

West Belfast Primary Care Multidisciplinary Team Service

A Partnership between West Belfast GP Federation and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

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www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/primary-care-multi-disciplinary-teams-mdts



Introduction

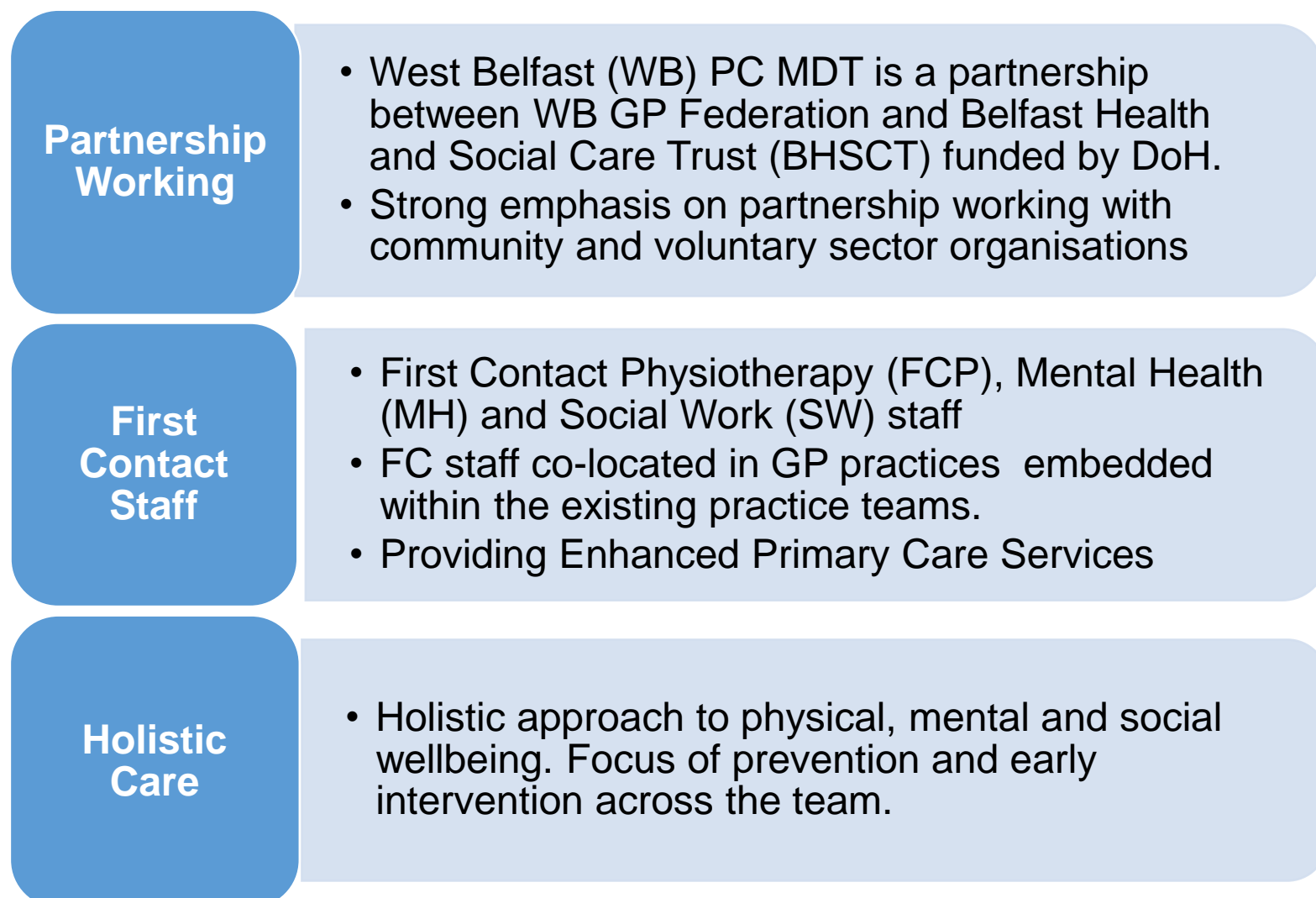
Current pressures across the healthcare system in Northern Ireland (NI) are unprecedented. Within Primary Care, demands upon our General Medical Services (GMS) are pushing GP Practices to breaking point. With increasing practice contract handbacks there has been a 10% decrease in the number of GP practices in NI in the past 10 years.

The regional development of new Primary Care Multidisciplinary Teams (PC MDTs) is a central element of 'Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together' for Department of Health (DoH) in NI. It has been identified as a key factor to stabilising and strengthening Primary Care Services.

The PC MDT Programme has been established to transform the planning and delivery of Primary care services by:

- Better meeting existing demand for primary care services;
- Providing a platform for service reform –supporting the shift of care into primary and community settings; and
- Boosting capability and capacity for early intervention, prevention and focus on wellbeing.

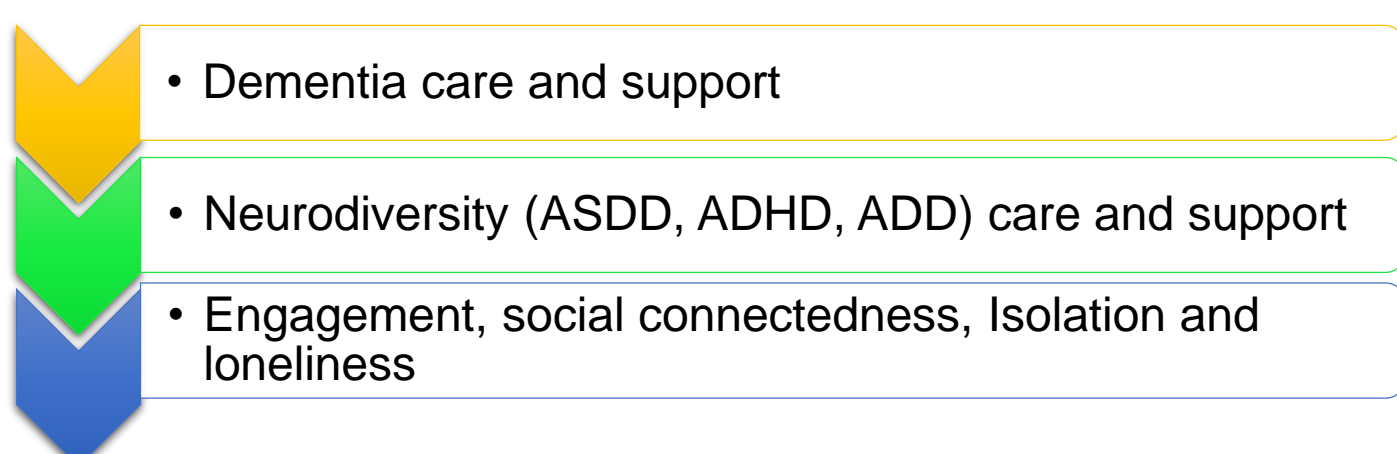
Background – West Belfast Primary Care MDT



Seed funding community Development Projects

In addition to staff funding, the DoH NI provides WB PC MDT with annual Seed funding for the purpose of building capacity in the local community and/or enhancing services provided by the Community & Voluntary(C&V) Sector. The Primary Care Social Work service oversees the allocation of this funding on behalf of the WB GP Federation working together with PC MDT professional colleagues and local community organisations

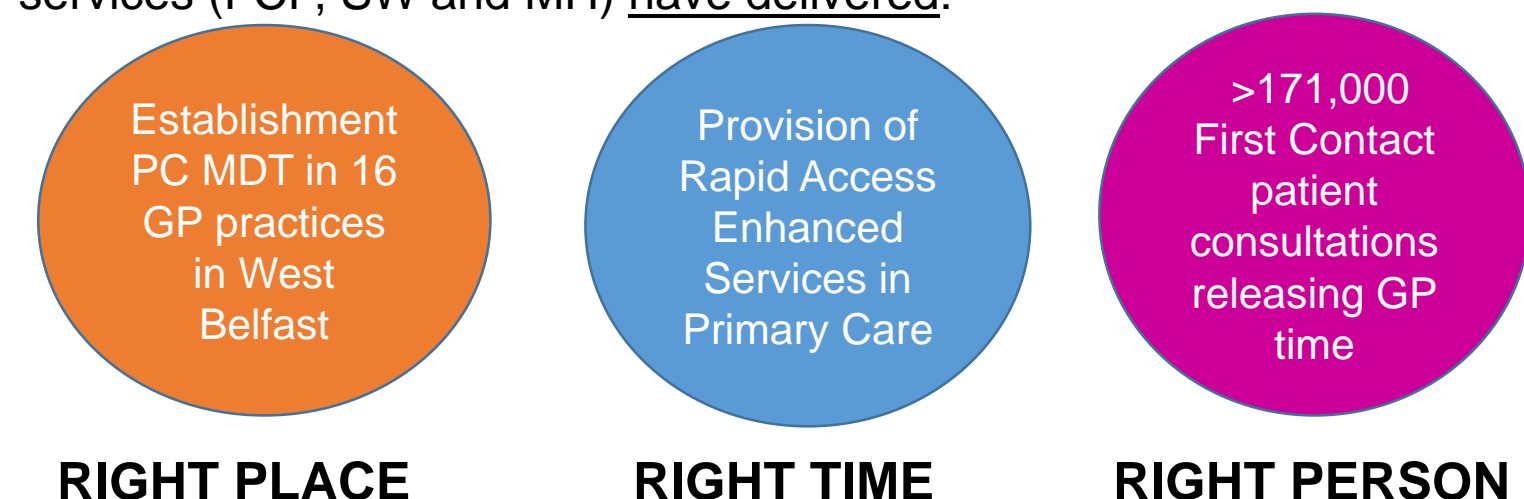
All Seed money projects are designed in partnership between the Primary Care MDT, C&V organisations and Service Users. All projects are planned with an outcomes based approach to ensure optimum delivery of project objectives. Projects address unmet local need in the local community. Current projects include the following key themes:



Results & Impact

Service Delivery in GP practices

Since implementation in 2019/20-2024/25, WB PC MDT First Contact services (FCP, SW and MH) have delivered:



Results & Impact Cont'd

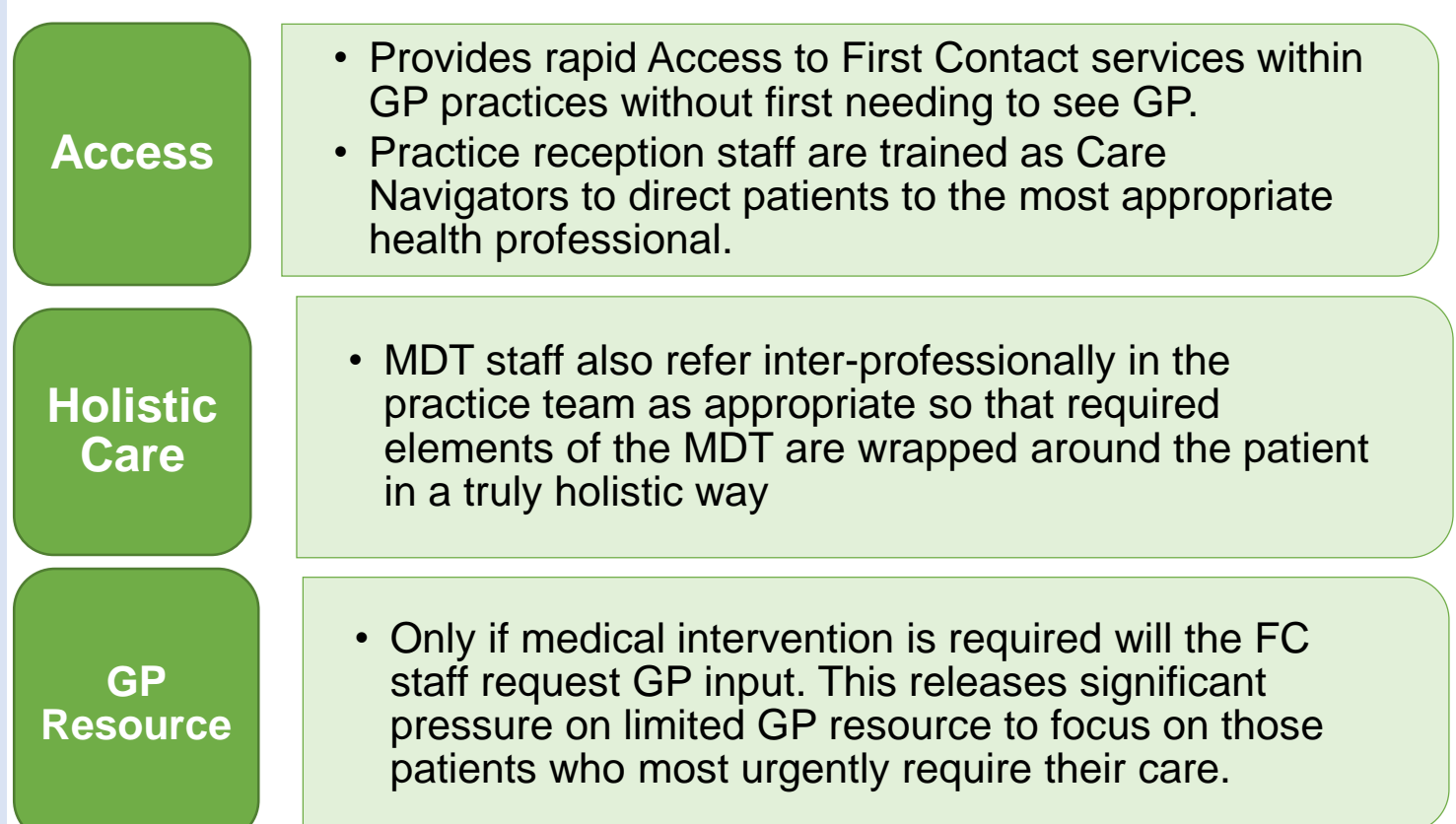
Seed Money Community Development Projects 2020-2025

Since service commencement (April 2020-August 2025), WB GP Federation has delivered:



Contracts have been delivered collaboratively with all five WB PC MDT professions, the 16 GP Practices, schools, C&V organisations within West Belfast and BHSCT

Service Delivery outcomes



The majority of patient referrals are being addressed within Primary Care without the need for onward referral to Secondary Care services.

2024/25 West Belfast PCMDT average % of Referrals requiring onward referral to Secondary Care

First Contact Primary Care MDT Profession	% managed in primary care	% Onward referral to Secondary Care
Physiotherapy	78.9	21.1
Social Work	85.9	14.1
Mental Health	88	9

Patient/Service user and GP Feedback

DoH NI completed a PC MDT regional 10,000 voices patient experience survey and a regional GP Feedback survey. A summary of findings and patient quotes is shown below.

- 831** responses patients, relatives and carers
- **97%** reported experience of services as positive or strongly positive
- **81%** were satisfied or very satisfied with time to access an appointment
- **86%** satisfied or very satisfied with time spent at appointment
- **81%** satisfied or very satisfied with their progress and number of appointments offered

GP Feedback -



303 survey responses received from across all 17 GP Federation areas in NI

- **89%** of responses from current MDT practice GPs Strongly Agreed/Agreed that MDTs have improved quality of care
- **94%** GPs Strongly Agreed/Agreed that MDTs improved patient access
- **80%** GPs Strongly Agreed/Agreed that MDTs uncovered unmet need

Conclusion Summary: Impact of Primary Care MDT in West Belfast

The West Belfast Primary Care Multidisciplinary Team has significantly strengthened local healthcare delivery by embedding First Contact Practitioners within GP practices, enabling rapid access to holistic care and reducing reliance on secondary services. Since its implementation, over 171,000 consultations have been delivered, releasing vital GP capacity and improving patient outcomes. Community development projects funded through Seed Money have further enhanced service reach by addressing unmet needs in partnership with local organisations. High levels of patient and GP satisfaction—97% and 94% respectively—underscore the model's success in improving access, quality, and responsiveness. The Primary Care MDT approach represents a sustainable, collaborative solution to the growing pressures in primary care.