**Patient Information leaflet for The Connection Works Project**

*Healing through Connection*

The Trauma program is a 12-month project jointly run by BHWC, Trinity Medical Centre and Charter Medical Centre, funded by the local PCN.

This project offers an innovative holistic approach to healing people who may have experienced significant stressors, difficult life events and/ or significant psychological trauma.

People joining this program may also experience different physical symptoms that are under-recognized and not managed well.

**Why this project?**

Evidence shows that a holistic approach works but there are very few opportunities for this being offered in one place, under the NHS.

We want to contribute to researching and understanding this area and how engaging in a co-creative healing process produces positive results.  Our intention is to help create change in this field that will support, inspire, and encourage others to work in this way in the future.

**What?**

The year-long holistic program is a co-created journey that aims at enabling people to become active participants and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing.  Participants will be able to access a combination of individual and group work. The offers will include a combination of lifestyle medicine, yoga and nature walks, body work such as massage or acupuncture and creative arts such as singing or narrative writing and storytelling. There is also an opportunity to experience Equine Assisted Learning.

**How?**

Once you have decided to join the program and agree to fully commit to the full 12 months, you will need to let us know by sending an email to:  bhccg.connectionworks@nhs.net

A member of the team will then contact you and arrange an initial meeting.

**What next?**

Prior to the initial meeting, you will be sent several intake forms, these can be filled out prior to, or during the meeting. We will need to carefully assess if this program is suitable and helpful for you.

If you are successful and accepted on the program, you will be invited to participate in our 4 x 1.5-hour weekly education program; looking at how stress impacts the body and looking at lifestyle interventions to help manage this. We will explore how body work such as yoga, acupuncture and creative therapies promote healing and processing of stress. You will be an active participant in all the sessions, be they the education program or group work (e.g., yoga, nature walks, creative therapies) and you will be journeying through the program with the same small group of participants; thus, being able to support each other through the year. Together we will co-create your individual program, enabling you to be an architect of your healing journey.

**Cost:**

The cost of the sessions is covered by the Connection Works, but you will be responsible for travel to and from any of the sessions.

* These sessions would take place in various locations around Brighton and Hove, including Stanmer Park, Saddlescomb Farm, The Downs and Brighton & Hove Wellbeing Centre.

**Be Part of Research to Change Future Practice:**

We want this project to contribute to the very limited research on managing Psychological Trauma, the impact of stress on the body and healing.

We will be following up participants throughout the 12-month project as well as for 12 months after the project has been completed. We will do this by looking at physical symptoms and self-compassion scores, as well as NHS data with regards to attendance to GP/A&E attendances and hospital specialist appointments.

By participating in this project, you will be helping to change future practice!