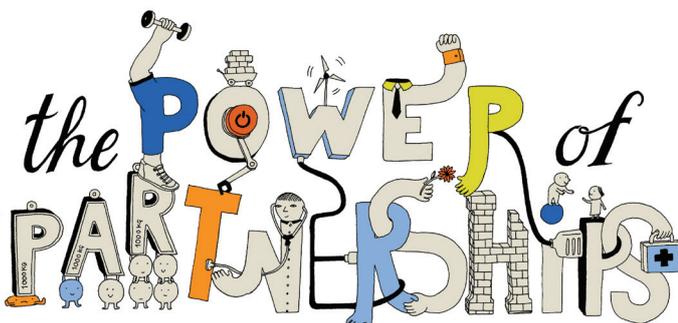

Building Health Partnerships

No. 02

One of a series of Partners in Practice case studies from the Building Health Partnerships programme.

Improving health equality for LGB&T people in Greater Manchester

Aiming to improve inclusion and access to healthcare for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGB&T) people, the Manchester Building Health Partnerships (BHP) programme has created a replicable model for addressing the health needs of under-represented groups.



IVAR Institute for Voluntary Action Research



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Key points

- Voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations can provide specialist knowledge and access to under-represented groups, in this case the focus was LGBT&T people.
- Effective partnerships with VCSE organisations can help Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to achieve their goals, especially in the areas of inclusion and patient engagement.
- Better understanding and information about under-represented groups and their health needs can lead to better health outcomes.
- VCSEs can boost their impact through relationships with partners and initiatives with similar goals.
- Gaining a better understanding of the workings of CCGs will help VCSE organisations to understand how to effectively engage with them to meet common aims.
- There's no need to reinvent the wheel. Shared learning can help to develop replicable models that will also meet your own organisation's needs.

“I’ve learnt that this kind of partnership is possible. It provides data, a forum, mechanisms and clout.”

ABOUT BUILDING HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

The Building Health Partnerships programme aims to improve health outcomes through supporting the development of effective and productive partnerships between Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local authorities and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. Supported by NHS England, the programme is delivered by Social Enterprise UK in partnership with the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR). It takes a facilitative approach, working with a cross-sector group.

“Sometimes an impetus is needed to bring people together. Building Health Partnerships provides that. By focusing on just a couple of main priorities we have given ourselves the chance to see real, measurable results.”

The core sessions include the following:

- a diagnostic session to create a shared understanding of the national and local health policy context
- a partnership development session to cement partnership working and develop an area-based action plan to address the key challenges
- an expert seminar to tackle specific local needs and build local knowledge
- a partnership development session to embed learning and review delivery of action plans
- additional bespoke support and facilitation from a dedicated facilitator.

 Find out more: www.socialenterprise.org.uk/buildinghealthpartnerships

Background

The estimated proportion of LGBT&T people in the population is 5-7% and Manchester has some of the longest-running LGBT&T rights organisations in the country. It is well-known for initiatives such as Pride in Practice – a quality assurance service from The Lesbian & Gay Foundation that helps GPs meet LGBT&T needs.

However LGBT&T people in Manchester still face health inequalities. The project partners wanted to explore the issues and barriers faced by LGBT&T people when accessing healthcare and draw on their collective understanding to identify solutions.

Their aims were:

1. To capture and explore LGBT&T people's experience: use desk based research; patient experience surveys; case studies.

2. Make the economic case: research unmet needs, make comparisons with other areas; use cross-boundary commissioning (Greater Manchester); outline economic savings and the clinical rationale.
3. Expand GP sign-up to Pride in Practice: get all GPs signed up and engaged with the process; provide training to practice staff; enable access to face-to-face or telephone support and ensure information is updated.
4. Create a replicable model: shares the learning for CCGs and VCSE organisations to translate the work in their own area.

Our approach

We drew on expert knowledge within the VCSE sector from partners including The Lesbian & Gay Foundation, the Stroke Association, Breakthrough UK, Trans Forum and Age Concern Manchester. The facilitated approach set out to identify issues and barriers, increase engagement with LGBT&T people in the community and gain an increased understanding of the health issues facing LGBT&T people.

The partners, including South Manchester CCG and Manchester City Council Equalities team, brought together a total of 40 key players from across the VCSE sector, local government and health commissioning for the diagnostic session and worked together on actions and outputs.

There was a keen focus on assisting CCGs to realise their aspirations for meaningful engagement with patients, carers and their communities and sharing best practice.

What we did

To achieve their aims, the partners created a dataset addressing the health needs of LGBT&T people.

Specific outputs of the dataset were:

- an economic case for investment in equitable health services for the LGBT&T population, using the expertise of a health economist
- a clinical rationale built on evidence of need – including clear and well-evidenced clinical arguments written by a GP, providing a strong case to influence commissioning decisions in the future
- the results of LGBT&T patient experience surveys and focus groups
- a set of engagement case studies outlining the benefits of supporting LGBT&T people and their families
- a summary of Pride in Practice implementation in South Manchester CCG.

Using this dataset, the partners created a set of recommendations to improve service provision, and extended the work out to include Greater Manchester.

The project produced a replicable model, with a best practice guide identifying key learning and how it can be applied by organisations supporting other under-represented groups. This will be shared to provide guidance across the wider VCSE sector.

What was the impact?

The project had a major impact in raising awareness of how to make healthcare services more inclusive, encouraging new and better partnerships, and sharing learning and information.

Improved inclusion

- Higher awareness among partners that certain groups have individual needs, and that this will lead to better healthcare outcomes.
- South Manchester CCG has begun sexual orientation monitoring in all its practices to support an individualised approach to care, create a better understanding of local patient needs and improve services.
- Increased awareness of the health needs of trans people – including a separate survey and the inclusion of trans literature in the Pride in Practice programme.
- Contributions to the Manchester Health and Social Care integration agenda, through increased community engagement of LGBT&T people, helping to both promote resilience and create independence.

Jayne Cooney from South Manchester CCG said: “We now have such a better understanding of this particular client group.”

Better partnerships

- Partners realised the importance and value of sharing outcomes and learning between organisations – a national event is being held in April to disseminate the learning, jointly hosted by The Lesbian & Gay Foundation and South Manchester CCG.
- The Bodey Medical Practice ran a HIV research project alongside BHP, creating opportunities for collaboration and co-production.

- Partners became more willing to ask for help and support from other partners involved in the project, and gained a better understanding of how CCGs and VCSE organisations operate.
- The project has expanded to include Greater Manchester.

Val Bayliss from Manchester Commissioning Support Unit has been able to take the partnership approach from this initiative back to the CSU. She said: “It helped me to better understand the relationship between the voluntary sector and the CCG and how participating in development projects like this links to wider strategies.”

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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Online resource:

www.lgf.org.uk/forprofessionals/pride-in-practice

Social Enterprise UK

We are the national body for social enterprise. We are a membership organisation. We offer business support, do research, develop policy, campaign, build networks, share knowledge and understanding, and raise awareness of social enterprise and what it can achieve. We also provide training and consultancy for clients of all kinds.

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Institute for Voluntary Action Research

We work to understand, support and strengthen voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisation and management using action research. We work collaboratively; concentrate on problem-solving; and want our work to be relevant and practically useful.

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