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A bite size guide to:

# Engaging With Communities

Publications gateway reference: 05427

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# Getting started

NHS England is committed to ensuring that the public and patients are at the centre of how we shape our healthcare services. NHS England's Five Year Forward View, published in 2014, set out new ways of working to support our NHS to improve. A key part of this is having much stronger partnerships with diverse local communities; building on local ideas and using the strengths of individuals and partner organisations to give us new opportunities and ways to improve the health of our communities.

As well as involving people directly in decisions about services, it also means working with community advocates such as local businesses, voluntary groups, volunteers and schools as well as others to help shift the conversation onto preventing ill health, being active in pursuing health and wellbeing and shaping the future of health and care services.

This can bring about powerful changes in creating healthier lifestyles, preventing ill health and tackling inequalities.

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#### **NHS England London, Wandsworth Council and Tottenham Hotspur 'Spurs' Football Club'**

Tottenham Hotspur FC has supported a major 'Get To Know Cancer' NHS campaign since the 2013-14 Premier League season. The club uses its high profile to encourage fans and the community to recognise the early symptoms of cancer and get checked sooner. The message is: 'Cancer is treatable, even beatable'. Following an overwhelming response from fans in the first season, the club extended its partnership ' into the 2014-15 season.

#### **Dr Andy Mitchell, Regional Medical Director, NHS England (London) said:**

"The club has worked tirelessly to use its high profile to raise awareness of the symptoms of cancer and promote early diagnosis among fans and the community.

"We estimate that at least 1,000 lives in London could be saved if cancers were spotted earlier. There is no doubt that this campaign is making a real difference. We already know that more than half the fans who took part in a survey last season said they now wait less time before seeking medical advice about changes to their health as a result.

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## Case study continued

"Our thanks go to Tottenham Hotspur FC and all at Get to Know Cancer for their hard work in making this important project such a great success."

**Simon Burton, Director of the Football Business Awards, said:** "Today business and football are strongly connected, with fans taking a vested interest in events off the pitch as well as on it. Football's role within the UK is incredibly influential where the sport is able to make a real difference in communities, whether social, charitable or educational. It is important, therefore, that the work football undertakes is inspirational and exceptional and the entrants into this year's FBAs reflect that."

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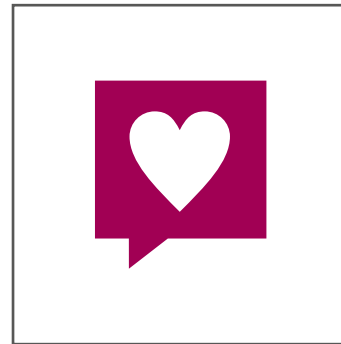
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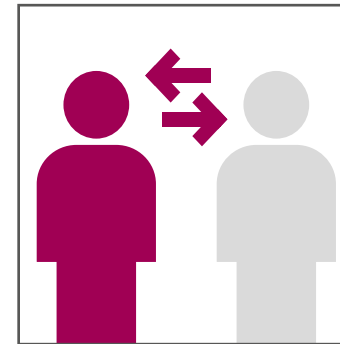
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# Core principles



The Five Year Forward View says that preventing ill health and early intervention are very important in keeping diverse communities healthy. To achieve this, we cannot rely on health professionals alone. We need to develop approaches that build on local community strengths and people's passions to encourage the kind of changes which support a healthy lifestyle and keep people well.



This type of large-scale change takes time to achieve and often requires partnerships. These can be people with a common purpose; people from the same areas; people who can provide different strengths, resources or opportunities.

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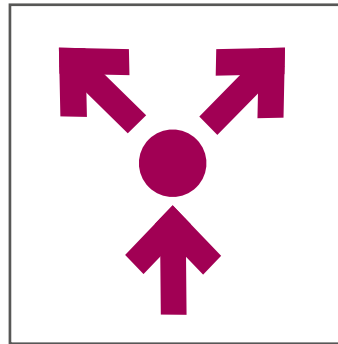
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## Core principles



This type of change focuses on reaching people through trusted routes, for example, through peers, friends, schools, hobbies and interests. Encouraging positive changes and actions through these routes is often more successful than through other ways.



Building local partnerships offers creative opportunities to promote equality, tackle health inequalities, and to address health improvements.

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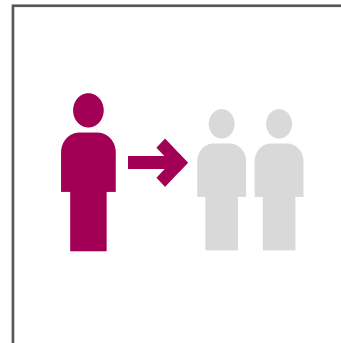
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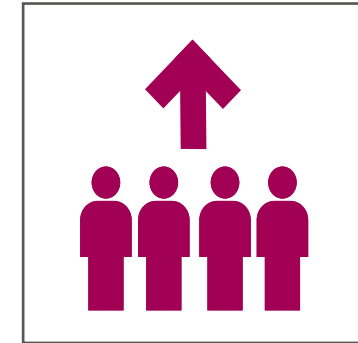
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Involving diverse communities brings new ideas, different skills and perspectives as well as innovative approaches to tackle the issues.



This way of working builds on people's commitment. Individuals can make a big difference when lots of people take action for change in a focused way.



We need to recognise and value the difference we can make as staff, employers, businesses, individuals, diverse communities and partner agencies. Together we can achieve much for ourselves, and our diverse local communities.

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**Dignity in Care. A campaign to eliminate abuse of frail and vulnerable people in care and ensure respect and dignity.**

Dignity in Care is a campaign to eliminate the abuse of frail and vulnerable people in care and to ensure their dignity and respect. It began in November 2006 and now has more than 58,000 registered Dignity Champions – either individuals or organisations. They are all part of a nationwide movement, working individually and collectively, to ensure people have a good experience of care when they need it. They include councillors, staff at all levels in the NHS and social care, volunteers, patients, their carers and members of the public.

The campaign is led by the National Dignity Council which works to raise the profile of the network and to promote the work Dignity Champions do to improve standards of care for service-users.

The campaign's core values reinforce dignity in our hearts minds and actions, changing the culture of care services and placing a greater emphasis on improving the quality of care and the experience of citizens using services including NHS hospitals, community services, care homes and home support service.



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Their actions include:

- Raising awareness of Dignity In Care;
- Inspiring local people to take action;
- Sharing good practice, giving an impetus to positive innovation;
- Transforming services by supporting people and organisations providing dignified services;
- Rewarding and recognising those people who make a difference and go that extra mile.

**Dame Joan Bakewell is their ambassador taking over from Sir Michael Parkinson. She said:**

“I am delighted to be associated with the Dignity in Care Campaign and the efforts it makes to understand and promote dignity. This is done with tenderness and generosity”.

To be inspired go to: [www.dignityincare.org.uk](http://www.dignityincare.org.uk)

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# Practical Steps

- 1. Work with local diverse communities to identify health ambitions.** What does the Joint Needs Assessment (JSNA) indicate? This can be found on your local council website. What equality issues and health inequalities are highlighted? What do local people and community groups want? What community assets or interests are there? Yorkshires' recent involvement in the Tour de France, for instance, championed an interest in cycling.
- 2. Understand where community organisations, local authority services and others have common goals and ambitions.** Discuss what might be a useful partnership such as dementia alliances to make dementia-friendly communities.
- 3. Shared responsibility means moving from traditional engagement approaches ('you tell us what's wrong and we'll sort it out') to a joint problem-solving (co-produced) approach ('what can we all do together that would sort it out').**
- 4. Build an action plan together. Looking at issues from several angles can help to develop creative solutions.** For example, a community fun run can raise awareness and funds for a particular health issue. It can be sponsored by local businesses, organised by community volunteers, delivered at community events and individual runners achieve personal benefits as well as being positive community activists.

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- 5. Identify local champions – active individuals with local knowledge and contacts who can make a difference.** Public organisations often focus on structure and governance but it is motivating and mobilising people which can make the difference.

### Case study

**Fixing Dad is one family's story highlighting the achievements of Dad** as he gets to grips with his diabetes and over the course of the year accepts challenges, big and small, to help change his behaviour. [Diabetes Week](#) unites individuals and organisations across Britain in a similar celebration of "I can do" ....

- 6. Recruit, train and develop local people, front-line workers, and voluntary organisations or businesses to use their local knowledge and experience to tackle an issue in a new way or reach a new audience.** For example, the Ice Bucket Challenge raised millions of pounds and international interest in Motor Neurone Disease; football clubs can reach an audience that traditional health campaigns do not.

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- 7. Offering rewards and recognition for involvement and support keeps people motivated, supports their efforts and helps build awareness and ongoing interest.**

Individuals, community groups and local businesses may value different approaches to rewards and recognition for their involvement.

- 8. Encouraging changes in behaviour draws upon social movement theory and nudge theory.** It can be useful to understand some of this, and explore case studies of where and how this has delivered change. Don't re-invent the wheel, instead adapt what works for your local priorities.

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### Case study

**The Upsy Downsy Case** Many local authorities and organisations are trialling behaviour change pilots to encourage positive lifestyle changes. (John et al., 2012). Joint work commissioned by Bolton NHS, working with Bolton Community Network based at Bolton Council for Voluntary Services (CVS), used new methods based on 'nudge-style', or encouragement based approaches to change health behaviours.

Bolton held workshops using a new board game called Upsy Downsy, which was based on Snakes and Ladders, to promote positive mental health. It used statement cards about good or 'upsy' habits and bad or 'downsy' habits to help people make choices and 'think happy habits'.

Participants pledged to take on a new good habit and were contacted a few weeks later with a gentle reminder and support information about local classes and organisations they might find useful. As a result, there was greater equity in uptake of health promotion prevention, screening and treatment services, including more minority ethnic women attending cervical screening appointments.

The Upsy Downsy game was delivered to more than 1,150 people who all pledged to take on a new habit to improve mental health and wellbeing.

<http://www.boltoncvs.org.uk/upsy-downsy>

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NHS Citizen is a national project which will allow NHS England to take into account the views of the public when it makes decisions

<http://www.nhscitizen.org.uk>

The Health Empowerment Leverage Project (Help) was launched by the NHS Alliance in 2014 to bring residents and services together to create stronger communities to improve health and wellbeing. It was commissioned by the Department of Health.

<http://www.healthempowerment.co.uk/>

Participation Works is a partnership of seven national children's and young people's agencies that allows children and young people to have a voice about the services they use.

<http://www.participationworks.org.uk/>

The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement, which closed in 2013, put together a study of how social movements can be used to drive change within the NHS. The findings are still available here:

[http://www.institute.nhs.uk/building\\_capability/new\\_methods%2c\\_tools\\_and\\_approaches.../social\\_movements.html](http://www.institute.nhs.uk/building_capability/new_methods%2c_tools_and_approaches.../social_movements.html)

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## Want to learn more?

Deliberative public engagement is a distinctive approach to involving people in decision-making. Involve is an organisation which champions best practice in how to involve people. This document sets out the Nine Principles of Deliberative Public Engagement

<http://www.involve.org.uk/blog/2011/06/28/deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles/>

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) offers guidance on public health improvement and practice at

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph9/chapter/1-public-health-need-and-practice>

NESTA (innovation organisation) produced a report entitled People Powered commissioning which sets out the Strengths Based Approaches to commissioning and planning services in a co-production model, clinical commissioners working with local people partners and providers to develop a new model of care <http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/people-powered-commissioning-embedding-innovation-practice>

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation published a report on how neighbourhoods can help the lonely. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/loneliness-evaluation>

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## Want to learn more?

Health for All (Leeds) Ltd is a community health development organisation which works in partnership with local government, health services and local people to engage with, and improve, disadvantaged communities <http://www.healthforall.org.uk/>

Transforming Participation in Health and Care – the NHS belongs to us all. How to involve patients and carers. NHS England <http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/trans-part-hc-guid1.pdf>

NHS Constitution for England <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>

The Building Health Partnerships Programme works to improve local health and wellbeing outcomes, through supporting the development of effective and productive partnerships between Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities and voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/policy-campaigns/policy/building-health-partnerships-programme>



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## Other Bite-Size Guides

Click on the links below to download each of our '[bite-size guides](#)' to participation. Additional guides are in development.

[Bite-size guide 1 – Principles for Participation in Commissioning](#)

[Bite-size guide 2 – Governance for Participation](#)

[Bite-size guide 3 – Planning for Participation](#)

[Bite-size guide 4 – Budgeting for Participation](#)

Guides 5 -15 are also available via the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/participation/resources/>

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NHS England's series of 'Bite-size guides' aims to help colleagues plan and deliver the best possible patient and public participation, in line with Transforming Participation in Health and Care.

For further information, please contact [england.nhs.participation@nhs.net](mailto:england.nhs.participation@nhs.net)

***Produced by the Public Participation team at NHS England.***