

The Braveheart Project

Forth Valley: "Braveheart" project: Supporting older people who have had heart attacks.

The Braveheart Project is an innovative Ageing Well Health Demonstration Project which has looked at the feasibility and effect of training non-medical senior members of the local community to run mentoring groups to educate, support and empower patients aged 60 years and over with ischaemic heart disease. Over 150 participants have now benefited from this service which has been managed by a project team representing the main partners including Age Concern Scotland, Health Education Board for Scotland, Forth Valley Acute Hospitals Trust, Forth Valley NHS Board and Merck, Sharp and Dohme Ltd. New developments this year have seen the project move from its acute base to the Forth Valley South LHCC with the support of the Scottish Executive and the original partners.

In its first 3 years the Project was run as a randomised controlled trial comparing the outcomes in the participants in the mentoring groups with a similar group of patients who received standard care only. Final results are awaiting publication.

There was a very high satisfaction rating from participants. The model of support appears inclusive of all socio-economic groups and encourages healthy alliances. Mentoring complemented existing secondary prevention and health promotion strategies. The intervention seems to be practical, relatively inexpensive, safe and promotes positive lifestyle changes in older people with coronary artery disease.

Further information from the Braveheart Website

<http://www.braveheart.uk.net/>