

Culturally Appropriate Health Communication and Engagement Tower Hamlets Toolkit

Dr Somen Banerjee

Director of Public Health

Adrian Riggs

Practice Director, Kesson Physiotherapy Services

Dr Cyril Eshareturi

Public Health Programme Lead



Outline



- Background
- Project methodology
- Project output - Tower Hamlets Toolkit
- Case study - The Outdoor Gym Activation Programme
- Value proposition
- Discussion - Embedding use across the system



Background



Public Health Brief on Health Communication and Engagement

Address the inequalities experienced by Tower Hamlets Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities by delivering 'tangible and practical' actions which will deliver real change to the lives of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities.

Operationalising the Brief

Review health communication and engagement strategy with residents towards ensuring guidance and important messages are:

- 'culturally appropriate'.
- 'available in different languages'.
- 'uses different approaches' to ensure messages reach different audiences'.

Alignment with the Six Principles of Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Strategy

1. Resources to support health and wellbeing should go to those who most need it.
2. Feeling connected and included is a foundation of wellbeing and the importance of this should be built into services and programme.
3. Being treated equally, respectfully and without discrimination should be the norm when using services.
4. Health and wellbeing information and advice should be clear, simple, and produced with those who will benefit from them.
5. People should feel that they have equal power in shaping and designing services and programme that impact on their health and wellbeing.
6. We should all be working together to make the best use of the assets we already have that support people's health and wellbeing.



Project methodology



The project adopted a two phased approach triangulating documentary evidence and qualitative data:

- Phase 1: Review of the literature on culturally appropriate health communication and engagement towards generating a checklist/guidance.
- Phase 2: 22 Semi-structured interviews with Tower Hamlets residents were thematically analysed (13 females and 9 males, with 10 different self-described ethnicity whose age ranged from 26 – 75 years.
- Sample recruited through organisations which work with Tower Hamlets BAME communities: Young Foundation, Newham African Caribbean Resource Centre, Account3, Somali Senior Citizens Club, Limehouse Project, Tower Hamlets Health Watch, Real and Apasen.



Culturally Appropriate Health Communication and Engagement Tower Hamlets Toolkit



	Key issues to be addressed	Yes	No	NA	Comments
1	Has the message been co-designed with the community?				
A representative sample of the community must be involved in the message design process from conception to delivery.					
2	Has technical language been avoided?				
Specialised health terms should be avoided, and message validated by a representative sample of the community.					
3	Has language of requirement and mandate been avoided?				
Highlight the benefits of engaging with the message rather than underpinning the message with government mandates or requirements.					
4	Does the message induce fear and/or stigma?				
Ensure the message does not induce fear or stigma by validating with a representative sample of the community.					
5	Will compliance with the health message disadvantage target community?				
Ensure compliance with the health message will not exacerbate inequalities by checking with a representative sample of the community.					
6	Are multiple trusted credible sources utilised to disseminate the information?				
Credible sources must be identified as such by a sample of the community and a plethora of these sources used to disseminate the message.					
7	Are we disseminating in multiple languages?				
Endeavour to disseminate the message in the various languages spoken within the community. The community should lead on identifying these languages.					
8	Are we disseminating using multiple media?				
Disseminate the message using the various media tools community members engage with for information. The community should lead on identifying these tools.					
9	Have we explored the use of culturally trusted settings?				
Disseminate message in culturally trusted settings which must be identified by consulting the community. Culturally trusted settings must not be health aligned.					
10	Have we made provision for questions and clarifications following message delivery?				
Following the delivery of messages, provide a resource to address questions and/or provide further clarifications.					
11	Is the message accessible to people with disabilities and or special needs?				
Consider the needs of people living with disabilities and ensure the message is accessible to these individuals.					



The Tower Hamlet Toolkit in Practice



- Underpinned engagement with the community on the Outdoor Gym Activation Programme which is aimed at enabling residents to access physical activity programmes utilising Tower Hamlets existing Outdoor Gym sites.
- Tower Hamlets Healthy Children's team used the checklist to underpin co-design sessions to inform Year 6 letters sent to parents ahead of reception communication in January 2023.
- Used as a reference guide for Tower Hamlets communication campaign around the theme of 'living well for less' in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.
- Helped the scoping of different routes of engagement with the community towards informing the design of the proposed Tower Hamlets Play Street Programme.



The Outdoor Gym Activation Programme



- Vision: To enable residents access to physical activity programmes utilising Tower Hamlets existing Outdoor Gym sites. We will connect residents with local activators and offer a combination of face to face and digital transformation platforms to enable sustained levels of increased activity.
- Goal: Tower Hamlets has commissioned TGO to lead a Boroughwide Activation Programme across our 16 outdoor gym sites with the aim to support residents / groups of them to use the outdoor gyms. We will do this by:
 - Enabling residents access to free physical activity programmes throughout starting September 2022 at each of our Outdoor Gym sites.
 - Providing a tailored package of support to residents including access to a behaviour change programmes, virtual training sessions and a greater connection with local leisure providers.
 - Working with communities to support diverse, inclusive community use of existing, public spaces to promote physical activity and social connection.
- Design: the Activation Programme considers 3 primary target audiences:
 - Families: helping local people reduce obesity through the power of movement
 - Youth (16-24 year olds): providing inclusive activity and fitness classes
 - Those 'at risk' of lifestyle diseases, e.g. diabetes, heart disease, stroke, etc



Communication and Implementation

‘the need for a community appropriate approach’



- Initial engagement:
 - In-person outreach
 - Printed outreach
 - Digital funnel (social media campaign)
- Community roadshows and health MOTs at the gyms
- Regular expert-led classes, e.g Shadwell basin meet-ups
- Community activation:
 - Raising awareness of Activation programme to community groups
 - Identifying and training local activators to co-ordinate and lead sessions
 - Encouraging local leisure providers to run sessions at outdoor gyms



Using the Toolkit: Outdoor Gym Activation Programme

- Rationale: The design and implementation of the Outdoor Gym Activation Programme presented a number of issues to consider:
 - A cross-Borough programme of activities, working across many diverse communities, at different times
 - Physical and digital marketing, as well as face-to-face and remote presentations
 - A mix of physical and digital activities offered; the latter through different channels and types of device
 - Sub-demographic groups targeted, some running across communities, some more prevalent in specific communities
- Prompts: How the Tower Hamlets Culturally Appropriate Communication and Engagement Toolkit shaped our approach :
 - Overall, it challenged our existing more established approach
 - Enabled us to consider the perspective of the receiving resident; subsequently able to test this within the community
 - Introduced us to new questions, which we otherwise may not have asked
 - Provided a route in to find the right resources and channels to help facilitate our key messages
- How its going : As the Programme rolls out, how is the Toolkit helping?
 - Shaped both our digital and physical messaging; keeping them simple and direct – these have also changed through the development process following reference to the toolkit
 - Helped those outside the Borough/community. i/e/ us, gain a more relevant perspective about how the OGAP is (being) received
 - All the early stages of a light touch roll-out (September 2022 to February 2023), the Toolkit guides our approach when introducing ourselves to communities. In the community out-reach and roll-out phases (March 2023 on) the objectives of the Toolkit are evident.



Value proposition

- Co-designing with communities
- Evidencing power sharing
- Addressing stigma
- Demonstrating being ‘culturally appropriate’

“If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together”



Discussion - Embedding use across the system

Principles of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

1. Resources to support health and wellbeing should go to those who most need it.

2. Feeling connected and included is a foundation of wellbeing and the importance of this should be built into services and programme.

3. Being treated equally, respectfully and without discrimination should be the norm when using services.

4. Health and wellbeing information and advice should be clear, simple, and produced with those who will benefit from them.

5. People should feel that they have equal power in shaping and designing services and programme that impact on their health and wellbeing.

6. We should all be working together to make the best use of the assets we already have that support people's health and wellbeing.

Proposed Approach for discussion

Overall goal:

To embed the toolkit across the system within 1 year.

Indicative plan:

Jan – Feb 2023: Work with all board partners to identify campaigns / piece of work where the toolkit can be used.

July 2023: Give Health and Wellbeing Board an update at six months.

Dec 2023: Report detailing Impact on the use of the toolkit and update to Board.

Discussion:

- What are your thoughts on this approach?
- How do we hold ourselves accountable to embed the toolkit in a practical and feasible way?

