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Brooks, Joanna, Bravington, Alison, Rodriguez, Alison, King, Nigel and Percy-Smith, Barry

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Using participatory research methods to facilitate wide stakeholder involvement: Experiences from a community public health workshop

Jo Brooks, Alison Bravington,
Alison Rodriguez, Nigel King and
Barry Percy-Smith

Background to the study: changing times for public health in the UK

- Health and Social Care Act (2012)
- The Marmot Review (2010)
- Increased focus on **ABCD** and an **assets approach**

Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Key messages from the Marmot Review

- Health inequalities result from social inequalities
- Action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health
- Effective local delivery requires effective **participatory decision-making** at local level. This can only happen by empowering individuals and local communities.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

- Balances traditional focus on health **deficits** with an equal focus on health **assets**
- Assets may be at **individual, community, and organisational/ institutional** level
(Morgan & Ziglio, 2007)
- Focus on assets rather than needs ➡ increased community efficacy in addressing own needs
(Foot & Hopkins, 2010)

Our project

- Undertaken by University of Huddersfield for Hull City Council Public Health team (Brooks et al, 2015)
- Qualitative work undertaken from an Assets Approach focus:
 - What assets exist in different communities throughout Hull?
 - How can these assets be utilised?

Overview of study design

- **Phase 1: Half-day city wide stakeholder workshop;**
- **Phase 2: Community focus groups (n = 12) with a diverse range of groups in contrasting local areas;**
- **Phase 3: Case study interviews (n=12);**
- **Phase 4: Presentation of findings to community groups and stakeholders;**
- **Phase 5: Final report**

Purpose of workshop

- To explore local and national issues and challenges in responding to different public health needs;
- To identify areas of good practice and reflect on how these might be developed further;
- To identify issues and questions to inform the focus for qualitative inquiry in subsequent stages of the research;
- To achieve all this from multiple stakeholder perspectives;
- To allow the research team to learn about local context and make contacts

Underlying principles

- **Appreciative Inquiry**
- **Action inquiry**
- **World (or Knowledge) Café**

Participants

- Representatives from council (public health; members of HWB; social care; early years; housing; housing)
- Representatives from health services and CCG (inc. professionals, PPI, commissioned services)
- Community groups

- 40 attended in total (from 80 invitations)

Workshop plan

- **Welcome and introductions**
- **Warm up activity**
- **Initial inquiry – photovoice**
- **Plenary**
- **Identifying questions**
- **Answering questions**
- **Whole group discussion**
- **Final discussion and reflections**

Welcome/ Introductions/ Warm up activity

- Seating arrangements and 'colour-coding'
- Introductions
- Warm up activity: what are the most important considerations in improving Public Health outcomes in Hull?

Initial inquiry – photovoice

- Choose a photo that captures something about: “What it might mean to make health and wellbeing everybody’s responsibility?” Discuss in groups.

Plenary and identifying questions

- What are we learning here?
- What seems really important in improving Public Health outcomes?
- How do these issues and questions challenge us in our own roles?

- In small groups (at 'home table') discuss:
"If there were **one question** that if answered would best help us focus how we might respond better to Public Health priorities, what would it be?"

Answering questions

- Questions from research team (N = 10) and from previous session (N=7) stuck to walls
- Participants added responses, comments, questions using colour coded Post its(previously assigned)

Whole group discussion, final discussion and reflections

- “Based on your collective inquiry and reflections today, let’s return to our original question. What are we learning about how we might make H&WB everybody’s responsibility in Hull?”
- “What should we do differently? What are you taking away from discussions today?”

Then what?

- Successfully built relationships between research team and participants, research team and funder and between participants themselves
- Overwhelmingly positive delegate feedback
- Event written up as interim report to funder
- Collated information usefully informed next research stages

Acknowledgements

- Hull City Council Public Health Team
- Everyone who took part in both this event and the research project
- Research team

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