

Communities of Interest Q&A Forum Notes

Wednesday 29th April 2020

10:00-11.30am

Attendees

- **Ali Kaye** - Leeds Older People's Forum
- **Annette Morris** - Voluntary Action Leeds
- **Charis Green** - Leeds Society for Deaf & Blind People
- **Charlotte James** - Leeds GATE
- **Daisy Morgan** - Forum Central
- **Damian Dawtry** - Feel Good Factor
- **Dave Paterson** - Leeds Food Aid Network
- **James Allen** - Beacon Leeds
- **Jane Li** - Home-Start
- **Jez Coram** - Forum Central
- **Karen Fenton** - Forum Central
- **Karl Witty** - Forum Central
- **Luke Aylward** - Leeds Autism AIM
- **Nik Peasgood** - Leeds Women's Aid
- **Owen Walker** - Leeds Autism AIM
- **Paula Gardner** - BARCA Leeds
- **Pip Goff** - Forum Central
- **Rachael Loftus** - Leeds City Council
- **Sally Egan** - Women's Lives Leeds
- **Sam Powell** - Leeds City Council's Communities Team, Migration
- **Stuart Morrison** - Healthwatch
- **Val Hewison** - Carers Leeds
- **Wendy Cork** - Leeds Autism AIM/Advonet

Session aims - Pip

- Want to bring people together and explore the work we can do together, as well as how VAL and Forum Central can best support your organisations.
- Not just at the present time, but what opportunities are there to embrace and progress the equalities agenda so we take the best learnings that are emerging through to beyond Covid.
- Keen to understand everyone's views relating to their Community of Interest (Col), but also explore opportunities for intersectional work.

An update on the Shielding group - Rachael

- 22,500 people in Leeds have been identified as extremely medically vulnerable based on estimates from Leeds Care Record. So far, the Government has sent 18,000 letters and only 11,000 of those people have confirmed receipt by registering on the National website. Those people that have registered have been contacted by, text, email or phone.
- There will be a higher proportion of people in the Communities of Interest who haven't received shielding advice. Note people are only being given the advice, they can choose what they do with it. But keen to hear how we can improve knowledge and understanding around what the letter means & the help available to enable people to shield safely.

- Concern that national messages around going out to exercise etc conflict with advice for shielding. If you are shielding you must seek medical advice as soon as you develop symptoms, which is a very different message from that given to the rest of the population who are told to stay at home and isolate.
- Seeking input from the group as to where information can be improved for people who have been advised to shield. Also any specific considerations from Col in terms of how support can be best provided.
- Confirmed areas where less people have registered are generally those that are more deprived, but the relationship is not linear - for example there is a higher number of people with these conditions living in these areas. Also, there is a lower number of people confirmed as registered in both the upper and very low age brackets.
- Need to get support for people who are shielding solid because we expect advice to shield will continue when lockdown ends for the general population; it's an important period now to reach out to people and make sure they understand the messages they're getting.
 - Annette - There's confusion around the shielding message, particularly amongst BAME communities. The letter is complicated, and the process of registering not user friendly for certain groups.
- A very specific set of people have received letters - people were identified through different waves and not everyone was informed at the same time, with some people still being informed now. It's hard to give people a definite 'no' that they shouldn't be shielding.
 - Note shielding is not to be undertaken lightly - with no ability to go out, no halfway house, you have to follow the rules strictly as possible. It's all done through NHS records - especially relevant to the migrant community. There will be people not included but who know they have these conditions - we need to find a way of getting help to them. **Sam to pick up with Rachael.**
 - 'Routes to Support' document - everyone should have this available when talking to people who are shielding/might need to shield. Includes info on how you can help them register, and support that's available. **Rachael to share.**
- Val - family carers who live in the same household are worried about bringing the virus in, Rachael confirmed this is a concern & has been looking at models for getting PPE to people who are not professionals but might want to have some aspect of PPE when caring for family members. **Val to pick up with Rachael.**

Resources/communications - Pip/Karl

- A weekly email is being distributed by the Forum Central team; people agreed this is broadly useful and manageable.
 - Please continue to inform Forum Central what would work best for everyone, and how we can share and use information most effectively.
- Perspectives gathered in partnership with Healthwatch and Voluntary Action Leeds are being collated into a weekly overview report (led by Karl), which will be shared within weekly update emails.
 - We need people's support to identify the most pertinent issues across communities; a forum like this helps to tease out the priorities that cross cut across communities, whilst recognising that communities aren't homogeneous and there are complexities within each category. Feedback on the reports is much appreciated and will enable us to evolve it to make it the most effective in communicating with people who make decisions across the city.

- **Damian** - a magazine has been produced for people in LS8 & LS9 including information and entertainment, particularly for people with limited technology, and some are leftover. **Let Damian know if anyone distributing parcels etc in these areas would like some to give out.**
- **Jane** - agree with issues emerging around communication and language, and the need to go back to simple language across agencies. Important to do anything we can to support each other.
- **Charis** - offer available for people to receive calls in BSL, and the blind community. Get in touch if you know of people who might need support. ***Charis can share details.*** Organisation is concerned that there's a group of individuals that aren't able to communicate without technology, so they're trying to encourage connection there, and also conscious of people for whom social groups have previously been a lifeline.