

Learning from Lancashire – Beacon Event – 10th November 2009.

Workshop: Community Engagement in Lancashire

Morning session

What you want to know?

Ways of reaching out to difficult to reach populations.
Ways of reaching out to older people in our communities.
How do we engage with older people?
How to turn 'engagement' into tangible improvements?
How do the general public get involved?
How to engage with communities that are reluctant to engage due to no apparent demand?
How to engage with the community innovative ways of engaging?
How do we get more people 60+ involved?
How do we get in touch with less involved/active older people?
How do service commissioners get in touch with next generation of older people?
The best way to engage with older people and make links with waste management.
Involving and co-production creative engagement.
How do you get the decision and policy maker to truly involve older people?
How to engage better with local communities and older people?
How to reach hand to engage people with no family support?
Examples of good practice across Lancashire.
Funding – necessary to move forward in projects – how to obtain in?
How do you cast the net wider to engage with others – Not the usual suspects?

What's going well?

Trust in our organisation (Fire Service)
CMHT – Older people due to dementia Strategy- Memory Ass Service
Communication with Communities
Existing 50+ regional forums area
Working with established organisation
Using community venues e.g. Libraries, Sport Centres for BP checks or any other services / message we want to promote.
Development of community strategy driven by Listening.
Face to face (Lancashire) project reality useful in the Fylde and partnerships.
Using community venues e.g. Libraries, sport centres for BP Checks or any other service / message we want promote.

Afternoon session

What you want to know?

How do we know people are ready for change in the services – like self directed support etc?
How to achieve a great deal within budget constraints? Being creative – innovative.
How to empowering people, enchasing people?
Engagement, face to face, by locality and in partnership – Personal
Helping clinicians understand the volume of real engagement
How do we give older people a voice?
Who do we engage with?
Reaching more older people especially rural areas
Forums
Sharing good practice / Information
Overlapping at work
Working people – Older People
Share Knowledge
To better communicate our services to people
More innovative ways to reach people
How you engage all the older people except small minority?
Less jargon
Hard to reach people loosing touch
Partner we are working with lack of knowledge
Finding out how to contact
Information Sharing
When strategies are developed and working
How do we get to reach ‘ new’ people / new users?
Include more isolated people and ways to meet them and care for them

What’s going well?

Partnership
Prepared to learn / prepared to change
Changing adapt to current needs
Reaching out to vulnerable people within existing charity, age concern and help the aged.
Fire services and much more community services.
Free lunches if you want to.
Networking and Interfacing between the public and service provides.
Team working with identified vulnerable people.
Work at CDRP level and partnerships
Good network of older peoples forums.
Infrastructure of partnership meeting.
Sharing of good practice
Setting up ‘assembly’ for all of forums.
We are face in the community
We have strategies / services
Implementing fire service polices regarding fires safety.

What's going wrong?

Only meet monthly
Limited Volunteers
Different departmental working
Cliques
Stubborn – Historic mode of working
Imperialistic Gatekeeper
Engaging rural Communities

General points raised by the groups were as follows:

1. How can we attract younger people on groups – in some areas groups have changed the name of the group to the 50 plus group in the hope of attracting people of younger ages to join. This is because some people may not want to join a group named older people because they do not consider themselves to be 'old'.
2. Generation issues – people who are in their 80's & 90's now were raised in a different way. This may influence why they are more willing to volunteer. Numbers of people willing to get involved is still low.
3. Hard to reach groups – consideration needs to be given to the isolation felt by the elderly who live in sheltered housing and residential care. Studies have shown that there is a likely for this to happen in situations like this.
Language can be a barrier to communication but there are ways round this for e.g. one area held courses to teach staff how to say hello in the language of the person they were going to visit.
Adult illiteracy is a problem as someone can be put off from accessing a service if they have to complete forms.
4. Imperialist gatekeeper – sometimes it feels like the same people are repeatedly chosen to represent the views of all the elderly population.
5. Culture and attitude of staff – If the attitude of a member of staff is not right then this can affect whether someone takes up a service and it will affect the public's perception of a service. Important to get right the way we treat someone and the way we present ourselves to the public. Need to address the culture and attitude of the workforce.
6. Funding – Voluntary agencies are very much affected by funding and the continuation of that funding. Important to ensure that details of active organisation are kept up to date. As you could signpost someone to an organisation that no longer exists.