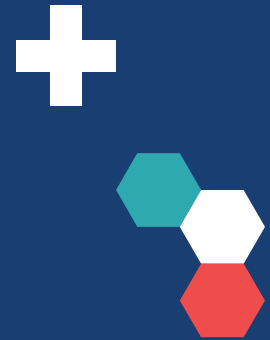


Evaluation of three West Midlands local authority COVID-19 Community Champions programmes



Presenter: Dr. Ngozika Jane Hemuka.

Public Health Intervention

Responsive Studies Team (PHIRST) - Fusion

Project team: Ruth Jepson, Murali Subramanian, Ngozika, Jane Hemuka, Divya Sivaramakrishnan, Glenna Nightingale, Nai Rui Chng, Sinha De Silva, Murali Subramanian, Louis Goffe, Andrew Passey, Bronia Arnott



AIM



- To present the findings of the COVID-19 Community Champions (CCC) programme evaluation to the HWB.
- To present the recommendations from the evaluation made around how we work collaboratively with community groups to build on these findings, and take forward the community champions approach across a wider range of public health initiatives



CCC programme

- Tailored, community-based approach - reoriented toward addressing vaccine hesitancy during Covid-19 pandemic
- Vaccines were an important part of the government strategy to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic - Vaccine hesitancy a challenge
- Significant disparities in vaccine uptake: ethnic minority communities, deprived areas and lower socio-economic groups (Dolby et al, 2022; Gaughan et al, 2022)
- Government made substantial investment to support the Covid Community Champions programme.

“Community champions are typically volunteers from a local area who act as a bridge between people and health and care services, signposting community members to services, communicating health messages or running outreach sessions”

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2023/07/community-champions-thriving-beyond-covid>



PHIRST CCC evaluation



- PHIRST Fusion team consisting of members from: the University of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle
- Evaluate the Covid Community Champions programme in three West Midlands Local Authority:
 - Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
 - Birmingham City Council
 - Walsall Council



Phase 1: Quantitative exploratory analyses

Aims

1. To determine whether vaccine uptake rates can be estimated using administrative data – during and prior to the CCC activity
2. To create basic visualizations of the CCC activity per Local Authority and of vaccine uptake and GP registrations.



Key data sources

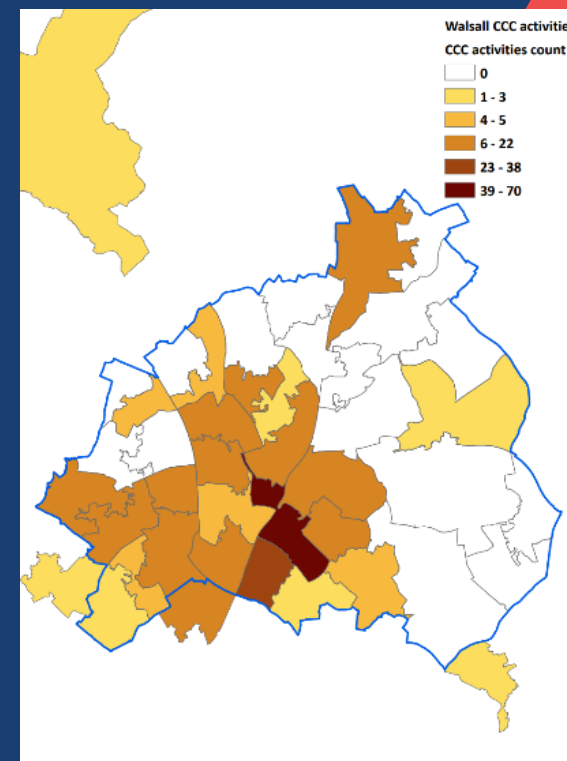
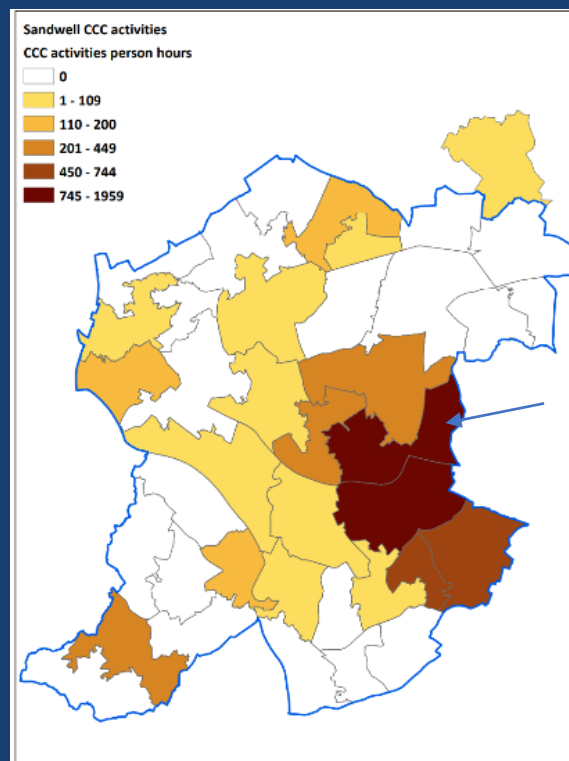
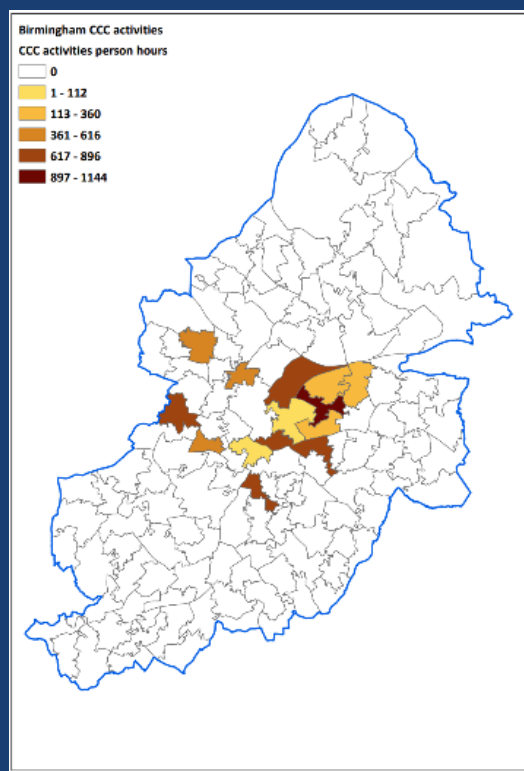


1. UKHSA (UK Health Security Agency) Vaccine uptake data: This data is provided by MSOA by day per LA.
2. Councils (Birmingham, Sandwell, Walsall) - Covid Champion Activities

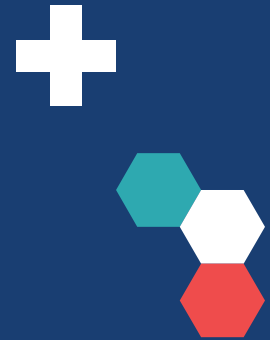


Results

CCC Activity



Phase 2: Qualitative interviews with 10 programme coordinators and 5 community champions across the three LAs



- April to June 2023
- Three researchers – including the embedded researcher from Sandwell council
- A thematic analysis of the interviews was carried out



Themes



1. Barriers and Facilitators to engaging with CCC activities

Coordinators felt that language disparities and distrust among the champions hinder engagement.

'Vaccine Toolkit translated into many languages would have been a helpful move with lack of trust in the council or in the NHS' (Coordinator)

Positive community networks and trusted sources enhance communication.

2. Sustainability

Champions need funding and ongoing learning that focuses on crucial messages to deliver.

- 'They are not supported by anybody...if it needs to work, they need better funding, more resources and continued attention' (Coordinator)*



Themes

3. Trust and Distrust

- Effective communication and open dialogue, built trust.
- Cooperative engagement within the CCC programme fostered trust.
- Lived experiences of champions relating to vaccine-related side effects contributed to a culture of mistrust.
- Historical research exploitation deepened medical mistrust.
- Lack of responsiveness from local government and local MPs contributed to distrust.

4. Transferability

- CCC's collaborative model can be transferred to other public health projects
- Comprehensive training is essential, and meetings need improvement.



Phase 3: Community Surveys

- Onsite community surveys were conducted in Walsall (ASDA superstore) and Smethwick (Guru Nanak Gurudwara) - July 2023.
- A total of 221 valid responses were gathered.
- 112 Female, 102 Male, 7 Not Reported
- 49.3% Asians, 32.2% White, 10% Black, 8.5% Others

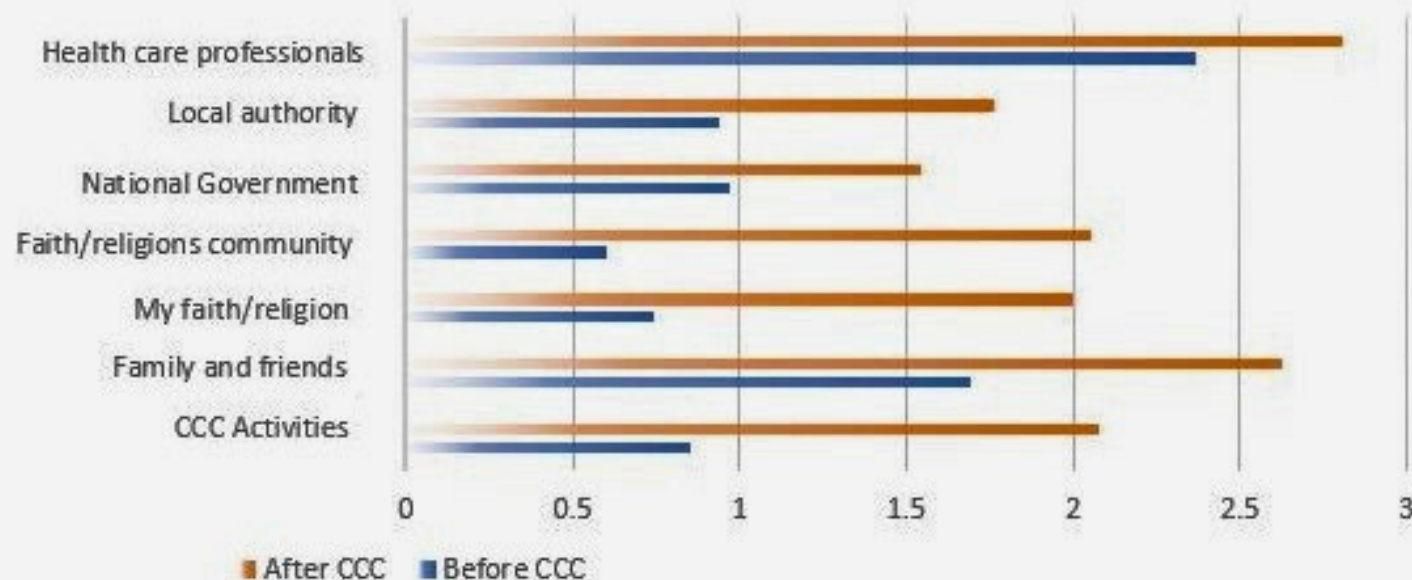


Trust Before and After CCC

After the CCC activities, the most significant increase in trust was observed in faith and religion, local authority, and family and friends.

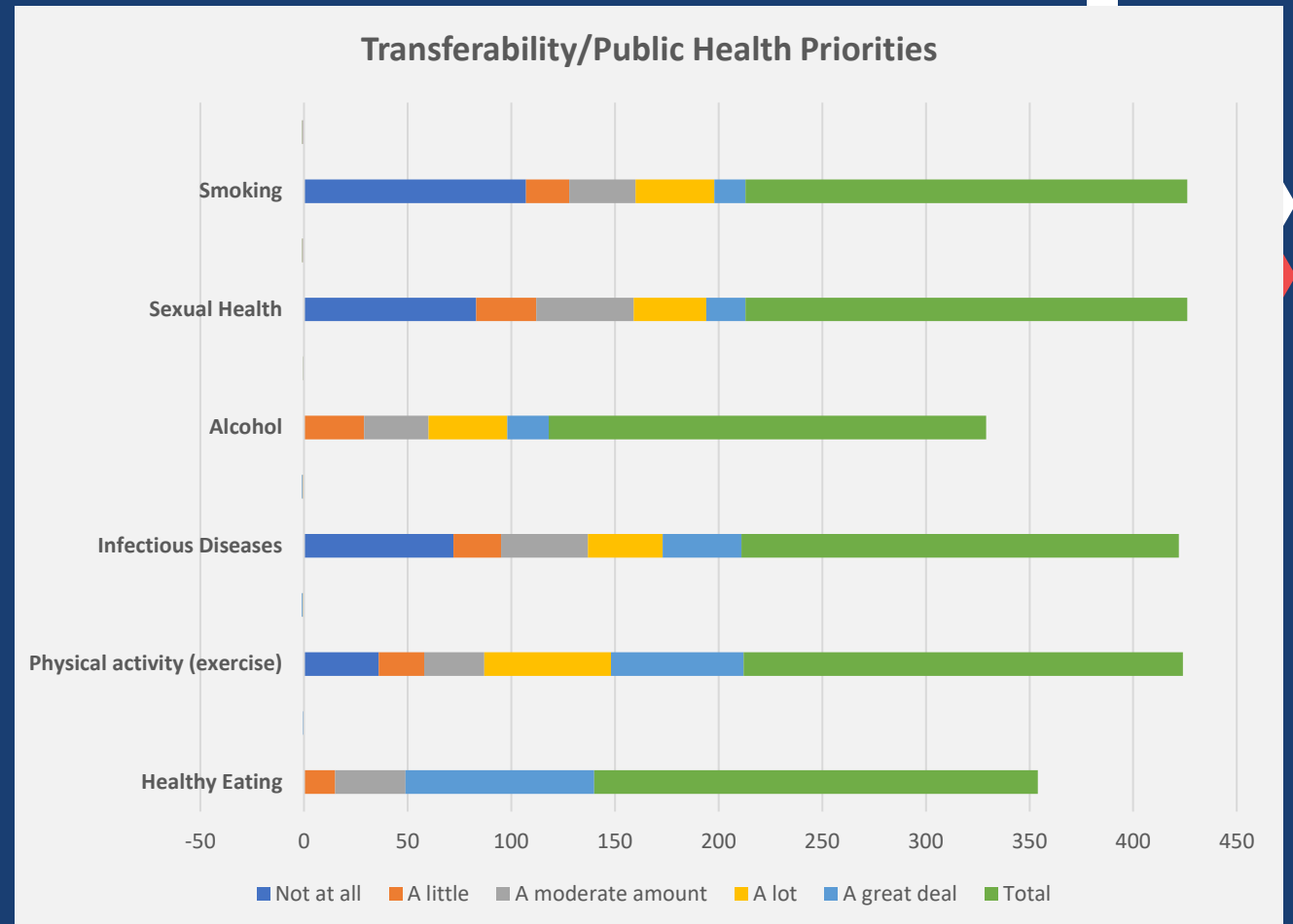
Trust in healthcare professionals remained consistently high both before and after the CCC program

Trust Ratings - Pre and Post CCC activities



Transferability/Public Health priorities

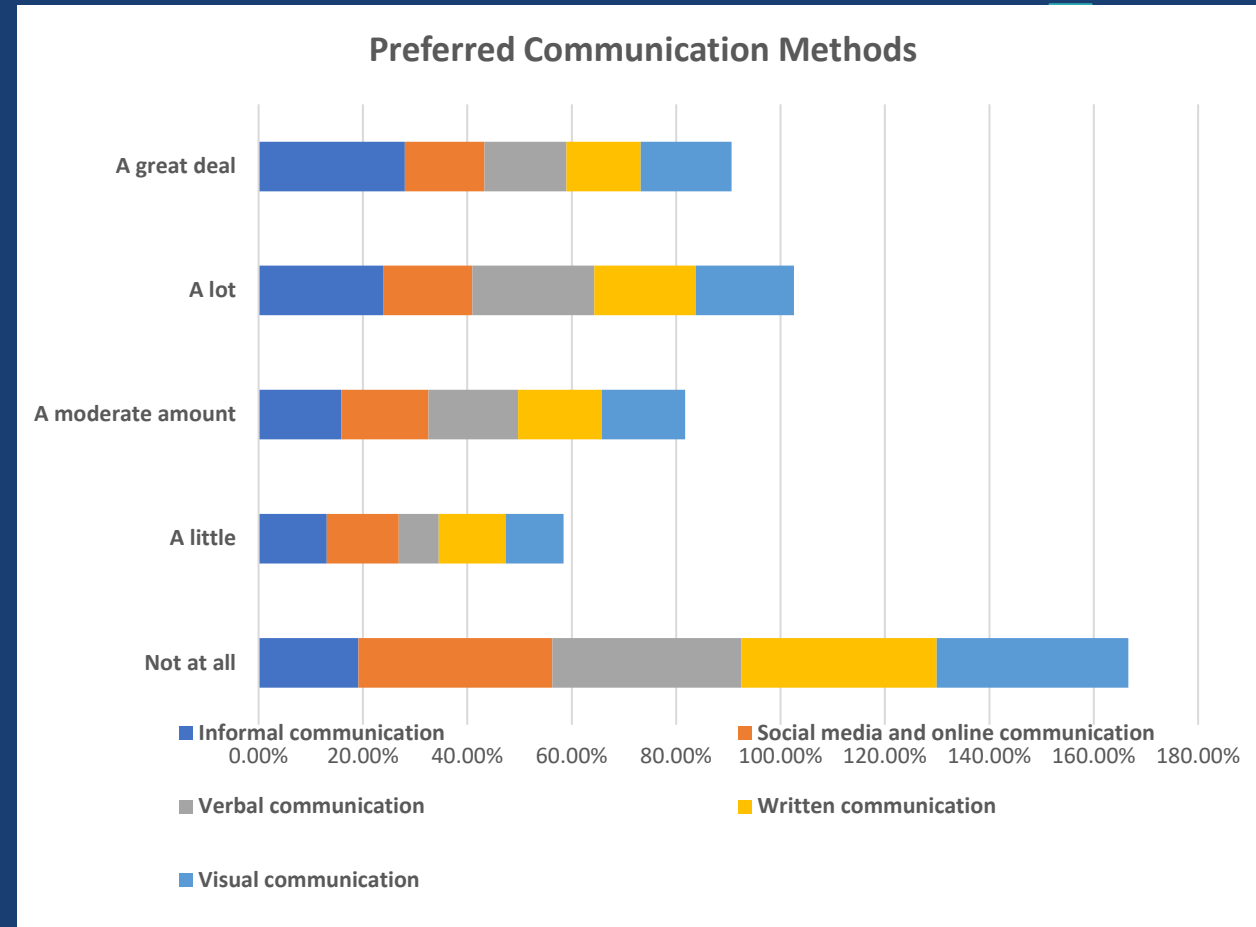
The survey revealed that the top preference for such activities is in healthy eating, followed by physical activity



Preferred Communication Methods



- Informal communication such as chatting with friends and family came out as the most preferred method while information sharing via social media is the least preferred method of communication



Conclusion



- A successful CCC programme is one which encourages trust amongst champions through supportive engagement and collaborative working with LAs, addresses barriers more specifically to language needs to make sure Public Health messages get delivered to diverse communities.
- To ensure the sustainability of the CCC programme there is a need for sustainable funding, systems that reward the champions and organisations, and ongoing learning.



ਭੂਨਿਟੀ ਚੈਂਪੀਅਨਜ਼

ਸਥਾਨਕ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਨੇ ਕੋਵਿਡ -19 ਦੇ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਭਾਈਚਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੋਵਿਡ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਲਈ ਖੋਜਕਰਤਾਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਚੈਂਪੀਅਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਵੇਂ

ਤਾਵਾਂ ਨੇ 221 ਸਥਾਨਕ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ

ਸੁਪਰਸਟੋਰ, ਵਾਲਸਲ
ਰਾ, ਸਮੈਥਵਿਕ, ਸੈਂਡਵੈਲ

ਲਈ QR ਕੋਡ ਨੂੰ ਸਕੈਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ
ਲਈ ਪੰਨਾ ਮੋੜੋ।



D Community Champions

During the Covid-19 pandemic local councils created
19 Community Champions. Volunteers from
communities to help people understand
information about COVID from the NHS and
Government.

Local councils have been working with
volunteers to understand how Community
Champions has made a difference in your area.

23 researchers surveyed 221 local people at
St Matthews Superstore, Walsall
Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick, Sandwell

Scan the QR code to read the full research report or
visit the website to see key findings from the survey



Recommendations

1. Build a community of trusted champions to support public health messaging.
2. Work collaboratively with community champions and voluntary organisations, ensuring clear guidance and expectations of the role of champions.
3. Allocate sufficient funding to facilitate regular meetings and communications with community champions to support collaborative working, community champion's training in communication styles and public engagement, learning, celebratory events, and rewards, to ensure a successful programme.
4. Support community champions connected to a range of local organisations, including voluntary sector organisations, community groups, and faith groups to host face-to-face community events, café days, and seminars to deliver public health messages to their networks, community groups, and organisations.
5. Expand the role of COVID community champions to encompass a broader spectrum of public health initiatives, including promoting healthy eating, managing alcohol consumption, and encouraging physical activity.



Questions?

