



Emotional health & well-being

East Sussex County Council

Personalised health budgets

May 2024

Additional support for care leavers to improve health outcomes based on what young people identify as important to them.

[Find out more about the Bright Spots Programme](#)

Why? It was recognized that many care leavers had poor health outcomes. Improvements were made by using a social prescribing model funded by the NHS and managed through the leaving care service.

What did they do?

- East Sussex County Council's Through Care Service has been running its Health and Well-being Project - funded by NHS England and Sussex Health and Care - since October 2021.
- It uses a personalized care approach, including **personal health budgets** supported by the team's social workers and personal advisors, to create wraparound health and well-being plans for care experienced 16-25 year olds and provide access to a range of community groups and services that support their specific needs and interests which, ultimately, improves their mental wellbeing.
- **A personal health budget of up to £500 per young person** (aged 16-25) is available and the project supports a **mental health practitioner**, admin worker and a project managers.
- Referrals arise from discussions between leaving care workers and young people about the challenges the young person faces and their ideas of potential solutions.
- The programme has helped to identify other barriers to effectively supporting care leavers – **additional training and support to help leaving care workers** address challenging issues, developing additional capacity within partner agencies and ensuring pathway and referral routes to adult services are clearer.

What difference is it making?

Over half of East Sussex care leavers have been supported by the programme; many with gym membership and sports equipment but also help with more specific requests such as Salsa dancing, repairing bikes, playing cricket, working with horses. Young people report improvements in their sleep patterns, reducing social isolation and having an increased sense of purpose.

*By finding something he enjoys, which in turn makes him feel better, the Through Care service has helped transform a hobby into volunteering and now into a full-time job. Within the last six months he's transformed from being in his room anxious about the outside world, to working in a job he loves and feeling more confident in himself and his skills.
I'm so proud of him!
Leaving Care worker*

Watch this video about the programme:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o-x4vuxYoc>