

City & Hackney Health Inequalities Steering Group - one year on Partner briefing, January 2022

What this briefing covers

This short briefing note provides an overview of the work of the City & Hackney Health Inequalities Steering Group (HISG), since it was formed in November 2020 in the context of the coronavirus pandemic and the stark injustices this has exposed.

Role & purpose of the Health Inequalities Steering Group

The HISG was convened to provide a focal point for work being done locally to reduce unfair and avoidable differences in health outcomes between groups and communities.

Membership of the group is designed to represent all [four 'pillars' of a population health system](#) - the 'wider determinants' of health, health behaviours, places and communities, and an integrated health and care system. Members are drawn from the VCS, Healthwatch, local authorities, North East London CCG, NHS trusts, and PCN clinical directors. The steering group is chaired by Dr Sandra Husbands, City & Hackney's Director of Public Health.

The purpose of the group is to ensure our collective efforts have maximum impact, and that we make best use of our combined resources to tackle long-standing health inequalities, through collaboration and partnership. It strives to do this by:

- collecting and monitoring information about health inequalities in the City and Hackney and the actions being taken to address these
- helping to prioritise further measures needed to prevent and reverse existing health inequalities (in the short and long-term)
- mobilising local action, by working in partnership to influence decisions and empower others to act
- using our collective resources to support the effective delivery of priority actions to reduce health inequalities
- challenging, and taking collective action to address, institutional cultures and practices that act to perpetuate health inequalities
- empowering local communities and our workforce to take positive action to improve health and reduce inequalities.

The HISG works in close partnership with the new City & Hackney Population Health Hub, which has been established as a shared system resource to provide timely and actionable intelligence, develop practical tools and lead specific projects to improve population health and reduce health inequalities. Dr Husbands chairs the Population Health Hub as well as the HISG, which helps to ensure alignment of priorities and action plans. As part of its workplan, the Population Health Hub is leading the delivery of a number of projects in support of the HISG's cross-cutting strategic objectives (see below).

Progress to date - looking back over the past 12 months

Early in 2021, the HISG defined 10 cross-cutting areas for system-wide action to reduce local health inequalities (see below).

10 cross-cutting areas for system-wide action to reduce health inequalities

1. **Equalities data & insights:** Routine collection and analysis of service equalities data & insight to inform actions
2. **Tools & resources:** Develop and enable system-wide adoption of tools to embed routine consideration of health equity in decision-making
3. **Tackling structural racism & systemic discrimination:** adopt a partnership position and action plan to tackle racism and wider discrimination with local institutions
4. **Community engagement, involvement & empowerment:** build trust and adopt flexible models of engagement to work in partnership with residents to improve population health
5. **Health in all policies:** ensure wider policies and strategies explicitly consider and address health inequalities
6. **Anchor networks:** local anchor institutions collectively use their local economic power to lead action on reducing social inequalities that underpin health inequalities
7. **Strengths-based, preventative approach to service provision:** 'no wrong door' access to support for residents to address wider health and wellbeing needs
8. **Staff health and wellbeing:** build on Covid-19 risk assessments to provide ongoing support for wider staff wellbeing needs
9. **Digital inclusion:** pool system resources to x3 dimensions of exclusion: skills, connectivity, accessibility
10. **Tailored, accessible information about services and wider wellbeing support:** produce information in community languages that is culturally appropriate and responsive to local diverse needs

We also produced a **Covid-19 inequalities evidence pack** (latest version is saved [here](#); this will be updated early in 2022). This evidence pack was shared with the Health and Wellbeing Boards to help inform the development of two new HWB strategies for Hackney and the City of London. HISG members also contributed to two workshops to shape the HWB strategy priorities - the 10 cross-cutting areas for action are explicitly referenced in the [draft Hackney strategy](#).

The Population Health Hub is leading on the delivery of a number key projects on behalf of the HISG, specifically addressing three of the 10 cross-cutting priorities, namely:

- a stocktake of equalities data across the health and care system, including a 'deep dive' of mental health and sexual health service data [1. *equalities data & insights*]
- co-development of a resource pack to facilitate routine consideration of health equity in local decision-making and planning [2. *tools & resources*]
- the design and delivery of a series of workshops to develop a shared system framework for inclusive resident involvement to improve population health outcomes [4. *Community engagement, involvement & empowerment*].

Another major programme of work that is being progressed by the HISG is the development of an action plan to embed an explicit anti-racist approach in tackling health inequalities across the City and Hackney.

The steering group has also hosted a number of conversations to review and offer support for work being led by wider system partners on a number of other priority areas - including digital inclusion; tailored & accessible information about services and wider wellbeing support; and anchor networks. There are named HISG leads for all of these cross-cutting areas, who are taking responsibility for ensuring that the steering group is kept updated on progress and that we provide appropriate and timely support and guidance where it is needed.

Finally, we have been working closely with the NEL CCG health inequalities workstream from the outset to ensure our focus is on action needed at local level, while working in partnership through the ICS where it makes most sense for action to be taken at a broader level. The NEL CCG lead for health inequalities and population health regularly attends the HISG to ensure we are making the most of opportunities for partnership action.

Looking forward to 2022 and beyond

Work will continue in the new year to progress actions being led by the HISG, and Population Health Hub on its behalf, across key cross-cutting areas, as described above.

We will also turn our attention to programmes of work relevant to three priority areas we have not reviewed in detail to date - health in all policies (including work being led by the Health and Wellbeing Boards); strengths-based preventative approaches to service provision; and staff health and wellbeing (including partnership work with the City and Hackney Workforce Enabler Board).

Early in the new year, we will also revisit work started in 2021 to support the City & Hackney Integrated Care Partnership to strengthen local plans to address health inequalities through the health and care system - including actions for the NHS in response to the 2022/23 operational planning guidance and new requirements as part of the [CORE20PLUS5 framework](#).

While we will continue to support the development and implementation of both HWB strategies, it is expected that the role of the HISG and Health and Wellbeing Boards will increasingly align over time. As such, the scope and purpose of the steering group will be kept under regular review.