

## Case Study: Bowel Cancer Awareness Project

*This project effectively and successfully uses all 4 activities*

For more information on this project please click on this [Involve link](#)



### **Informing:** *Providing clear, relevant and accessible information*

One aim of the Bowel Cancer Awareness Project was to raise and improve awareness of the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer through accessible information.

Selected 'Community Champions' from the local area, public health and community workers from the local authority worked with local organisations to lead a campaign of talking and engaging with over 50s about the signs and the symptoms of bowel cancer.

Promotion of the cause was through conversations, public awareness events, leaflets, posters and radio and press advertisement.

### **Empowering:** *Supporting people to get involved, emphasising and developing their assets and experience, and – where appropriate – enable communities to influence decisions and make decisions of their own*

Another aim of the Bowel Cancer Awareness Project was to encourage residents to present symptoms at primary care services earlier, thereby increasing early diagnosis and reducing cancer inequalities in the more deprived areas.

Also, by supporting some members of the community to get involved and become 'Community Champions' a lasting and more developed understanding of the project will continue to benefit the area, effectively empowering residents to help themselves by helping each other.

### **Consulting:** *Asking for views on topics or issues and establishing dialogues to evaluate services or objectively influence decisions or policies*

The local authority supported consultation activity which aimed to involve approximately 2500 members of the community. The consultation activity used different approaches, including printed material, to engage members of the public to become potential 'community champions'.

When the community champions were chosen, further consultation on the topic of Bowel Cancer established the appropriate level of dialogue and tactics needed to engage the target audience.

Consulting with members of the community with which you wish to engage helps facilitate understanding of how to reach out and open dialogues.

### **Collaborating:** *Maintaining an ongoing dialogue and working with communities to develop solutions*

Initial work between members of the local community and the local authority gained links for the project with the Mosque, local GP surgery, community centres, the science college and a young persons group. Integration of Public Health and community workers from the authority provided wide ranging knowledge and understanding of the community with which the work was undertaken.

Direct links with some parts of the community, especially the most deprived areas, were essential to this project and its intended goals. For example during dialogue with members of the community it was established that there was unease felt towards access to health care; specifically appointments being unavailable, few female doctors and, especially on this subject, symptoms not being taken seriously.

**Conclusion:** The overall campaign to raise the importance of bowel cancer screening in deprived areas was developed closely with the community and with those most closely linked to the harder to reach demographic. Using the four activities to progress communication and involvement links enabled project success, so much so that one participant (a 'Community Champion') reported that, following the advice of the campaign, they visited their doctor and had been referred for secondary care. It can be seen through the projects development process the ongoing work will have a lasting effect on the community.