

Coventry City Council: Community Messengers

The
Strategy
Unit.



Overview

Reference: 29

Location: Coventry

Target Group: Multiple

Initiative type:

Community messengers

Contact

Website:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/>

[k/](#)

Twitter:

@coventrycc

Top Tip

Listen to communities

Why is this important to us?

In Coventry we found from our mapping that in our more deprived areas there were higher numbers of COVID-19 cases and lower uptake of testing and vaccination. The people who are not taking up the vaccination are the same people who are at risk of lots of other negative health outcomes. It wasn't all of our black and minority ethnic groups that had low uptake, but specifically those living in deprived areas. We decided to focus on these populations and the people who work with these populations.

What are we doing?

We started working with community messengers last summer, to engage with people around the government guidelines. We produced usable information and then got feedback from different parts of our population. What the funding allowed us to do is enhance our offer, to incentivise some parts of our population who weren't currently on the community messengers panel to join us. We awarded small grants to smaller organisations which just allowed them time and expenses to attend meetings so we could disseminate messages. We've also allowed larger community organisations, such as our refugee and migrant centre, to host a community messenger so that people there can find support.

Who is involved?

The scheme was set up by the Community Resilience Team, who already had links to voluntary and community sector organisations. Originally, we only had 50 community messengers, but now we're up to around 270. We have a broad coverage around the city and in terms of ethnic groups and underserved populations, such as people with disabilities and people who live in the most deprived areas. Some of our webinars have featured GPs and community leaders.

What works for us?

We asked the CCG to get the granular level data so we could see where uptake was low. We wanted to understand why, but also be able to listen to people's concerns. Everything we've done has been led by the messages that we're hearing back from people. We've put on webinars with GPs and community leaders. We've also used pictorial infographics as much as possible, as some of the translated materials are not translated in the way that people understand. For us, it's always been about giving out messages of reassurance, but also being honest and ensuring there is choice.

Amongst deprived communities, the numbers of people vaccinated is definitely increasing.

NHS England

NHS Improvement