

Community Health Champions in Sheffield – the story so far!



Community Health Champions

- Well managed and coordinated
- Designed and delivered by local community organisations
- Provides evidence of impact
- Cost effective
- Changing lifestyles across communities
- Nationally and regionally recognised as excellent practice!

Why do we need Champions?

- Tackling health inequality, e.g 12 year difference in life expectancy between Sheffield neighbourhoods.
- Lifestyle is one of many causes; aim to promote
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Mental wellbeing

Obesity; What a waste!

- More disability and health conditions
- Earlier death
- More hospital admissions
- More mental health problems
- More people unable to work (less taxes, more benefits)
- **WE CAN'T AFFORD TO DO NOTHING!!**

Altogether Better

- Big Lottery Funded programme – Yorkshire & Humber Region
- Community Health Champions – a new name but based on significant international and national research
- Sheffield programme – 180 Champions, each supporting 15 people.

What makes successful Community Health Worker programmes?

(World Health organisation 2007)

- Community participation – involving the community in all aspects of the programme including identifying priorities
- Good, careful and sustained programme management
- Community participation in the selection of community health workers
- Competence and practice based training relating to how and where community health workers work
- Availability of supervision and support
- Government support and adequate resources

These factors are in place with our programme.

Sheffield- Lets Change 4 Life

- A further 60 Health Champions – enabling work in more communities (total now 240)
- 1-to-1 support and bursary scheme to help tackle obesity

Partnership that Works

- City Council – accountable body.
- NHS Sheffield - training (ICDH link) and funding additional Champions through *Sheffield – Let's Change4Life*
- Wellbeing Consortium – tendering, coordination, support, monitoring. Enables reach across communities.
- 19 VCS sector “hosts”

How are we doing?

- Target of 240 champions hosted by 20 voluntary/community sector organisations.
- 150+ recruited; 127 completed at least 16 hours. 100 active at present.
- 51 have done over 100 hours activity.
- 40 have got paid work in related fields

What are Health Champions doing?

- Walking, cycling
- Allotments/growing
- Cooking, advice on healthy food
- Health messages at events, groups, mosques etc
- Sports (eg 5-a-side football)
- Gym in the Park
- 1-to-1 “buddying” support

Why is it working well?

- Focus on training and development
- Champions feel trusted and valued
- Delivery at local level, supported by monitoring, quality assurance, contract management from the Consortium – “hub and spoke” model.
- People in communities are viewed as “assets” rather than “problems.”

Value for money?

- Average cost of a HC - £2,700
- If they support 30 people, average cost is £90 per person changing lifestyle
- 20 HCs from benefits into work - £100,000 saved in benefits, plus local spending
- Community assets, role models, speakers
- Cost over 3 years = cost of 3 months missed appointments at 1 hospital!

Further opportunities

- Supporting people to manage Type 2 Diabetes – Sharrow and Darnall/Tinsley
 - Mid-Life Health Checks – Champions support people to carry out on-line checks
- These have built on the existing Champions programme – allowing delivery on very small budgets.*

The future?

- Supporting more Champions into work and/or further training and volunteering opportunities
- Collecting evidence that we're making a difference – Case Studies
- Can we find ways of continuing the programme?
- **CAN WE AFFORD NOT TO???**

Contact details

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Introduction to Community Development & Health (ICDH)

Gareth Johnstone
NHS Sheffield

WHAT IS ICDH (Introduction to Community Development & Health)

The ICDH course is a 15-week OCN accredited course offered at levels 1, 2 and 3.

The course is run city-wide in partnership with local community based organizations such as community forums or family centres.

This can be a good starting point for people returning to education and/or who want to explore issues relating to their own health and well being and that of their community.

The ICDH units 'Power and Powerlessness' and "Recognising and Building on the Strengths of Communities' encourage learners to see themselves as active participants in their communities and to identify the strengths and limitations of various methodologies of Community Development work. As a result learners often take a more active part in community groups and organisations.

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi they '*become the change (they) want to see*'.



ICDH Learners Awards Ceremony 2009

SECONDARY BENEFICIARIES

The impact of the ICDH course extends beyond the immediate participants. While learners often move on to further education, training and employment they also take their new found skills and knowledge back into their homes and communities. For example, learners may explore issues around food. They are enabled to think about diet in the context of their own lives and in relation to the communities in which they live. Many learners are key decision makers in their household with responsibility for instance, for purchasing and preparing their families meals. As well as gaining an understanding of the benefits of healthier eating, where to source good quality fresh ingredients from, and how to cook them to suit individual and cultural preferences learners can also acquire skills to persuade others of the benefits of making small but significant changes. These changes contribute directly towards reducing obesity in both adults and children.



WHAT LEARNERS DO NEXT

The Community Health Champions programme is one scheme that provides an opportunity to put this learning into practice and graduates of the ICDH course have given up to 100 hours of their time to volunteer as Health Champions, delivering a range of health messages in their communities. This further experience has led many of them to seek employment as Health Trainers, supporting individuals who want to make health improving behaviour changes. Many other graduates have found employment in education, training, community development, health, child care and more. In a difficult economic climate where competition for jobs is high the ICDH learners' combination of knowledge, skills and experience gives them an advantage and encourages independence and social integration.

To find out more about the ICDH course and how past learners have benefitted please contact a member of the Community Development and Health Team on 0114 305 1407