Made for More

HEALING FOR THE HEART
Transforming Lives

Background

Due to the **correlation between mental health and addiction** it was decided to run a psychoeducational personal development course within the Northwest women's group (Wings) to support women with mental health and addiction issues. **Dual diagnosis, which involves coexisting substance abuse disorders and mental health disorders, affects a large population of people in the UK** (Otasowie, 2021). In this regard, one of the most general psychological consequences of the disease includes the worsening of symptoms and the degree of their manifestations. Moreover, individuals suffering from dual diagnosis appear to have severe forms of both mental health and substance use disorders, which aggravate their general condition (Wamel et al. 2021). The two disorders are closely related, so the symptoms overlap, increasing severity and making it hard for healthcare professionals to treat the condition as they are bundled up.

Another psychological effect of dual diagnosis is noncompliance with treatment and poor response to the care received (Chetty et al., 2023). There is a high chance that patients with dual disorders have a hard time adhering to their treatment regime since symptoms of both disorders may be similar, and the side effects of the drugs used are similar. This can lead to a non-adherence cycle that involves skipping appointments, not taking the medications or disengaging from the necessary therapeutic interventions and worsening the disease.

Made for More

Made for More **helps people start their journey towards positive change** by setting personal and learning goals. The programme offers tailored, individualised support to make sure that participants get exactly what they need. These are the objectives of this personal development programme:

- Learn how to work as part of a team and find your voice.
- Discover what you were made for and take the steps to get there.
- Work and learn together in a supportive, therapeutic environment.

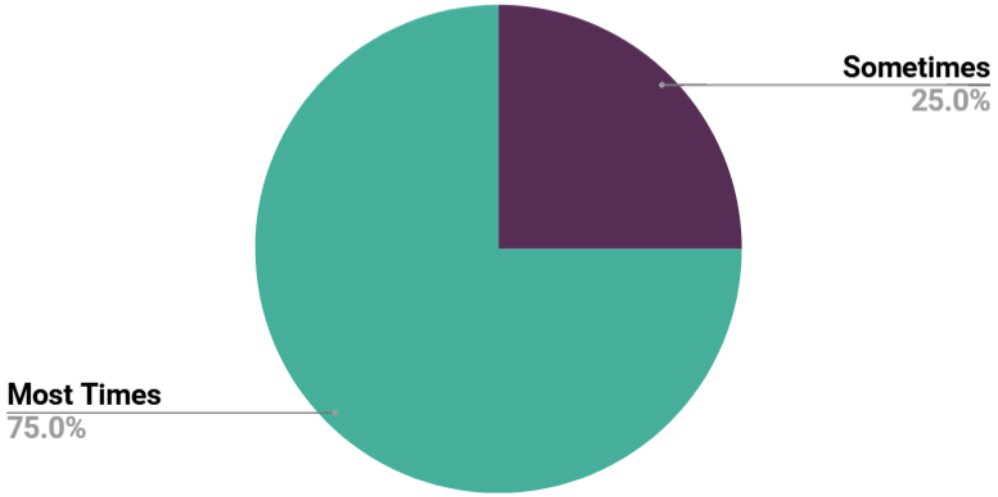
"It has made me more aware of what I can do as a person and that I am worth something"

Impact

An 8 week programme was developed and delivered to increase participants resilience, confidence, self-worth and self-esteem. Topics like **physical health, boundaries, identity, purpose, stress management, self-care, and personal development** was covered. Based on previous feedback from groups and partnerships, **we believe it is essential to empower people in communities by increasing their literacy about emotional, mental and physical wellbeing and equip them with healthy coping tools to look after themselves and others.** The group was positively received and below are some of the key findings from qualitative and quantitative data gathered pre and post the programme.

'I know healthy coping strategies for when I feel overwhelmed'

Participants' answer after participating in Made for More

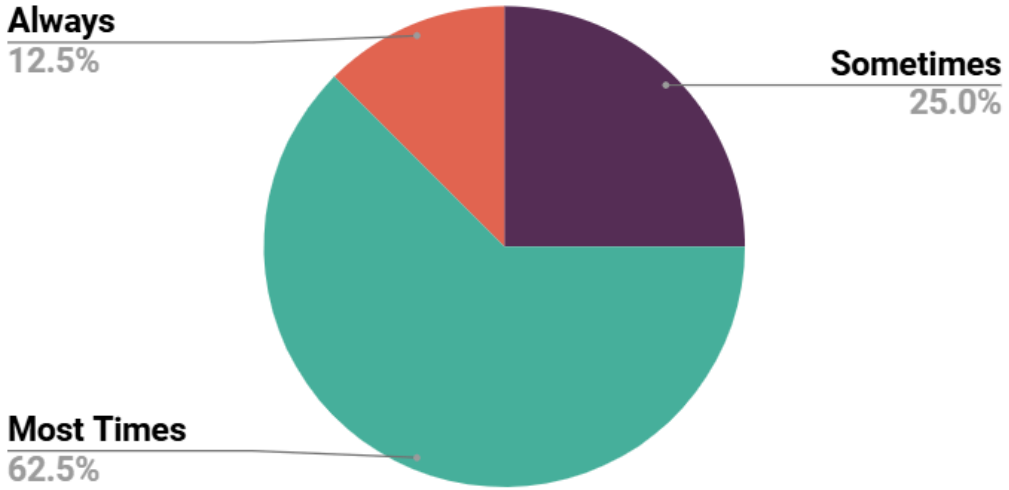


After participating in M4M, 75 percent of participant felt that they know how healthy coping strategies for when they feel overwhelmed *Most Times*. This is a significant improvement compared to people's answer prior to participation where over 65 percent said that they only *Sometimes* or *Rarely* know healthy coping strategies.

Another important finding was that a significant portion of the group felt more positive about their future after taking part in M4M. More specifically, out of the group over 80 percent of participants had increased the amount they 'felt positive about the future' when their answers were compared to their answers prior to participation. Below you can see that overall 75 percent always or *Most Times* feels positive about their future!

'I feel positive about my future'

Participants' answer after participating in Made for More

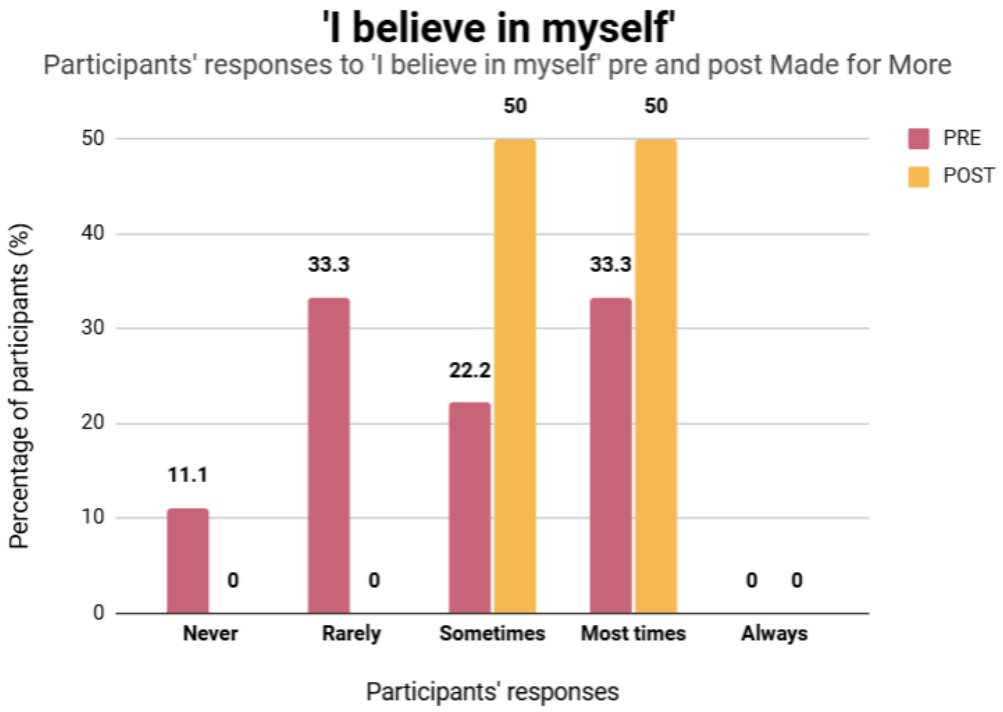


"Healing for the hearts group helps me to understand my mental health issues and fills my day with positivity."

"A safe space to talk where people understand my journey and all the things I have been through with guilt and shame, I don't feel judgement for decisions that I made due to addiction and trauma."

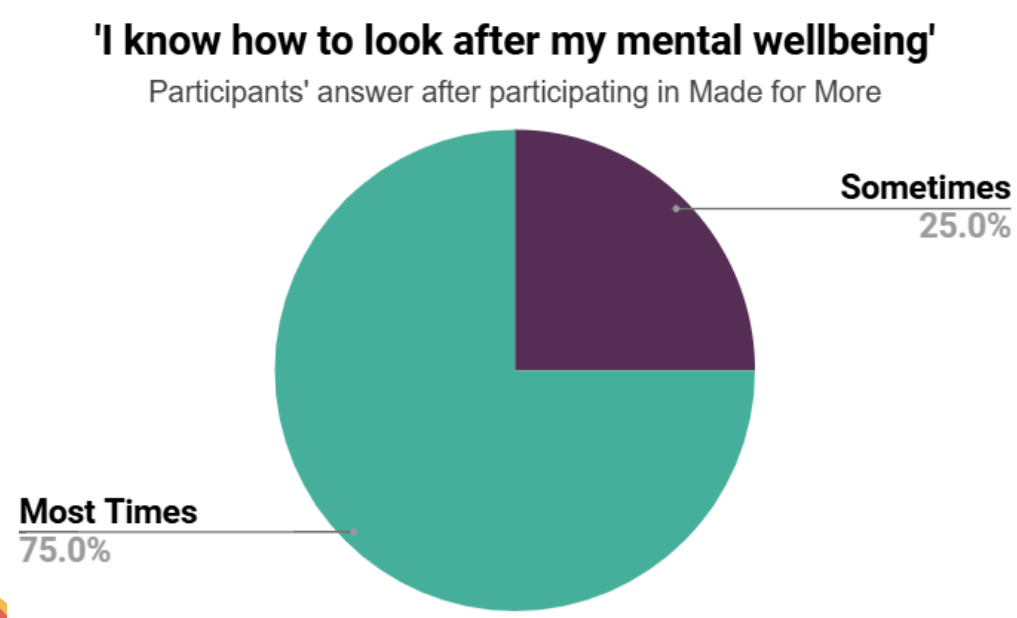
"It gave me the confidence to now have a job and believe i can achieve anything"

Another important finding was that people's self-worth and confidence increased throughout the programme. The figure below show the comparison of participants' amount of self-belief pre and post M4M. Out of the group, **over 80 percent of participants had increased the amount they 'believed in themselves'** after taking part in the M4M group. Over 40 percent said that they *Never* or *Rarely* believe in themselves pre participation. However, no one said Never or Rarely post participation and instead said Sometimes or Most times.



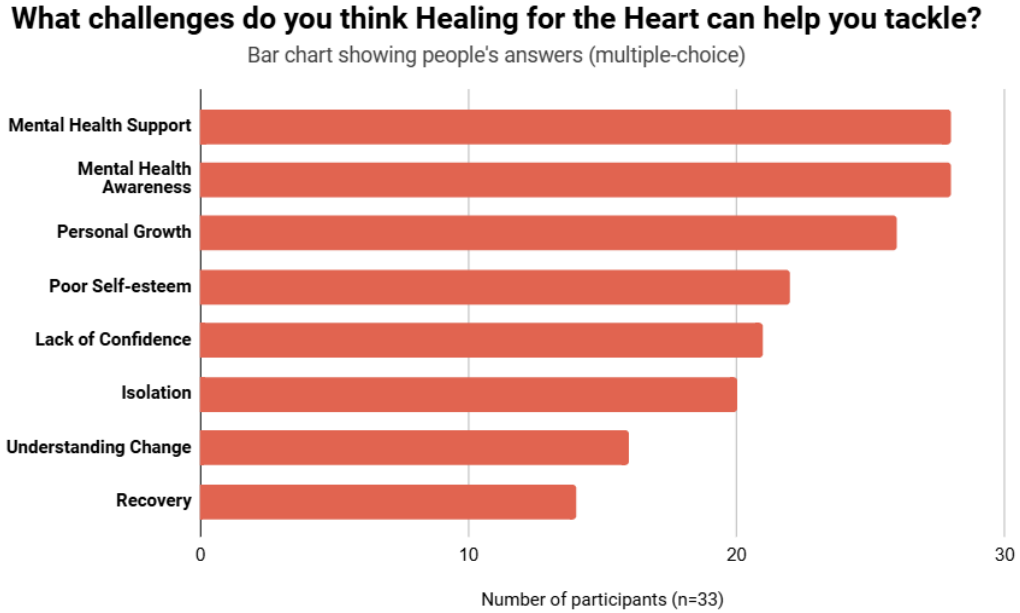
"It has made a massive difference to my mental health and social skills and gave me more confidence"

The main aim of the programme was to increase people's awareness about mental health and provide mental health support because we believe that people's mental health plays an instrumental role in their recovery and personal development. 75 percent knew how to look after their mental wellbeing after taking part in M4M. People bravely shared the barriers they face accessing mental health support from other services and said that Healing for the Heart and Donna provides an essential service. More specifically, participants said that it was really helpful to learn strategies to regulate their nervous system and tools to identify and manage their emotions is a healthier way.



"I feel this group is helping me with my confidence and helping me learn new skills to improve my well being. I am a person not just an addict."

Lastly, we wanted to show a figure highlighting all the challenges in communities that people think Healing for the Heart can support them tackle.



We greatly value people's feedback and continuously look at ways to improve our programmes to best address the needs of different communities. Mental health support and awareness, personal growth, self-esteem, confidence, isolation, understanding change and recovery were they key challenges that people would like future help with.

We have summarised the key findings of the benefits people think they can get out of participating in a programme facilitated by Healing for the Heart on the next page.

"Helped build my resilience"

Summary of Benefits of Made for More

- People mentioned better communication skills.
- People mentioned that they learned tools to regulate and manage their emotions.
- The programme increased people's confidence.
- People appreciated being signposted to other services/programmes.
- M4M helped their recovery journey.
- People mentioned that M4M gave them an opportunity to connect to others, laugh and think more positively.

Scottish Priorities

We want to empower people and communities by aligning our initiatives with national policies. We are closely following the development of:

- The Scottish Medical Assisted Treatment Standards. Most specifically we are focusing on Standard 6 - Psychological Support, Standard 9 - Mental Health, and Standard 10 - Trauma Informed Care.
- Scotland's Mental Health Strategy (2017-2027)
- The National Performance Framework. Most specifically the indicators of Loneliness, Perception of Local Area, and Community Ownership

We continuously reflect and evaluate how our charity can work people and organisations to achieve the Scottish priorities in creating happier, healthier and more resilient communities

Future Goals

Healing for the Heart wants to work with adults, parents, children and communities to support their mental health. **We aim to enhance people's self-worth, foster compassion and strengthen community bonds through learning.** Donna originally developed Made for More - Personal Development Programme to support people on their recovery journey and has since developed the programme to work with different clientele to deliver tailored, person-centred support to individuals and groups. Donna leads the community development activities and continuously focus on identifying and developing groups for suicide, alcohol, and drug deaths. She **loves organising community events that brings people together** and she continues to look for partnerships to deliver Made for More in communities across Glasgow.

Conclusion

Women often find it difficult to seek support due to stigma around addiction and mental health. Women have reported to have internalised stigma, guilt and fear around parenting and possible social work involvement. The access to mental health support in addiction services is very limited with long waiting lists. The ROSC model is helpful within the Northwest recovery due to their willingness to partner with other organisations. The approach to support should be dynamic in delivery.

Furthermore, individuals felt there was a lack of support for women or a lack of knowledge of support primarily around mental health. Ongoing partnerships with mental health providers are beneficial. **The above graphs and quotes indicate that psychoeducational groups are important and that they help increase people's self-belief, confidence, recovery, and overall mental and emotional wellbeing.**

"This group helps me with my confidence and to interact with people, it gives me structure to my day and helps me to learn more about my emotions and feelings I have to deal with on a daily basis, It teaches me about triggers and more healthier coping mechanisms."