

Thinking Active Prospectus

The county council and Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is seeking partners for facilitate the delivery of our Thinking Active project.

Vascular dementia

Vascular dementia is the second most common type of dementia (after Alzheimer's disease), affecting around 150,000 people in the UK and nearly 12,000 people in Staffordshire.

The word dementia describes a set of symptoms that can include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language. In the case of vascular dementia, these symptoms occur when the brain is damaged because of problems with the supply of blood to the brain. Conditions that affect the heart, arteries or blood circulation all significantly affect a person's chances of developing dementia. These conditions include diabetes, mid-life high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol levels, mid-life obesity, heart problems (such as a heart attack or irregular heart rhythms) and stroke.

Research shows that during middle age, regular participation in physical, mental, social and leisure activities is associated with a potential 47% reduction in dementia; however 60% of people are not active enough to obtain these preventive benefits. In 2014, BMC Psychiatry published a paper which demonstrated that multimodal activity intervention (physical activity alongside cognitive and social stimulation) could be effective in reducing the risk of developing dementia, slow the onset of vascular dementia and increase independence amongst patients.

Thinking Active

Staffordshire County Council has used this research to design a programme aimed to reduce the risk of our residents developing vascular dementia. Thinking Active will use this evidence to provide a programme of physical activity which integrates cognitive and social elements. Delivered by community partners Thinking Active will take sessions in to the heart of communities, delivering blocks of activity in local hubs. The scheme will help target those at risk of developing vascular dementia, helping them build a support network locally and boost their confidence in local surroundings.

Becoming a delivery partner

Staffordshire County Council is seeking five organisations to help us deliver Thinking Active sessions. We are looking for existing community organisations that have good reach in their local community and a track record of delivering safe and engaging activities.

Initially we are looking for partners to deliver a twelve week block of sessions (with a minimum of one session per week). Each session will include elements of social, cognitive and physical activity. The county council will provide session guidelines regarding intensity, duration and type of activity; however you will be encouraged to design sessions based on your facilities and your experience of local demand. Examples of a Thinking Active session might include a table tennis session with a novel scoring system followed by tea and coffees or it might bolt on to an existing activity such as a memory clinic, or art class followed by a guided walk around a local estate – all sessions should be led by appropriately qualified volunteers.

The county council will support delivers in recruiting participants, by facilitating a link with local GPs, practitioners will be able refer patients who are displaying risk factors. We are also keen to allow self-referral, which will enable people who are concerned about developing dementia. SCC will deliver a central campaign which will support both avenues.

What Staffordshire County Council will provide?

- Dedicated Staffordshire County Council support officer
- £1200 implement funding to cover operational costs
- Thinking Active session guidelines
- Digital marketing campaign
- Facilitate links with local GPs
- Volunteer training and support
- Evaluation materials

What we expect delivers to provide?

- Deliver a minimum 12 weekly, Thinking Active sessions (with suitable qualified session leads)
- Targeting a minimum 20 participants per session
- Provide suitable venue (with capacity for a minimum of 20 attendees)
- Deliver local recruitment campaign for sessions
- Risk assessment and insurance
- Sustainability plan
- Facilitate monitoring and evaluation (this will include measurement of blood pressure, resting heart rate and weight of all participants). Training and support will be provided
- Signpost to further dementia services

How to apply:

Please complete the attached application form and return to communications@staffordshire.gov.uk by **26th February**

If you have any further questions about Thinking Active please contact Ben Hollands on bhollands@staffordbc.gov.uk or 07812 351083 (please note, due to annual leave Ben will be unavailable between 5th -19th Feb).