slightly different cohort of beneficiaries.
19. n=488, see Table 13 in method notes.
20. Homeless Link are leading the Housing First England project – for more information see <https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/>
21. Moreton, R., Welford, J., Mulla, I and Robinson, S. (2018) *Promising Practice: Key findings from local evaluations to date* CFE Research.
22. Arrests, n=701, see Table 14 in method notes.
23. Presentations at A&E, n=678, see Table 14 in method notes.
24. Police cautions, n=657, see Table 14 in method notes.
25. Conviction, n=653, see Table 14 in method notes.
26. Evictions from a tenancy, n=776, see Table 14 in method notes.
27. Destinations of those who have left, n=2,041, see Table 7 in method notes.
28. Comparison group beneficiaries who have left n=147, see Table 7 in method notes.

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29. Terry, L. and Cardwell, V. (no date) *Understanding the whole person: part one of a series of literature reviews on severe and multiple disadvantage* Revolving Doors Agency and Lankelly Chase Foundation.
30. See Table 15 in the method notes.
31. Volunteering over two years, n=471, see Table 16 in method notes.
32. Moreton, R., Welford, J., Mulla, I and Robinson, S. (2018) *Promising Practice: Key findings from local evaluations to date* CFE Research.
33. Literacy, n=478, see Table 17 in method notes.

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