

Tuesday 21st February 2023

New Wellbeing Hub created at Akerman Health Centre allowing community groups to support health and well-being of south London residents

- **Range of groups already using the space, with new sessions starting this month**
- **Early analysis shows the new community hub is already delivering huge social value**

A new Wellbeing Hub has been created at Akerman Health Centre in South London, offering free bookable space for a range of local community groups to use in their work to improve health and wellbeing in hard-to-reach communities. A series of regular sessions are now available for Lambeth residents to attend.

The Akerman Health Centre in Patmos Road, Camberwell opened in 2012 and has grown to become a vital part of the local community, with the 4-storey building offering GP surgeries, dentistry, children's services, midwifery and other community services all under one roof in a purpose-built building. To ensure the building continues to serve the changing needs of the local area, in 2021 a 'Community Needs Analysis' was commissioned by Fulcrum Infrastructure Group – a leading healthcare investor who helped to deliver Akerman Health Centre with Community Health Partnerships (CHP) under the NHS LIFT Programme.

Fulcrum's analysis recommended that space in the building should be provided to organisations focussed on combatting deprivation and improving health and wellbeing in hard-to-reach communities. As a result, Fulcrum, CHP and other partners supported work to reconfigure the Akerman's ground floor space, creating 5 bookable rooms to be made available free of charge to community groups.

The newly created space became the Akerman Wellbeing Hub and is already now being used by several community organisations, offering a range of important services to local residents including:

- **ClearCommunityWeb** – a south London-based social enterprise focussed on helping people feel more confident and comfortable with technology, providing classes, workshops and individual support for older people, vulnerable adults, carers and families. A new series of weekly sessions at Akerman start from **Friday 24th February from 10am-12pm** - for further details visit www.clearcommunityweb.co.uk/lambeth
- **The Well Centre** - a young persons' clinic run by Herne Hill Group Practice, where a team of youth workers, mental health nurses and well-being practitioners provide young people aged 13-21 with support across all physical, mental, and sexual health needs. For further details visit www.thewellcentre.org
- **Carers Hub** - an independent charity who offer a safe space for young carers (age 12-16) to socialise and make new friends, and to experience benefits such as decreased feelings of loneliness and isolation, and increased promotion of their wellbeing and mental health. For further details visit www.carershub.org.uk
- **LEAP Multilingual Café** - LEAP (Lambeth Early Action Partnership) is a multi-agency partnership, running a wide range of free events for young children and families. At Akerman, the LEAP Multilingual Café was introduced to support young families with English as a second language, many of whom experience social isolation due to language barriers. For further details visit www.leaplambeth.org.uk

For the initial few months, the Akerman Wellbeing Hub has been run at partial capacity, but early research has shown it is already delivering clear benefits, with analysis showing that for every £1 invested in the facility, over £19 in social value has been created. Building on this, Fulcrum, CHP and other partners are now focussed on bringing the Wellbeing Hub up to full capacity this year to allow even more local organisations to use the space.

Fulcrum CEO Sarah Beaumont-Smith said: *“The Akerman Wellbeing Hub shows how much can be achieved by taking a thriving health centre and opening it up to an even wider range of local organisations, allowing residents to access some vital new services and activities in the heart of the community. To see the new Wellbeing hub already being used by a range of community groups is hugely encouraging, and our focus is now on opening the space up further so that even more local organisations can join us in supporting the health and well-being of local residents.”*

CHP Regional Director Philippa Robinson said: *“This Wellbeing Hub is an initiative which works well across other buildings in the CHP portfolio. We are very pleased with the support Fulcrum are providing for the local community which enables them to share a community space for a much wider use.’*

“Building on this, I can see that additional integration of services for the community by voluntary organisations can only benefit local people as they see that the building is viewed as ‘theirs’. It was always the original design intention that the building became core to the community and not just for Monday to Friday healthcare and CHP wholeheartedly supports this idea.”

- Ends -