

# 47 meditation centres for heartsink patients for half the drugs budget saving £7.50 for every £1 invested

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## 1. Summary – 3,000 mindfulness courses for 30,000 depressed patients on vouchers

I have written this proposal for Dr Tom Scanlon (director of public health) hoping that he will include it in the Wellbeing Strategy for the city, to be presented to the next meeting of the Brighton and Hove Health and Wellbeing Board on 29.7.14.

I have been campaigning for GPs to be able to prescribe NICE-recommended Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) 10 week meditation courses as easily as Prozac for the 30,000 depressed patients in the city, for which they have the statutory right under the NHS constitution. This would require the commissioning of 3,000 courses pa, assuming 10 patients per course, costing £23 mpa, which is half the prescribing budget, and about 3% of the council's budget.

Many of these patients are known as 'heartsinks' because the doctor's heart sinks when he sees them because he knows there is nothing he can do for them. All they can be given is drugs which get them further addicted, and perpetuates their habitual merry-go-round use of primary care, A&E, social services, housing, unemployment, criminal justice etc, costing the taxpayer on average an estimated £10,000 each pa, which is largely wasted because nobody gets better from it.

This paper proposes to increase the social capital in the city by diverting half the prescribing budget (£55mpa) to finance specialist meditation centres near surgeries, to which GPs could refer their heartsink patients by prescription voucher for meditation courses. Each of the 47 surgeries in the city should commission and provide about 60 MBCT courses pa for 600 heartsink patients, most of which should be provided at these new meditation centres.

These new meditation centres would be set up to effectively address **all** the social determinants of the wellbeing of heartsink patients, namely housing, education, self care, employment, social care, and health. The MBCT and other courses there would give them a safe space and **structure** to learn how to look after themselves, and replace their dysfunctional habits with functional ones.

GPs at each surgery would prescribe on average 60 courses pa for 600 patients pa, costing £475,000 pa, or £800 per patient treated for up to 90 hours (£9 per hour).

We estimate that this £23 mpa invested would save £172 mpa (£7.50 saved per £1 invested) in avoiding un-necessary patient contacts, hospital admissions, and attendance in public housing, employment, benefit, and criminal justice systems. This would pay back the investment in 7 weeks, and accrue a total saving to the taxpayer of £1,720m over 10 years.

It would also increase the social capital in the city, rejuvenate derelict shops, and create 750 full time jobs, and volunteering opportunities for nearly 4,000 of our citizens. By 2020 the public health statistics could be halved and 20% less cost to the taxpayer, as described in previous papers.

You are invited to view by arrangement SECTCo's model meditation centre at 3, Boundary Rd Hove BN3 4EH (near the corner of Kingsway). It is about 400 yards from Portslade Health Centre, which we hope will refer patients to it, and typifies what each of the 47 GP surgeries in the city should have.

## 2 The merry-go-round of heartsink patients

Heart sink patients get their name because the doctor's heart sinks when they see them coming in. They are frequent (sometimes weekly for years) attenders of primary care (GP surgeries and Accident and Emergency, A&E) but the doctor knows that there is nothing that they can do for them, as they have simply become addicted to attending primary care. They cannot be turned away, and they waste much time and temper. They are the cause of the crisis in primary care as they gridlock the system, as described in previous papers (see section 9 of [www.reginaldkapp.org](http://www.reginaldkapp.org))

They are usually also addicted to drugs (both recreational and prescription) are unemployed, and may be homeless, so resort to stealing to survive, so are also frequent attenders (and time wasters) at unemployed centres, benefit centres, drug and alcohol clinics, rehabilitation clinics, and the criminal justice system. Some of them cost the taxpayer scores of thousands of pounds annually, which expenditure does not cure them, but keeps them in their dysfunctional habits, perpetuating unsustainable levels of public expenditure.

This paper proposes that half the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) prescribing budget (£55mpa) be spent more constructively via the newly pooled budgets of health, social care housing and education (nearly £1 bn pa) under the new Health and Wellbeing Board. It would provide GPs with the ability to prescribe vouchers for mindfulness courses (and other meditations) for heartsink patients, which they could cash in specially constructed meditation centres, (ideally renovating derelict shops) and staffed mainly by former heartsink patients who have healed themselves.

## 3 Model - SECTCo's meditation centre at 3, Boundary Rd Hove BN3 4EH.

For over a decade I have been running regular drop in meditation courses for all comers (mainly heartsink patients) for donations at 86, Church Rd, and 3, Boundary Rd, Hove. (shown in photos below) I have run 13 MBCT 10 week courses for about 150 people, the last 8 of which were in the above shop. This has a group room of 23'X11', totalling about 350 square feet, and is sufficient for a class of up to 15 people, plus a back room as an office/store room and toilet, total 500 square foot net. Over the last 18 months I ran 4 MBCT course on Tuesdays and 4 on Thursdays (facilitators course) as optional enhanced sandwich courses, according to the following daily schedule:

Session reference	Time	Meditation with offered tariff price weekly for 10 successive weeks	
A	0800-0900	Dynamic	£100
B	0930-1200	MBCT	£400
C	1200-1300	Kundalini	£100
D	1400-1700	Family constellation	£400
Total	0800-1700		£1,000

The whole 9 hour day for 10 weeks (90 hours total) is designed to provide a healing package of meditation practices which are accessible to everyone, with no known contra-indications, on an optional drop in basis. Session A empties the emotional garbage can, and makes space for the reception of the content of the MBCT course (B) Session C digests the content. Session D heals the family patterns that tend to come up. (Details of how these meditations work are shown in other papers on [www.sectco.org.uk](http://www.sectco.org.uk), section 9 of [www.reginaldkapp.org](http://www.reginaldkapp.org).)

SECTCo put in a bid to the Community Mental Health Prospectus (July 2012) to provide 200 MBCT courses pa at the above tariff rates, for up to 3,000 patients pa. However, this is only 10% of the potential demand in the city, so we have developed the following specification for a model meditation centre, based on 3, Boundary Rd, which could be copied in other parts of the city.

This would increase the social capital by regenerating deprived areas, reusing derelict buildings, and bringing back community life. They are inspired by what I have read about GP surgeries in community health centres at Bromley-le-Bow, East London, Marylebone church crypt, and Michael Dixon's surgery at Cullumpton, Devon.

These provide employment, both paid and voluntary, for service users as part of their therapy, and some staff housing and hostel accommodation. Before the welfare state came in 1948, these services used to be provided by monasteries, convents, churches, charities, etc. There is still a public expectation that the state should provide them, as a worthy use for public money.



**FIGURE 1 NUMBERS 4,3,2,1 BOUNDARY RD – NO 3 HAS A GREEN SIGN BOARD**

**4 Facilities required at a model meditation centre (based on 3, Boundary Rd, annual rent £7,500pa, capital value £150,000)**

**a) Essential minimum (provided at 3, Boundary Rd shop)**

- 1 Group room of 350-500 square feet
- 1 Office / store room 150-300 square feet
- 1 Toilet.



**b) Desirable extras (which could be provided at 2, Boundary Rd, which is derelict, and for which SECTCo is trying to get a lease)**

2 group rooms, and toilet, for other courses, and complementary therapies.

10-20 Residential rooms for staff, ideally above the group room, or within short walking distance. (eg 1, Wellington Rd, Portslade which is 11 flats up for sale with Oakley Commercial, 688882, asking £450,000, or Greenways 353, Kingsway Hove which is a former B&B with 6 double rooms asking £700,000, through Mishon McKay, .

1 Kitchen for provision of food and drink for participants

1 café for participants and passers by to purchase food and drink.

1 or more gardens for cultivation of growing plants and natural resource.

**5 How many enhanced sandwich MBCT courses could be provided annually per centre?**

SECTCo would like to fully utilise the space we have at 3, Boundary Rd, by contracting to provide enhanced sandwich MBCT courses to the above schedule (9hour days) every day of the week.

This would mean running a Monday course, a Tuesday course, a Wednesday course, a Thursday.



**FIGURE 2 INTERIOR OF 3, BOUNDARY RD**

course, a Friday course, a Saturday course, and a Sunday course. Each course would run for 10 weeks, so 5 of these courses could be run back to back annually, totalling 35 courses annually.

Assuming that these were provided for an average of 10 patients per course, the total patients treated would be 350 pa. Each patient would be on enhanced sandwich vouchers @ £1,000 per patient, which would cost the CCG **£350,000 pa**.

Ideally the centre would also provide an extra kundalini meditation daily on weekdays for working patients from 530-630pm, and an evening MBCT course from 7-930pm. This would provide an extra 25 MBCT courses, for an extra 250 patients pa @ £500 per patient per course, total **£125,000pa**.

The total cost to the CCG of running **60 MBCT courses pa for 600 patients pa** would be £475,000, or £800 per patient treated. This cost would be taken out of the prescribing budget of each average surgery, (about £1.2 mpa, leaving £750,000 pa for drugs) to the detriment of the profits of Glaxo Smith Klein, Astro Zenica, and other pharmaceutical companies.

## 5 To whom would this £475,000pa go?

### a) Staff costs

SECTCo's policy is to have a facilitator and an assistant facilitator for every MBCT course, to give adequate support to participants. SECTCo's budget tariff prices (see papers on above websites) are based on paying our MBCT facilitators £50 per hour of teaching time, and assistant facilitators £30 per hour of teaching time, totalling 25 hours per course, or £1,250 per facilitator per course, and £750 per assistant per course, total £2,000 per course. Facilitation of 60 courses pa would therefore cost £120,000 pa.

We reckon that each of our facilitators could provide 4 MBCT courses per week, (25 teaching hours per week) repeated 5 times pa, hence totalling 20 courses pa. Facilitators would thus get £25,000 pa, and assistant facilitators would get £15,000 pa. To provide 60 MBCT courses pa, we would therefore need to employ 3 facilitators and 3 assistant facilitators, to whom we would pay a total of £120,000 (£2,000 per course)

We estimate that these 6 teaching staff would need to be backed up by 3 full time administrators doing the paperwork, each paid £15,000 pa, total £45,000 pa, and 3 meditation leaders to facilitate the sandwich meditations, @ £20,000pa total £60,000.

A manager @ £40,000pa and an assistant manager @ £30,000 would need to be employed, totalling £70,000pa. the staffing costs are summarised in table 1 below:

**1 TABLE 1 ESTIMATED ANNUAL STAFFING COSTS OF MEDITATION CENTRE**

Full time equivalents	Number employed	£000pa	Total £000pa
MBCT facilitators	3	25	75
Assistant facilitators	3	15	45
Administrators	3	15	45
Meditation leaders	3	20	60
Manager	1	40	40
Assistant manager	1	30	30
Café manager	1	30	30
Contingency			25
Total staff	15		350

### **b) Directors fees**

SECTCo is run by a board of up to 15 directors, who we believe should be paid £20 per hour spent on SECTCo business. We estimate that on average each director will work for 2 hours per week, 100 hours pa, for which they will receive £2,000 pa. Total directors fees are therefore estimated at £30,000pa.

### **c) Premises**

The rent for 3 Boundary Rd is £7,500pa, and 2 Boundary Rd is assumed the same, total £15,000ap. Services for electricity, water, sewage, telephone, and business rates are estimated at £10,000pa.

### **d) Housing costs.**

As mentioned above. We would like to provide residential accommodation for say 10 of our staff, for which we will need to employ a housing manager @£30,000 pa, who will need a budget for janitorial supplies of say £10,000pa. These non-staff costs are summarised in table 2 below:

**TABLE 2 ESTIMATED ANNUAL NON-STAFF COSTS OF MEDITATION CENTRE**

Non staff cost		£000 pa	Total cost pa £000
Directors fees	15	2	30
Premises			40
Housing manager	1	30	30
Contingency			25
Sub total			125
Staff costs from above			350
Grand total			475

## **6 What would the social value outcome of spending £475,000 pa on MBCT courses at this meditation centre?**

### **a) Saving up to 45 patient contacts pa to Portslade Health Centre, Church Rd Portslade.**

Every surgery has patients with medically unexplained symptoms (MUS) who attend frequently (say once per week) so are known as 'heart sinks, as the GP's heart sinks when they come in, as he knows there is nothing he can do for them, but they have just acquired the habit of attending. If they cannot get appointments with the surgery, they go to A&E. They overload the primary care system counterproductively because they prevent other patients the care they need, and waste the time of GPs and other staff.

This proposal could give them meditation courses which could give them self help techniques, and teach them how to look after themselves, thereby relieving the overload.

Under this proposal, GPs from Portslade Health Centre could refer 600 heartsink to SECTCo's meditation centre at 3, Boundary Rd, (about a quarter of a mile away) for £475,000pa, by giving them vouchers worth £800 per patient treated. This is cheaper and more effective than Prozac, as meditation has no side effects or adverse drug reactions. They would be told to attend the 10 week course, and not to come back during that time. If they previously came once per week, this would save the surgery at least 9 patient contacts in each 10 weeks, or 45 patient contacts pa, per heartsink patient. If 1 in 3 of the 600 (200) did this, the total saving would be 45X200=9,000 patient contacts pa.

Assuming that the average cost per patient contact is £50 if nothing is prescribed, the saving of 9,000 patient contacts pa @£50 per patient contact= £450,000pa, which is £1 return pa on each £1 invested in MBCT courses, paying the investment back in 1 year.

**b) Saving hospital admissions**

Adverse drug reactions hospitalise over 1 m patients pa in England. If the average cost is £3,000 per admission, and by treating the 600 patients with MBCT courses, we save each patient 1 admission pa, the saving to the surgery would be £3,000X600=£1,800,000 pa, which is £4 per £1 invested in MBCT, paying the investment back in 3 months.

**c) To the police and housing office.**

Heartsink patients feel rejected by society. They may be veterans, unemployed, dysfunctional, homeless, so try to get council housing, (for which there is a waiting list of 20,000) so live on the streets. They get mugged and robbed, and may have to steal to live, so they tend to take up a lot of time with the housing office, police and and criminal justice system.

This proposal would give them a voucher for regular meditations in a community meditation centre where they can go and meet friendly people who accept them for 10 weeks, thereby giving them a structure and anchor in their lives. They could repeat the courses, and become facilitators and directors themselves. (This is how SECTCo is staffed and directed) It could also lead to the possibility of rehabilitation by getting voluntary work, paid work, and residential accommodation.

SECTCo has befriended and treated many homeless people, and helped them to get housed. If the cost to the police and housing authorities is £2,000pa per heartsink patient, treating 600 of them would save £1,200,000pa, which is £2.5 pa per £1 invested by the CCG on MBCT courses, paying the investment back in 5 months.

The total saving to the taxpayer in treating 600 heartsink patients pa with MBCT courses is summarised in table 3 below:

**TABLE 3 ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVINGS ON £475,000 PA INVESTED IN COMMISSIONING MEDITATION CENTRES**

Paragraph above	Number saved per heartsink patient pa	Total saving on 600 heartsink patient pa	Return per £1 invested
a)Saved patient contacts pa	45 pa	9,000X£50=£450,000	£1pa
b)Hospital admissions	1 admission @ £3,000 pa	£3,000X600=£1,800,000	£4pa
c)Housing and criminal justice	£2,000pa	£2,000X600=£1,200,000	£2.5pa
Total saving pa		£3,450,000pa	£7.5pa
Total saved over 10 years		£34,500,000	£75

## 7 Scaling up city-wide

As mentioned, 3, Boundary Rd Hove is a model meditation centre serving Portslade Health Centre, Church Rd, and West Hove. Similar meditation centres would be needed for each of the 47 surgeries in the city. Table 4 below assumes that every GP surgery had a similar meditation associated with it, to which it referred 600 heartsink patients annually, and shows the costs and benefits:

**TABLE 4 ESTIMATED ANNUAL COSTS AND BENEFITS OF COMMISSIONING 50 SIMILAR MEDITATION CENTRES THROUGHOUT BRIGHTON AND HOVE**

Item	Per meditation centre	Total for 50 meditation centres
Full time equivalent staff employed	15	750
Directors	15	750
Unpaid volunteers	75	3,750
Staff costs	£350,000	£17,500,000
Non-staff costs	£125,000	£6,250,000
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>£475,000</b>	<b>£23,750,000</b>
<b>Total investment</b>	<b>£475,000</b>	<b>£23,750,000</b>
Number of MBCT courses pa	60	3,000
Number of heartsink patients treated pa	600	30,000
Cost per patient treated with MBCT(90hrs)	£800	£800
Value of patient contacts avoided	£450,000	£22,500,000
Value of hospital admissions avoided	£1,800,000	£90,000,000
Value of contacts with other authorities avoided	£1,200,000	£60,000,000
Total value of contacts avoided	£3,450,000	£172,500,000

## 8 Conclusion

We have proposed above that the council invests up to £23 mpa (about half the CCG's prescribing budget, and 3% of the council's budget) in about 50 meditation centres each near one of the 47 GP surgeries. They could then provide an effective treatment for 30,000 depressed patients (many of whom are heartsinks) by prescribing NICE-recommended MBCT courses for them.

We estimate that the outcome would be the saving of £172 mpa, or £7.50 saved per £1 invested. Put another way, we believe that that the £23 m invested would be saved every 7 weeks in the value of contacts avoided with primary care, hospital admissions and housing, employment, benefits, and the criminal justice system.

This proposal would also increase the social capital in the city, rejuvenate 50 derelict shops, and create 750 full time jobs, and volunteering opportunities for 4,000 citizens. By 2020 the public health statistics could be halved and 20% less cost to the taxpayer, as described in previous papers.

I therefore hope that this proposal will be included in the Wellbeing Strategy. I would be pleased to engage about this, and to show you round 3, Boundary Rd, Hove (near Kingsway coast road) by arrangement.

8 pages, 3,000words