**Population health case studies**

**Working with schools in Rossendale**

**What was the issue we were trying to resolve/why was it needed?**

The issue being addressed was health inequalities among children and the broader school community in Rossendale. The project aimed to improve health outcomes by integrating healthcare initiatives within educational settings. This was needed because:

* There is a significant link between poor performance in school and poor health outcomes in adulthood.
* 20% of health gaps between rich and poor are due to differences in education, learning, and literacy.
* The chosen school, Valley Leadership Academy, is situated in an area of social deprivation and has been struggling with poor Ofsted reports, requiring improvements after being graded inadequate for over 10 years.
* The school had a change in senior leadership, which provided an opportunity to implement novel approaches to improve health and educational outcomes.

**Who was it aimed at?**

The project was aimed at the entire school community, including:

* **Pupils:** Various health and well-being initiatives were conducted for students, such as sleep hygiene sessions, careers mentoring, and targeted support for specific families and pupils.
* **Staff:** Health checks, yoga sessions, and educational sessions on topics like menopause were organised for the teaching staff.
* **Parents and Carers:** Health checks, yoga, and family cooking events were conducted to engage parents and carers in improving their health and well-being, as well as strengthening family relationships.
* **Wider Community:** The project also included a well-being event open to the entire community, offering various health-related activities and information.

**Summary of the project**

**Project Summary:** Improving Health Outcomes in Rossendale School Community

**Key Objectives:**

* Address health inequalities among children and the broader school community.
* Integrate healthcare initiatives within educational settings to improve health and educational outcomes.

**Target Groups:**

* **Pupils:** Health and well-being sessions, sleep hygiene education, careers mentoring, and targeted support.
* **Staff:** Health checks, yoga sessions, menopause management education.
* **Parents and Carers:** Health checks, yoga, family cooking events.
* **Wider Community:** Well-being event with various health-related activities.

**Activities and Initiatives:**

* **Health Checks:** Conducted for staff and parents to manage chronic diseases and improve overall health.
* **Yoga Sessions:** Organized for staff and parents to promote physical and mental well-being.
* **Educational Sessions:** Topics included menopause management for staff and sleep hygiene for pupils.
* **Family Cooking Events:** Weekly sessions to teach families about healthy eating and strengthen family relationships.
* **Community Well-being Event:** A free event offering activities like rock climbing, meditation, and CPR training to engage the entire community.

**Challenges:**

* Coordination between NHS and educational institutions, both under significant pressure.
* Ensuring participation from the right target groups, particularly parents who needed the most support.

**Outcomes:**

* Improved health habits among participants, such as healthier eating and increased physical activity.
* Enhanced collaboration between healthcare professionals and educational staff.
* Positive impact on community engagement and well-being.

**Next Steps:**

* Continue improving health outcomes through educational settings.
* Strengthen community connections and collaboration.

**Who was involved – partnership approach for example?**

The project involved a partnership approach with various stakeholders:

* **Healthcare Professionals:** Led by Dr Emma Gladwinfield and supported by Dr Sam Smith, along with physician associates, nursing associates, and third-year medical students from UCLan.
* **School Staff:** Collaboration with teaching staff, heads of years, and the pastoral team to identify and support target families and pupils.
* **Mental Health Services:** Regular involvement of Karen Sillett, head of mental health services in schools, to address adolescent mental health issues.
* **Local Organizations:** Engagement with local youth clubs, family and well-being centers, family planning clinics, STI clinics, and other community services.
* **Community Partners:** Collaboration with local leisure trusts, charities, and first responders for the community well-being event.

This partnership approach was crucial for the project's success, ensuring comprehensive support and resources for the school community.

**Full names of people who supported with the project?**

* **Dr. Emma Gladwinfield:** General Practitioner in Rossendale and Dr Sam Smith who is the health inequality GP.
* **Sam Smith:** Health inequality GP who supported the project.
* **Karen Sillett:** Head of mental health services in schools.

Other contributors included third-year medical students from UCLan and various local healthcare professionals.

**When did it start/finish (is it ongoing)?**

The project started in October and is ongoing. Emma has been conducting regular cooking sessions every Thursday since October.

**What area was/is it delivered in?**

The project is delivered in Rossendale, specifically targeting schools in the area, including nurseries, primary schools, and the Valley Leadership Academy, a senior school situated on the border between Bacup and Stacksteads.

**How did the team go about delivering it?**

**The team delivered the project through a series of collaborative and community-focused initiatives:**

* **Collaboration with Schools:** Emma worked closely with schools, including nurseries, primary schools, and the Valley Leadership Academy, to integrate health initiatives into the school environment.
* **Health Checks and Yoga for Staff:** Organized drop-in health checks, staff yoga sessions, and health education sessions, such as managing menopause, for school staff.
* **Engagement with Parents and Carers:** Hosted events like afternoon tea with gentle yoga and meditation, and provided health checks for parents and carers.
* **Cooking Sessions:** Conducted regular cooking sessions for selected families to promote healthy eating and strengthen family relationships.
* **Mental Health Support:** Strengthened relationships with mental health services and provided regular support to the school community.
* **Educational Sessions:** Delivered sessions on topics like sleep hygiene and careers mentoring for pupils, often led by medical students.
* **Community Well-being Event:** Organized a free well-being event in Rossendale, involving various community organizations and activities.

These initiatives were aimed at improving health outcomes and fostering a deeper connection with the community.

**What were the main outcomes/impacts for people?**

**The main outcomes and impacts for people included:**

* **Improved Health Awareness:** Staff and parents received health checks and education on various health topics, increasing their awareness and management of health issues.
* **Enhanced Physical Activity:** Staff participated in yoga sessions, and parents engaged in gentle yoga and meditation, promoting physical activity and well-being.
* **Better Eating Habits:** Families learned to cook healthy meals, reducing reliance on processed foods and takeaways, and improving their dietary habits.
* **Strengthened Family Relationships:** Cooking sessions provided quality time for families, improving relationships and communication.
* **Mental Health Support:** Regular visits from mental health services helped address adolescent mental health issues and provided necessary referrals.
* **Community Engagement**: The well-being event brought together various community organizations, offering activities and services to the broader community.
* **Educational Benefits:** Pupils received sessions on sleep hygiene, healthy hearts, and stress reduction, enhancing their knowledge and practices related to health.

Overall, the project fostered a deeper connection with the community, improved health outcomes, and motivated healthcare professionals involved in the initiatives.

**Are there any comments/statements from people it helped?**

* **Positive Feedback from Families:** One child mentioned that the egg, ham, and vegetable muffins they made were the tastiest thing they had ever eaten, and they continued to make them regularly at home, improving their family's eating habits.
* **Impact on Pupils:** A young man who wanted to be a chef found the cooking sessions helpful for his confidence and integration into the new school.
* **Medical Students' Experience:** The medical students felt that their participation in the project improved their communication skills and allowed them to contribute significantly to the community.

These comments highlight the positive impact of the project on individuals' health, confidence, and community engagement.

**How many people were seen or accessed support?**

* **Health Checks:** Staff and parents received health checks during drop-in sessions and pop-up events. In total including supermarket pop up clinics- we have done approx 60 in the year
* **Yoga Sessions:** Staff participated in yoga sessions, and parents engaged in gentle yoga and meditation. 30 people- a significant number enjoyed it so much they have started doing yoga in the park (free event in Rossendale)
* **Cooking Sessions:** Regular cooking sessions involved cherry-picked families, medical students, and school staff. This is the big success of the project. We have 10 families at each session. It runs most of the school term. We often have parent, child and siblings come- sometimes extended family comes too! Recent had our local MP Andy McNae come- Please see picture below of this. School term is 38 weeks a year.
* **Mental Health Support:** Regular visits from mental health services provided support to adolescents. The mental health in schools team regularly attend the cooking sessions- hoping to pick up people who may need their support but haven't been referred yet.
* **Well-being Event:** Over 500 community members attended, engaging in various mind, body, and soul activities, and learning CPR.

