

Social Capital Workshop

“Communities Working Together to Beat Cancer”

Newport, Isle of Wight, 13th November 2018

Workshop Summary

Background to the Wessex Social Capital Project

The Wessex Cancer Alliance (NHS England) is developing a new project across four areas (Southampton, Portsmouth & SE Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight), with the aim of using peoples’ existing social networks and community resources to raise awareness of cancer and encourage them to seek support earlier. The presentation gives more information about this concept and what this initiative is:



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This presentation also contains more information about similar projects. These projects include:

- Cancer Champions, Manchester
- Be Cancer Safe, North Derbyshire, South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw
- Cancer Champions, Humber, Coast and Vale Cancer Alliance
- Innovation Grants Scheme, North East Hampshire and Farnham CCG

The purpose of this workshop was to help shape this project and approach with key people working in communities on the Isle of Wight. The workshop participants were informed that there is currently a budget of around £160,000 to support this work throughout the Wessex region (Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight) and that discussions held in this workshop and others throughout the region would help shape how the project would be delivered, with the focus that it be effective for and relevant to the local populations.

Summary of the Discussion

Several key themes, which were particular to challenges faced by Isle of Wight residents, emerged from the discussion.

A need to focus on the population groups that were not engaged with health care services.

It was recognised that, while a larger proportion of the population are older, there was need to engage younger people to help embed healthy living habits and appropriate health seeking behaviour early on in life. This might be accomplished by running awareness events in schools/colleges and working with groups such as the Scouts and Guides that have good representation on the island. It was recognised that the budget could include resourcing volunteers already in place with small grants in order to run events. Difficulties accessing children who are home educated were mentioned and these could be overcome by engaging with home education networks.

It can be a challenge for many residents of the island to gain access to a GP appointment.

Patients report often having to wait up to six weeks for an appointment. This is leading to many presenting as symptomatic with cancer at a later stage. Some put off going to their GP for a test due to concerns over potential travel costs to the mainland for treatment. This can be especially true of those patients who are on a low income.

There is a need to increase the uptake of cancer screening programmes.

Screening uptake on the island is largely following national trends and does not meet nationally set targets. It was noted that many who come for Breast screening for the first time have a degree of anxiety over the pain caused by the procedure and this can put them off attending the appointment. Uptake is generally better by patients over 70 who have prior experience of breast screening and who can self-refer to the breast screening service. Letters which specify a date and time rather than an invitation to make an appointment were more effective.

Younger women may find it difficult to attend for smear tests due to work and family commitments. It can be challenging to make an appointment which fits in around these other priorities. An example was given of a business which offered facials to women who attended for a smear test as an incentive. This was found to be highly effective. It was suggested that small grants could be given to business to resource similar initiatives to this.

Whilst there are low numbers of black and mixed ethnicity people in the Isle of Wight's population, there are asylum seekers and travelling communities, who may not be registered with a GP and would, therefore, not be sent an invitation to attend for screening.

A recognition of key partners/services that could be utilised to further this project on the island. These include – Community Action, Healthwatch, Wessex Cancer Trust, The Mountbatten Hospice, GP's, Age UK and many others.

Healthwatch help to run several Patient Participation Groups which have a voice in shaping health services. They also have strong links to schools and colleges in the island and could facilitate events with younger people as well as the staff who working in these places. Health awareness events are run at local festivals and in GP practices. The local clinical commissioning group collaborate with Healthwatch to take full advantage of national health awareness campaigns.

Wessex Cancer Trust run events which are focused on fund raising but could also be used to raise awareness or screening events. Volunteers work as befrienders to support those with cancer. They are also currently building a new centre that could be used as a venue for social events. Although it was raised as a concern that people would be put off coming to these because it was Cancer specific service, it was recognised that social events would be a way making the conversation around cancer more commonplace.

The Mountbatten Hospice has many volunteers working with them and one group, in particular, undertake intergenerational work within the community. This was thought to be a good way of embedding healthy living as a way of preventing cancer and the importance of screening as a means of early detection. In view of the older age demographic of the island, and the fact that Age UK has many volunteers across the whole island, they may be a valuable partner in progressing this work. The project lead agreed to have a conversation with Age UK representatives on the island.

Other companies or organisations that could be approached to help with this project would be churches, prison, housing associations, People Matter, parent and toddler groups, Homestart, town counsellors and parish councils.

There was recognition of the, already, extensive and committed network of volunteers in the communities on the island which could be utilised to help deliver this project.

There are around 13,000 who work as volunteers on the island which is an extremely valuable resource. Community Action are currently mapping who these are and who they/what areas they work in. Community Action has links with these and produce a newsletter on a regular basis which could be used to communicate with support groups and organisations about this project. The person who runs the Citizen's Advice Bureau is also the Scout's Commissioner for the island and would be a good link to younger people.

There was recognition that a project of this type would need a good communication and campaign strategy.

Feedback from the group indicated that effective communication is difficult to accomplish and requires engagement and commitment from all health care and voluntary sector organisations.

Methods of publicity and engagement that were considered were:

- Isle of Wight Radio
- Beacon
- Beacon Magazine
- Observer
- Style of Wight Magazine
- County press
 - News features
 - Paid for advertising
- GP's to send out emails or SMS messaging informing their patients that screening will be taking place.
- Facebook/Twitter/Instagram or other forms of social media
- Run events in Churchill Square (which has a large footfall).

There were also matters that would need to be raised with Public Health and Specialist Commissioning.

Some issues that were discussed in this area were:

- Patients who cannot gain access to a GP appointment will then self-refer as symptomatic to the Breast screening service. This has the result of the referral to diagnosis/treatment being lengthened.
- Some of the information sent out to patients being invited to attend for breast screening can be off-putting, especially for those attending for the first time.
- Due to staffing constraints at the prison there is a lack of staff to escort prisoners who have to attend for cancer screening, diagnosis and treatments. This is exacerbated by the fact that the majority of treatments are administered on mainland hospitals, which then may mean a whole day off site.

Conclusion

There was more of a focus, in this workshop, on the problems around screening uptake and less so on patients who presented as symptomatic, apart from those who presented to the screening services involved. From this discussion, it was apparent that there was a wide and varied voluntary network on the island which would benefit by being resourced by the Social Capital project. Collaborative working is essential to meet the challenges faced by the population of the Isle of Wight and the organisation that delivers this project across the Wessex will be most effective by working in partnership with organisations, community groups and individuals in the voluntary sector.

The attendees at the workshop were informed that an invitation to provide an “Expression of Interest” in taking on the administration of this project will be produced by the end of November. It was also agreed that the workshop summary from the Southampton workshop be shared with the Isle of Wight group. The project lead will also be liaising with Age UK and Community Action to help gain more insight into how to deliver this project in a way that is relevant to the local population.

The organisers wish to thank everyone who attended this workshop for their time and valuable contribution to this project.

| List of Attendees | |
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| Name | Organisation |
| Sarah Rochford | Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group |
| Mike Sizer-Green | Wessex Cancer Trust |
| Maribel Glover | Breast Screening Unit |
| Joanna Smith | Healthwatch Isle of Wight |
| Mary Seymour | Applegate Breast Cancer Support Group |
| Sue Newell | Wessex Voices |
| Sally List | Mountbatten Hospice |
| Robert Radford | Wessex Cancer Alliance |
| Michelle McInnes | Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group |
| Deborah Rooke | Healthwatch Isle of Wight |