

# How Community Links improved risk assessments for their clients

## Organisation overview

Community Links is an award-winning non-profit provider of mental health and wellbeing services in Yorkshire and the Humber. They offer support for people with a wide range of mental health issues including anxiety and depression, psychosis, alcohol and substance misuse, complex needs and personality disorder.

In 2018 they became part of Inspire North who is the parent organisation to a number of charities providing award-winning and accredited mental health and housing services across the north of England.

## Background

Before adopting the FACE Risk toolset, Community Links used a variety of paper-based forms and tools to assess risk. Although the information was collected accurately, it wasn't always easy to share it between services or efficient to complete.

The team identified that this could be solved by fully embedding the toolset across their organisation and digitising it within their case management system. By doing so, staff would no longer have to learn various tools, could become more joined-up when assessing risk and be able to share client information between services digitally.

## Adopting the FACE Risk Toolset

They selected the FACE Risk Toolset as it was considered to be a well-established tool that every professional understood and was aware of.

The licence also enabled them to digitise the toolset in order to help them move away from paper-based forms. To do this, they reproduced it within their Case Management System. This has provided them with the ability to update and share the documents when required digitally.

The team has found that having a risk assessment tool that every team uses had some significant benefits. They have increased the ability to work more holistically and collaboratively with statutory services and their clients. It's also boosted the confidence with the team when carrying out assessments knowing that they are using an evidence-based, up-to-date tool that's used across the country.



Organisation  
Community Links

Products  
FACE Risk Toolset

“The FACE Risk Toolset is a living document and is one of the most used tools within our residential services.”

Katie Morton  
Service Manager  
Community Links

## Supporting the referral process

The toolset has been liked with improving aspects of the referral process. For each referral, the team requests the latest copy of FACE risk profile form. By doing this, they quickly gain a complete overview of a client's current risk, historical risk and their formulation. It also gives them insight into what is working well for the client and what their goals are. Having all of the information in one place has helped the team speed up the referral times.

## Improving the client experience

The team has found that clients no longer have to have repeated conversations if they go between services as all historical and current risk is in one place and fully joined up. They're also not having to fill in unnecessary forms as the existing risk assessment can simply be updated with the historical data automatically retained for future reviews. Their process to keep the assessments updated mean that risk is always well mitigated and allows for crisis and support plans to be put in place effectively to help prevent further incidences.

The flexibility within the tools allows for plans to be quickly changed if things have not worked well for that person. The team also aims to have the client fully involved in their own assessments. This has always been found to have a positive response as it helps the client understand what is being done to keep them safe and supported. They also find that the assessments are a great way to show clients their risk history and how they have developed over time.

“The FACE Risk Toolset is a living document and is one of the most used tools within our residential services. Everything falls within the FACE Risk Toolset, and all of our support plans or support needs either feed into it or come off it. Our staff really like this aspect of the tool as it makes it functional and efficient to use for them and their clients.

Katie Morton  
Service Manager  
Community Links

## The results

- Improved communication across the organisation and the statutory services that they work with.
- Reduced paper-work means that the team can focus more on the client's needs and support.
- Increased team confidence knowing that they're using a well-established and proven risk assessment tool.
- Reduced referral times as they're able to quickly gain an overview of a client's risk and formulation.
- Improved client experience as they do not have to have repeated conversations if they go between services.
- Able to manage and mitigate risk more effectively by updating and referring back to the Risk Profile regularly.

## Next steps

Now that Community Links is part of a family of charities at Inspire North, the goal is to ensure that they all move towards a consistent method of risk assessment that will further improve communication across the charities and the statutory services that they work with.

To support this, the FACE licence is being extended for use by Foundation, who is a charity providing innovative and professional services for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

For more information, go to:

[www.imosphere.com/adult-risk-assessment](http://www.imosphere.com/adult-risk-assessment)