



THE WIDER DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

We at the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund Cycle of Demand team have been looking at what other factors contribute towards / prevent wellbeing. What keeps us healthy? How does the social landscape in Tower Hamlets manifest itself in health care? And what assets and capabilities can we unlock.

Understanding demand in primary care requires us to take into consideration Tower Hamlets as a place and the environment in which people are born, grow, work, live and age. Factors affecting the health of adults in Tower Hamlets include:

- + employment rates
- + income levels
- + educational attainment
- + housing quality
- + community cohesion
- + physical environment
- + levels of healthy behaviours
- + access to high quality health and social care services

These factors can be grouped as:

Individual and Lifestyle Factors (physical / emotional / addictions)

Social Factors and Community Networks (social isolation / exclusion / safeguarding / past trauma)

Living and Working Conditions (employment status / housing quality / education / parental confidence); and

Socio-Economic, Cultural and Environmental Problems (deprivation / poverty / malnutrition / green space / pollution / public transport)

HEALTH INEQUALITIES

There is a **social gradient** in health – the lower a person’s social position, the worse their health. These inequalities are not inevitable and are, therefore, considered a matter of fairness and social justice.

Action should focus on reducing the gradient in health. However, focussing solely on the most disadvantaged will not reduce health inequalities sufficiently. To reduce the steepness of the social gradient in health, actions must be universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage. We call this **proportionate universalism**.

HOW CAN WE IMPACT THESE FACTORS?

Action on health inequalities requires action across all the **social determinants** of health. To address these inequalities, we need to:

- + Recognise the impact of place and environment on health
- + Use asset based approaches that take into consideration existing skills and knowledge of communities
- + Work with statutory and voluntary sectors that work across domains affecting health

EXISTING EXAMPLES FROM THE BOROUGH

Taking the wider determinants of health seriously forces us to challenge a traditional NHS model that was set up to deal with infectious disease, acute illness and injury. Now, we are required to think creatively about how we can address health in a much more social way – and there are many examples of where this is happening across the Borough, some of which are highlighted below.

Factor	Example
Individual Lifestyle Factors	<p>The Health Trainers take self-referral who are based within various organisations within the Borough (Bromley By Bow, Osmani Centre, Stifford Centre and Social Action for Health). The person will be supported to address issues around diet, exercise, smoking, including those with mental health issues, who can be supported (indefinitely) http://www.osmanitrust.org/projects/health-trainers</p> <p>Patients can self-refer for individual or group therapy to Compass Wellbeing for a variety of common mental health issues for up to 12 weeks http://www.compasswellbeing.co.uk/#get_help/</p> <p>There is also lots of emotional and practical support available for carers http://communitypsychotherapy.org.uk/ http://www.carersuk.org/</p> <p>Those struggling with addiction can self-refer to Community Alcohol Teams, and the Lifeline Project for support over a 12 week period http://www.lifeline.org.uk/</p> <p>Walking is a great way to encourage exercise and promote well-being. Walking groups are easily set up from the surgery, For example, the Bengali women's walking group at Bromley by Bow Health Centre or can be linked in to more national programs! http://www.beatthestreet.me/</p> <p>http://www.walkeast.org/</p>

Social Factors and Community Networks

Local community groups that are active in the area could promote or engage with people in the Practice

The Digital Inclusion Project run by the Bromley by Bow Centre is working with people across the Borough, including in GP waiting rooms supporting people to 'get online' with basic computer skills, and Internet navigation. They have a focus on health to use services like booking appointments and ordering prescriptions online, using NHS Choices and WebGP

East End Homes has a 'safe and well' scheme where they offer residents a regular phone call to check that everything is ok

The Casserole Club is a project that connects people over food <https://www.casseroleclub.com/>

There is a scheme via <https://www.borrowmydoggy.com> for people wishing to create a relationship with a dog (and his family) without the responsibility that pet ownership brings. There is also <http://www.borrowpets.com/> for other pet pals

Living and Working Conditions

Disability Welfare Advisors are available to support patients whose health impacts their ability to work and can offer advice as to how to manage situations like this

The Limehouse Project can support patients needing help with their benefits
<http://www.limehouseproject.org.uk/advice>

East End Homes Community Engagement setting up raised beds for their estates greenergardens@eastendhomes.net or join the Tower Hamlets food growing network www.wen.org.uk

The Blithehale Practice after school club. The trainee GPs run an event on Thursdays from 4.00 to 6.00 pm where they talk to school children about health issues

Try DIY Health: DIY Health is an approach to working with patients and local people using co-production as a way to build confidence and skills for patients to manage health. The approach is based on the assumption that the power balance between professionals and patients' needs to be redressed, and assumes an equal and reciprocal relationship. DIY Health training is based on a pilot project that was carried out between 2012 and 2015 in Tower Hamlets <http://www.uclpartners.com/our-work/academic-health-science-network/integrated-children-young-people-and-maternal-health/diy-health/>

Socio-Economic, Cultural and Environmental Conditions

Try sending a receptionist on training to give out foodbank vouchers

<https://www.firstlovefoundation.org.uk/foodbank/>

Try getting involved with Citizens UK's Living Wage campaign and encouraging your patients too!

http://www.citizensuk.org/living_wage

Try your locality Public Health Manager and ask them to run a Participatory Appraisal session to find out what issues are affecting your patients' health and get them involved in the process of change

Think about volunteering at the local city farm – great for physical and mental health, the environment and volunteering enables us to give something back which is great for wellbeing. <http://furry-tales.org.uk/>

USEFUL LINKS AND READING

+ “Impact of Supervisor Interactional Style on Employees' Blood Pressure” study
(see <http://oem.bmj.com/content/60/7/468.short>)

+ “Justice at Work and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease”
(see <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16246990>)

+ Bella Italia NHS discount : <http://www.bellaitalia.co.uk/bella-club/?offer=nhs-30-off-food>

+ Weightwatchers 25% NHS discount code 4-16-2069-28576