

Increasing self-referral to low intensity therapies

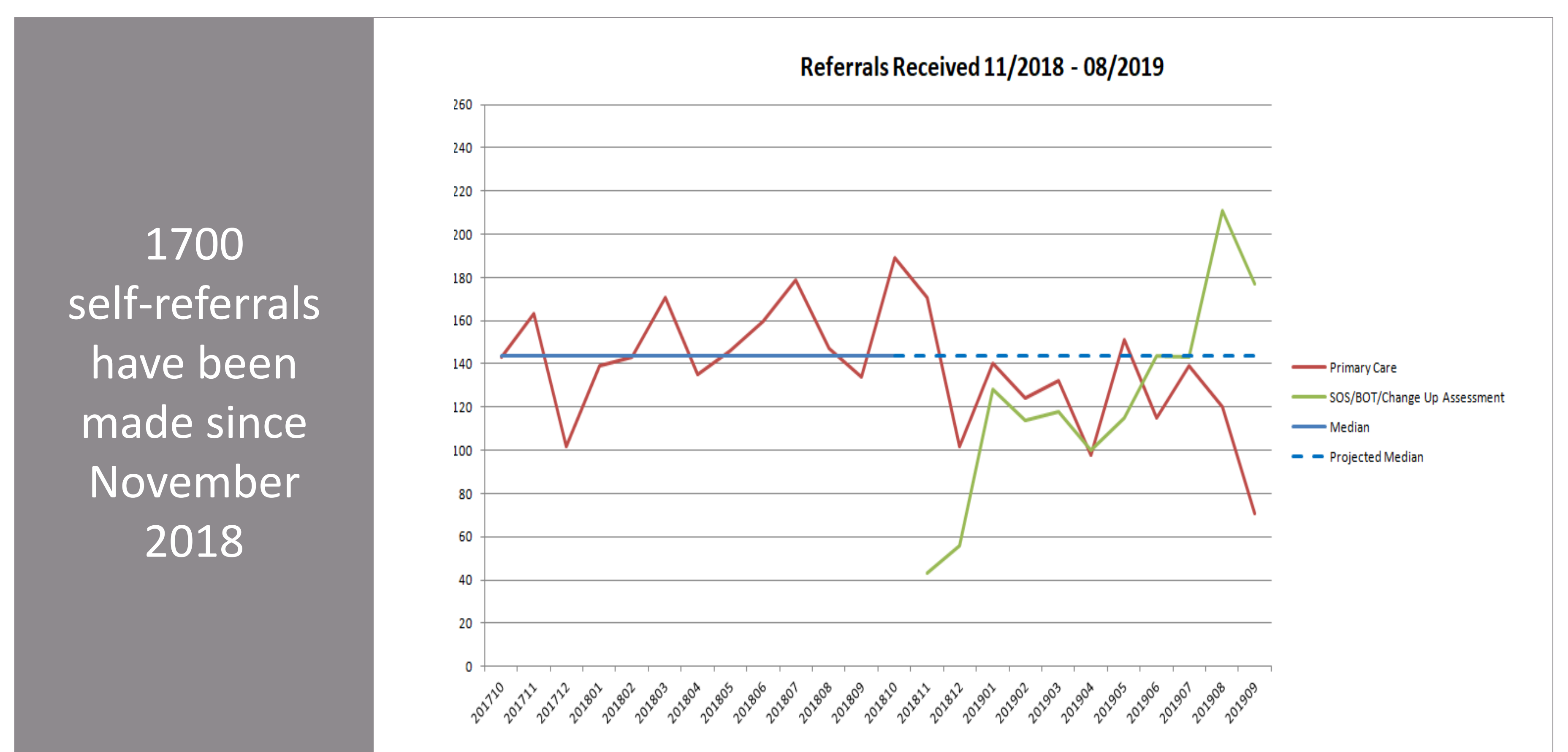
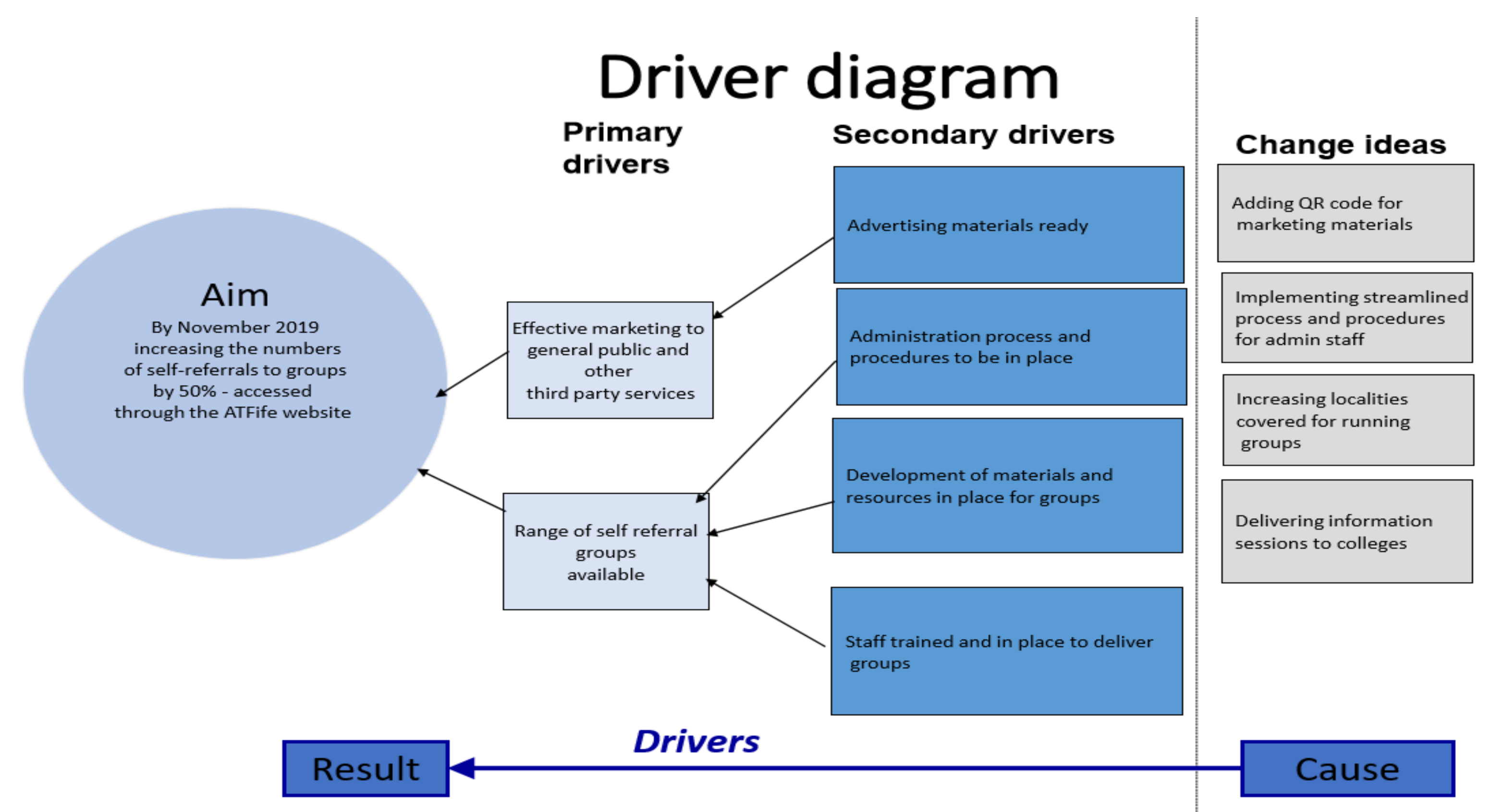
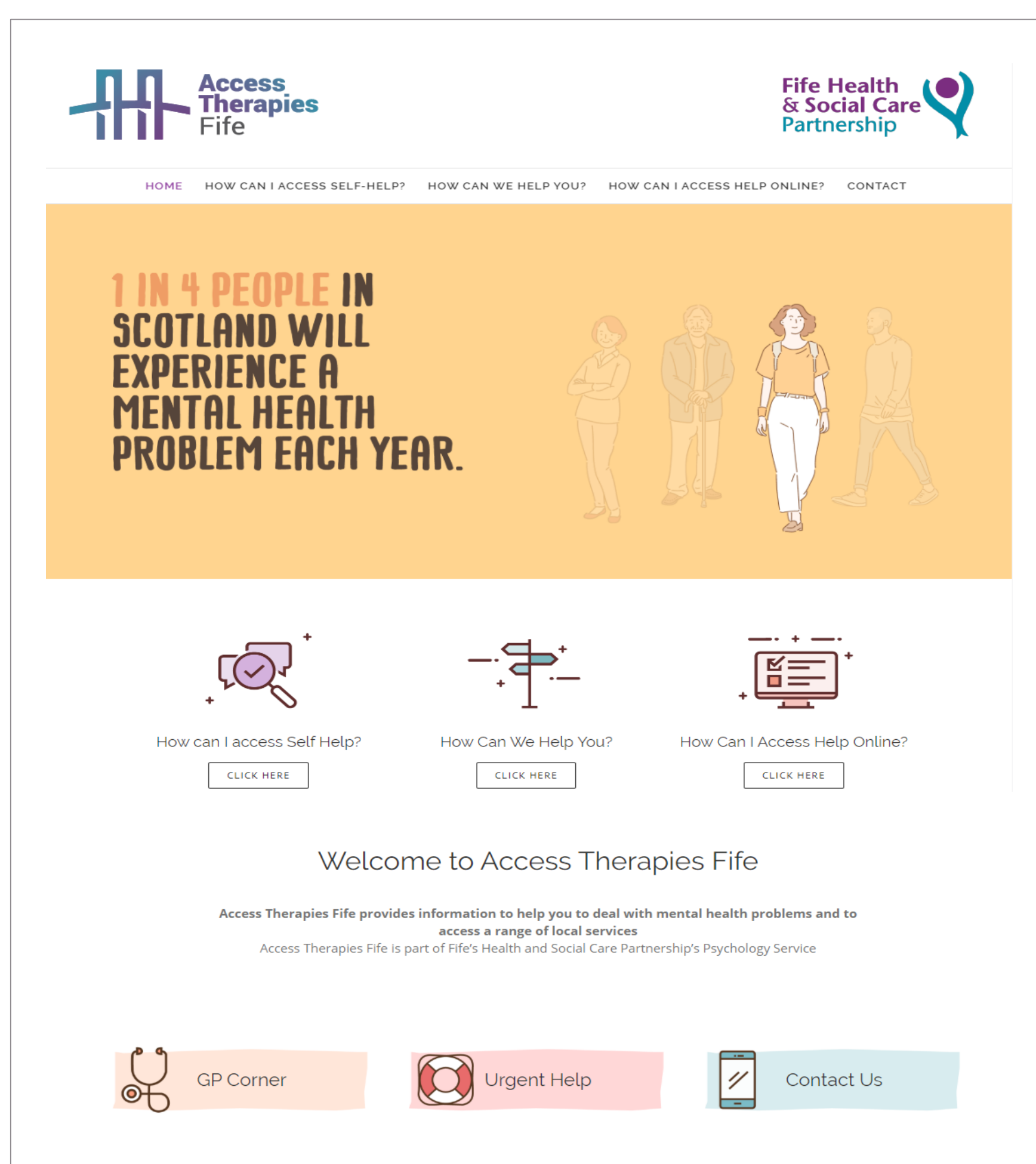
Author: Marie-Louise Blake
NHS Fife

Introduction

The main aim of the project was to increase access to low intensity evidence-based, psychological therapies. Our expectation was that by so doing we would increase capacity for provision of higher intensity therapies. This was done through development of a website - Access Therapies Fife - which supported self-referral to a range of low-intensity therapies, thereby removing the need for GP referral.

The website:

- Offers the option of self referral to a range of low intensity therapy groups
- Patients can select the date and location
- Sign-posts to local and national resources
- Provides self-help material



1700
self-referrals
have been
made since
November
2018

The website has had an impact on the referrals to the “Primary Care” tier.
The average waiting time for self referral is around 6 weeks.

Method

Incremental testing of:

- Marketing approach
- Uptake of services offered through website
- Impact of marketing on website traffic
- Collating data
- Producing monthly update reports
- Communications plan
- QR code

GP's have told us that they are promoting the website to patients.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- The self referral process had positive feedback from patients and GPs and an increase in requests to access the services offered.
- We are in the process of adding 3 additional self referral options to the website. This will offer low intensity therapies for children and families.
- The decrease in the number of referrals for assessment could be as a result of GPs both directing patients to the website to self-refer and/or patients by-passing their GPs to access services directly.
- If continued over time this reduction will increase capacity for provision of high intensity therapy within the “Primary Care” tier of the AMH psychology service.
- Discussions are underway to increase the number of groups to cope with demand.