

**Area Committee Well-being Fund – Project Proposal**

<b>Project Name: Sloppy Slippers</b>
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**Project Summary (including a brief description of what your project is and the main activities and why this project is needed):**

Sloppy Slippers or a slipper exchange is a falls prevention initiative for older people. The basic idea of a slipper exchange is to provide a pair of new, properly fitting slippers to older people. The new pair has to be exchanged for an old pair to ensure that old worn out slippers are no longer being used, therefore reducing the risk of falling in the home from wearing “sloppy slippers”.

Provision of the free slippers provides the opportunity to engage with older people on a one to one basis, using a checklist, devised by the Leeds Community Podiatry Service. This consists of a series of questions to ascertain important information about foot health, other health conditions, balance and mobility and home circumstances. This helps to check the suitability of the new slippers and assess the risk of falling, highlighting if the individual would benefit from referral to other services to reduce the risk of falling in the home, eg home safety checks and adaptations.

Agencies related to accident prevention and health can be on hand to facilitate referrals around a variety of needs, such as Care Ring and Telecare (Alarm Call Systems), Fuel Savers, Podiatry Services, Fire Service, Care and Repair and GP services.

Need for the project - Falls in older people are of concern. Due to low bone density falls can lead to hip fracture, lengthy hospitalization and associated complications. Falls are a major factor in premature admission to permanent residential care, with hip fracture leading to permanent reduction in mobility with the associated costs to social care and the NHS. Nearly a fifth of older people who break their hips die and of those that survive, less than one third regain their same level of mobility and independence, which can lead to social isolation and depression. Current trends in hip fractures and an aging population means that costs are expected to escalate. However, there is evidence that Falls Prevention Initiatives reduce the incidence of falls by 15% (lowest estimate) to 30%.

**Project Delivery - How the project will be delivered (inc how any partners are involved in the project, timescale etc):**

Partners involved in the project are

- Holbeck Elderly Aid
- Leeds City Council Health Improvement Team
- Leeds City Council Environmental Action Team (South Area)
- Leeds Community Podiatry Services
- Care and Repair
- West Yorkshire Community Fire Service
- Care Ring and Telecare
- Leeds City Council Fuel Savers Team
- Lions Club Message in a Bottle
- Leeds Credit Union

The project will be delivered in 5 Sheltered Housing Venues in Holbeck and at St Matthew's Lunch Club in Holbeck. Staff and Volunteers from Holbeck Elderly Aid will be provided with a free education session from Leeds Community Podiatry Services to give them the skills to fit the slippers and to recognise when referrals are appropriate. Staff from Leeds City Council Health Improvement Team are also trained slipper fitters and will be involved in the delivery of the project. An awareness pack consisting of information from the remaining partners in the above list will be provided to each older person, along with their new slippers. The Podiatry Services Checklist acts as a screening tool to assess the risk of falling and provides an opportunity for one to one discussion with the older person to ascertain whether any referrals are necessary and can be facilitated. Representatives of the partner organisations will also be invited to attend, to support this process.

**Please demonstrate how your project links with key priorities/action with Area Delivery Plans:**

Improvement Priority: Increase the number of vulnerable people helped to live at home. This project helps vulnerable people to access services and information to help them live at home, with a variety of elements. The free slippers provide a way to engage people and aims to reduce the risk of falling in the home. The process of fitting the slippers provides an opportunity to get to establish an individual older person's needs and match them up with appropriate services.

**Outcomes (a summary the main outcome, outputs and benefits the project will achieve):**

Outcome: Vulnerable people are able to stay in their own homes longer – reducing the risk of falls and subsequent reliance on health and social care and improving access to services to reduce inequalities in health. This project promotes independence, safety and support. This project aims to reach 80 to 100 older people who will all be screened for their risk of falling. The project gives the older people an opportunity to discuss a variety of needs around their health and home safety in relation to falls prevention, home safety, finances, GP and podiatry services, fuel poverty and gain referral to an appropriate agency to support their needs.

**Project Cost (an indication of how much the project will cost, how much Well-being funding is sought and the breakdown between capital and revenue):**

Revenue only, £800 to purchase the slippers

Refreshments for consultations: 5 events x £25 = £125.00

Transportation costs to venues 5 event @ £28 per event = £140.00

Volunteers costs @ £5 per day per vol. 3 x 5 events = £75.00

**Which geographic areas will benefit (ie particular neighbourhoods, wards etc) and which Area Committee this project is relevant to:**

The Holbeck Area will benefit, which is relevant to the Inner South Area Committee

**Other key information not covered by the above:**

Evaluation of this initiative which has been delivered previously in other areas of the city has shown that 85% of participants reported a continuing benefit from the initiative at a 6 month follow up. This was through continued wearing of the slippers or having benefited from health advice or through successful referrals to agencies, eg having received minor adaptations to the home and the fitting of smoke alarms.

Training by the Podiatry Service of Holbeck Elderly Aid staff and volunteers in the use of the screening tool and checklist for fitting slippers means that Holbeck Elderly Aid will be able to continue this initiative in the future. The initiative can be adapted to suit a variety of circumstances, from a large health fair type of event to an individual home visit. To support the sustainability of the Initiative Leeds City Council Health Improvement Team have developed a Toolkit for locally based organisations to use to deliver the Sloppy Slippers Initiative.