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Annotated bibliography: Community-centred approaches and systems

Description: Research and knowledge outputs to support the scaling of community-centred approaches and system working as part of action to reduce health inequalities, promote health and wellbeing and prevent illness; Originating from LBU’s Centre for Health Promotion Research and partnership with Public Health England and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Department for Health and Social Care UK.

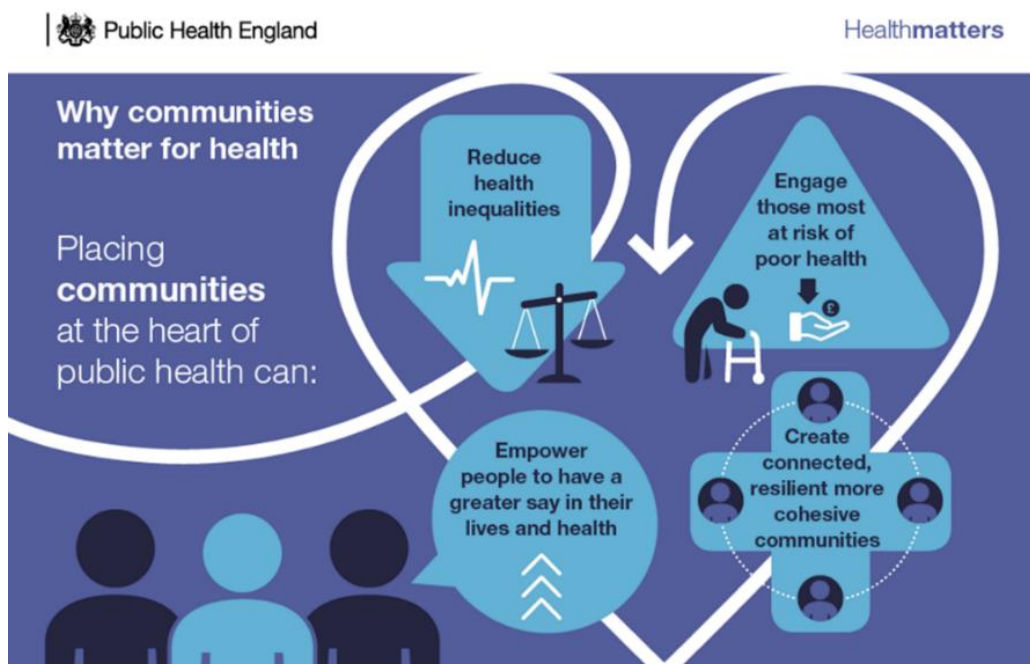
Date: January 2024

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Introduction

Community life, social connections and having a voice in local decisions are all factors that contribute to improving health and reducing health inequalities. Levels of trust, community belonging, and cohesion also contribute to community resilience and population health. These community-level determinants build control and resilience that can help buffer against illness and influence health-related behaviour.

Involving and empowering local communities, particularly disadvantaged groups, is central to action to improving health and reducing health inequalities. Participatory approaches can directly address marginalisation and powerlessness that underpin inequities.



(Source: 1)

Perspectives paper: South, J., Connolly, A.M., Stansfield, J.A., Johnstone, P., Henderson, G. and Fenton, K.A., 2019. Putting the public (back) into public health: leadership, evidence and action. *Journal of Public Health*, 41(1), pp.10-17. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdy041>

Government blog and infographics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-health-and-wellbeing-community-centred-approaches>

Government report: Bell, R., 2017. Psychosocial pathways and health outcomes: informing action on health inequalities. Public Health England and University College London. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/psychosocial-pathways-and-health-outcomes>

Research paper: Stansfield, J. and Bell, R., 2019. Applying a psychosocial pathways model to improving mental health and reducing health inequalities: practical approaches. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 65(2), pp.107-113. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764018823816>

Community-centred approaches

Community-centred approaches enhance individual and community capabilities, create healthier places and reduce health inequalities. Community-centred approaches are not just community-based, but are about mobilising assets within communities, promoting equity, and increasing people's control over their health and lives.

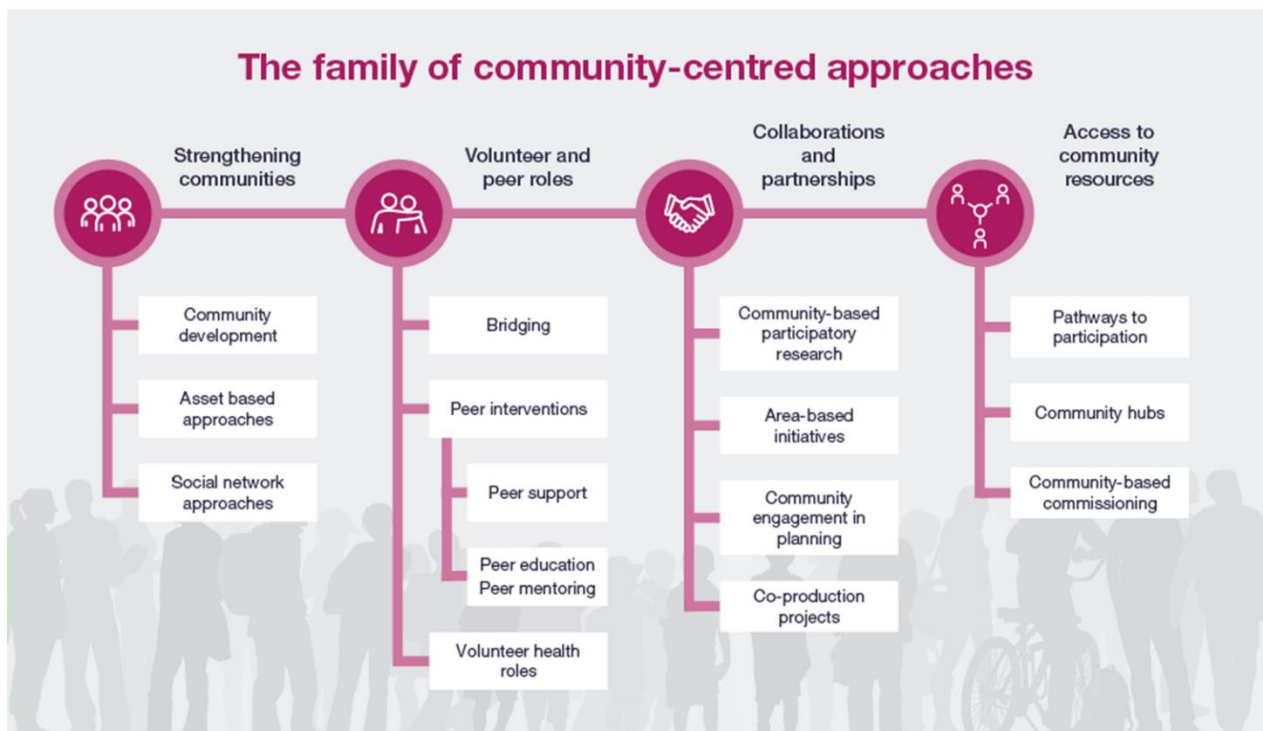
Research paper: South, J., Bagnall, A.M., Stansfield, J.A., Southby, K.J. and Mehta, P., 2019. An evidence-based framework on community-centred approaches for health: England, UK. *Health Promotion International*, 34(2), pp.356-366. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dax083>

Community-centred approaches involve:

- Using non-clinical methods
- Using participatory approaches, such as community members actively involved in design, delivery and evaluation
- Reducing barriers to engagement
- Utilising and building on local community assets
- Collaborating with those most at risk of poor health
- Changing the conditions that drive poor health
- Addressing community-level factors such as social networks, social capital and empowerment
- Increasing people's control over their health

Government guidance: Guide to Community-Centred Approaches for Health & Wellbeing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-wellbeing-a-guide-to-community-centred-approaches>

The 'family of community-centred approaches' shows the range of practical and evidence-informed approaches that can be scaled in local neighbourhoods:



(Source: 1)

Findings informed NICE guidance on Community Engagement to provide recommendations for public health, health and social care delivery

<https://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/community-engagement>. It includes quality standards for commissioning <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs148>, and standards for promoting health and preventing premature mortality amongst Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs167>

A knowledge translation project supported implementation of the guide and 'family' of community-centred approaches.

Research paper 2018: Stansfield, J. and South, J., 2018. A knowledge translation project on community-centred approaches in public health. *Journal of Public Health*, 40(suppl_1), pp.i57-i63. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/idx147>

Application to practice – Collection of practice examples

Evidence gathered from public health practice has value in identifying key processes to promote health and reduce health inequalities and describe implementation. LBU worked with PHE to test and develop a rigorous process to collate practice examples.

Research paper: H Outhwaite, S Evans, D Bell, M Manchini, J Stansfield, W Marsh, J South, 2017. A pilot project to develop community-centred public health practice examples, England, UK: *European Journal of Public Health*, Volume 27, Issue suppl_3, November 2017, cxx187.365. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckx187.365>

Research paper: South, J., Mapplethorpe, T., Gledhill, R., Marsh, W., Stansfield, J., Evans, S., Mancini, M. and Outhwaite, H., 2023. Learning from public health practice: the development of a library of community-centered practice examples. *Journal of Public Health*, 45(2), pp.414-422. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdac065>

Research paper: South, J., Woodall, J., Stansfield, J., Mapplethorpe, T., Passey, A. and Bagnall, A.M., 2024. A qualitative synthesis of practice-based learning from case studies on COVID community champion programmes in England, UK. *BMC Public Health*, 24(1), p.7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-17470-1>

Examples from local community-centred practice in England can be found in the UKHSA online library: <https://ukhsalibrary.koha-ptfs.co.uk/practice-examples/caba/>

Practice examples from the voluntary sector and volunteering from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations are available at: <https://ukhsalibrary.koha-ptfs.co.uk/practice-examples-2/caba/wsa/ncvo/>

Taking a whole system approach – community-centred public health

To have impact on widening health inequalities, further action can be taken to put communities at the heart of how public health is delivered. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the important role that communities play in health and the need to listen, involve and empower communities. Building trust and relationships between services and communities is an important part of a whole system approach.

Creating community-centred systems involves:

1. Scaling community-centred approaches across neighbourhoods
2. Involving communities in decision-making and being guided by community voice
3. Strengthening capacity of the workforce and VCSE to reach those most in need
4. Sustaining outcomes through long-term planning and measuring what matters to communities

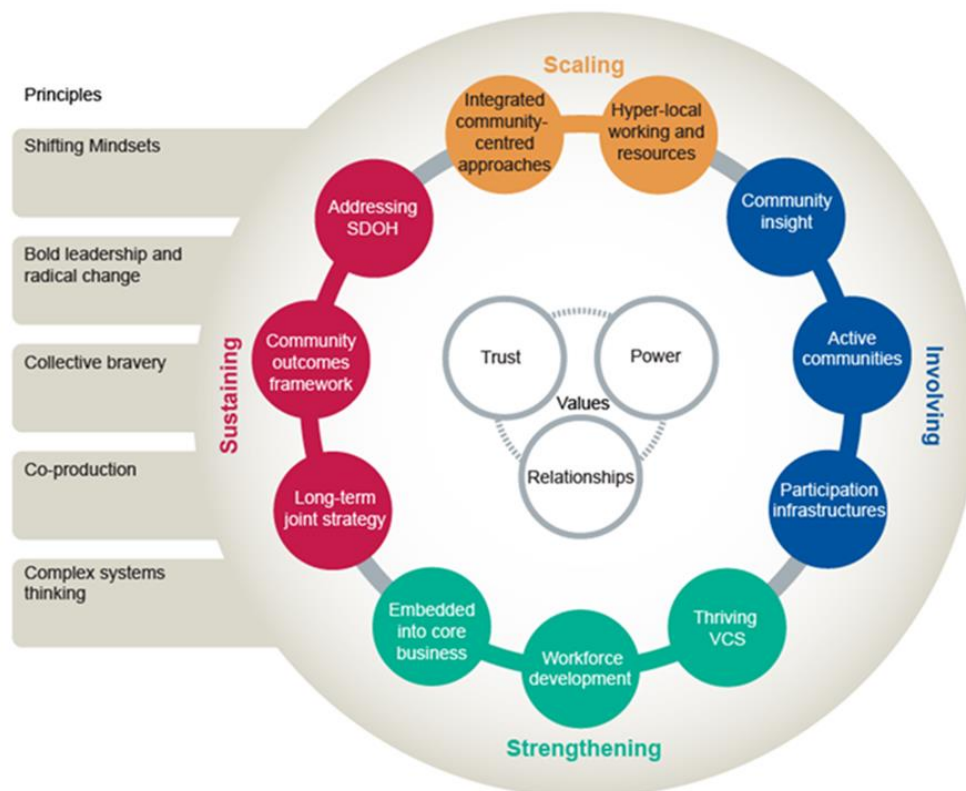


Fig 3. Community-centred public health: Taking a whole system approach (Source: 2)

Research paper: Stansfield, J., South, J. and Mapplethorpe, T., 2020. What are the elements of a whole system approach to community-centred public health? A qualitative study with public health leaders in England's local authority areas. *BMJ open*, 10(8).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-036044>

Government briefing and resources 2020: *Community-centred public health: taking a whole system approach*: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-centred-public-health-taking-a-whole-system-approach>

The framework has been tested with local areas exploring the role of community businesses in working with statutory partners to reduce health inequalities and improve social and economic outcomes. Read more at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-health-disparities-the-role-of-community-businesses-in-community-centred-systems>

Findings informed statutory guidance for NHS organisations to work in partnership with people and communities: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/working-in-partnership-with-people-and-communities-statutory-guidance/>

Sustainable outcomes can be achieved through a Place-Based Approach to reducing health inequalities. This involves joint action to integrate civic, service and community action. Government framework for local areas including guidance and tools are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-inequalities-place-based-approaches-to-reduce-inequalities>

Further resources are available in the Health Equity collection - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/health-equity>

Application to practice – the COVID-19 pandemic

The importance of communities to public health and the need for community-centred approaches and systems was highlighted globally as a key strand of the pandemic response and recovery.

Perspectives paper: South, J., Stansfield, J., Amlot, R. and Weston, D., 2020. Sustaining and strengthening community resilience throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. *Perspectives in Public Health*, 140(6), pp.305-308.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1757913920949582>

Community champions are one approach that involve community members as volunteers in public health and healthcare. This approach was deployed and strengthened as part of the pandemic response and recovery, informed by CHPR research.

Evidence review on community champions approaches - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-champion-approaches-rapid-scoping-review-of-evidence>

Programme guidance and resources to support those designing and implementing community champions programmes in local areas - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-champions-programme-guidance-and-resources>

Video from practice - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWgEeLnhwN4&t=4s>

Further examples of community champion local practice are available on the public health learning exchange - <https://khub.net/web/public-health-learning-exchange>

Building capacity and workforce development

Strengthening the system can be achieved through developing the knowledge and skills of the workforce and building capacity within the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. It is important that community-centred approaches are embedded into health programmes, services and strategies in order to reduce health disparities.

Bite-sized learning for health practitioners on community-centred practice at All Our Health <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-centred-practice-applying-all-our-health>

Perspectives paper: South, J. and Stansfield, J., 2016. Building Community Capacity: What can health visitors do?. *Journal of Health Visiting*, 4(3), pp.138-141. <https://doi.org/10.12968/johv.2016.4.3.138>

E-learning for Health has more in-depth learning for public health practitioners on healthy communities and community-centred approaches - <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/community-centred-approaches-to-health-improvement/>

There is an Apprenticeship Standard for community health and wellbeing workers that can help build capacity - <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/community-health-and-wellbeing-worker/>

Research has informed national partnership delivery with the VCSE sector. The DHSC, and other statutory health and care system partners, work with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector via the Health and Wellbeing Alliance. Further information at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/hwalliance/>

References:

1. Public Health England. 2018. Health matters: community-centred health and wellbeing approaches. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-health-and-wellbeing-community-centred-approaches>
2. Stansfield, J, South, J and Mapplethorpe, T., 2020. Community-centred public health: Taking a whole system approach. Briefing of research findings. Public Health England. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-centred-public-health-taking-a-whole-system-approach>

Further information: <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/research/centre-for-health-promotion>