



MATCH Project on Embedding Health Equity

11 July 2025

Ask for Health and Wellbeing Board:

- 1) Bringing this as an update on the work programme
- 2) Keen to hear feedback from HWB on
 - which parts of the system we could usefully engage with
 - input on the MATCH approach and anything missing
- 3) **Decision** on the proposed model for year 3

Background

Context

The [City and Hackney Population Health Hub](#) was established in 2021 to support the City and Hackney Place-Based Partnership and wider system partners to reduce health inequalities and improve the health of our population. We know that there is a complex interplay of factors that influence health and wellbeing, hence the need for a system-wide approach to reducing health inequalities.

The development of MATCH

The eMbedding heAlth equiTy in City and Hackney (MATCH) programme has been developed as a tool to engage with system partners about health inequalities and population health, and to support our workforce to embed a health equity approach.

After discussion with system partners, we noticed that although there was a strong commitment to health inequalities in principle across the system, in practice many people felt they did not know where to start.

The MATCH programme aims to address this gap by **supporting teams and services across City & Hackney to embed health equity in their day-to-day work.**



The MATCH programme supports the City of London's Corporate Plan's outcomes of building diverse, engaged communities by involving residents and partners in shaping more equitable services, and to deliver excellent services by equipping teams to respond more effectively to the needs of all communities.

Using non-recurrent NEL Health Inequalities funding, we have developed an approach and a package of training and support to help partners to do this. The programme reports into a steering group formed of stakeholders from across the partnership.

Programme participants identify specific health inequalities to focus on which are relevant to their work and, as part of the MATCH approach, identify areas for change.

The first two years have focused on a more intensive project-based approach to build momentum, and we are proposing a pivot to an 'academy' style model in year 3 to enable more participants to get involved, and to be supported by those who have already been through the process.

What is the MATCH approach?

The MATCH approach is intended to be flexible and non-linear, adapting to the needs of the specific teams and area of work while supporting the City of London's Corporate Plan outcomes to build diverse, engaged communities and provide excellent, inclusive services.

The MATCH approach involves:

- Bringing the right people together: health care professionals, service providers, statutory partners, VCS organisations and residents with lived experience work collaboratively to design programmes and services
- Examining the data and insight available on the topic and reviewing this information through different lenses
- Establishing conditions for change: working with teams to look at barriers to embedding health equity and what is needed to sustainably take an equitable approach.
- Generating and prioritising change ideas
- Implementing, testing and learning from the prioritised change ideas

Through the MATCH approach, the MATCH programme aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- System partners are committed to tackling the systemic drivers of health inequalities
 - System partners are aware of how to address inequalities and how to embed a health equity approach
 - MATCH participants and system partners adopt a collaborative and participative approach to their work, reflecting the Corporate Plan's focus on engaging communities in co-creating better services.



- Participants feel confident in planning action to narrow inequalities, and intent to tack action
- MATCH participants and system patterns plan, design and deliver effective action to narrow health inequalities and improve service quality for all.
- MATCH approach and projects continue beyond the initial period of support, contributing to sustained improvement in inclusive service delivery.

What have we done?

MATCH Year 1

During the first year of the programme there were five programme areas, each with a specific aim:

1. **Anti-racist commissioning:** How do we test anti-racist commissioning principles to tackle health inequalities?
2. **Food poverty:** How can we support people out of food poverty as well as supporting their health and wellbeing needs?
3. **Maternity:** HJow do we identify and tackle inequalities in maternity outcomes in an inclusive way?
4. **Prevention of poor outcomes from cardiovascular disease:** How do we improve prevention of poor outcomes from cardiovascular disease using an anti-racist and health equity approach in City & Hackney neighbourhoods?
5. **Women's health:** How do we support young women to manage their periods (to tackle inequalities in wellbeing, self-management and adverse outcomes from these)?

MATCH Year 2

For the second year of MATCH, there are three programme areas:

1. **Healthy weight pathways:** How can we improve access to and better integrate our local weight management pathways to address stubborn inequalities and improve outcomes for high risk populations?
2. **Mental health support for people seeking asylum:** How can we better support adult asylum seekers in Hackney with their mental health, both in terms of prevention and resilience, and when they experience illness or crisis?
3. **Children and young people's mental health:** How can we refine and then harness the work already done towards developing a Children and Young People's Mental Health needs assessment to identify and implement opportunities for improving children and young people's mental health in City & Hackney?





Appendix 1 shows progress for year 1 and 2 programme areas and **Appendix 2** provides case studies on the Food Poverty and Maternity programme areas.

Emerging findings from the ongoing MATCH evaluation

The interim evaluation report highlights specific areas of value of the MATCH programme:

- MATCH provides the time to reflect on a specific public health issue or concern with wider stakeholders and residents - it creates space to pause and evaluate ways of working. MATCH requires learning by doing - stakeholders learn to embed a health equity approach in their day to day work by doing this in a specific programme area with MATCH.
- Though MATCH currently provides a small amount of funding to each programme area to develop and design change projects, there is greater value in the relationships and networks that are built during the MATCH programme between wider stakeholders and residents working together.
- The change ideas have been developed in partnership with the residents they will serve.
- The MATCH approach is similar to the standard public health approach but there is value in having it written down - you can see where you are in the approach and understand that it is not linear.
- Some programme areas have taken time to complete pathway mapping of services in their area - this has been useful for stakeholders to understand the existing pathways better and identify any gaps and/or barriers along the pathway that residents might face.

The interim report has identified a few challenges for the MATCH programme:

- MATCH is working within a wider system - it may be able to push the boundaries some, but it does not control all aspects of the system that drive the wider determinants of health.
- The MATCH programme is not easy to explain and this has caused some difficulty for MATCH participants - MATCH is a complex system itself rather than a grants funding programme (as it is often misunderstood to be).
- Resident participation is essential for embedding a health equity approach and MATCH aims to involve residents in the work equitably and efficiently. Each MATCH programme area has addressed resident participation differently and is learning by doing. It is a challenging task that requires time and care.
- More work is needed to develop MATCH as a learning system.





Proposed outline for MATCH Year 3

In Year 3 of the programme, we will continue to test the MATCH approach but with reduced project co-ordination from the City and Hackney Population Health Hub and reduced funding for change ideas, in order to embed the programme in more teams, in a more sustainable way. We would like to test the replicability of this approach, by system partners, outside of the current programme structure.

A flexible support package including training, opportunities for peer learning with other MATCH project leads and 1:1 support is being developed. This approach does not intend to duplicate existing training in the area of health inequalities, the focus will be on supporting the practical application of existing frameworks and methodologies within a local context.

Scoping is underway to explore ideas for a City of London specific MATCH project. Initial ideas which have been put forward include a project led by Healthwatch City of London focussing on Portsoken ward and a project led by the City Action Group focussing on one of the three priorities from the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

We will develop a 'MATCH Playbook', aimed at partners who require minimal support but would like a framework for embedding health equity within their day-to-day work.

In addition to the MATCH Programme and the MATCH Playbook, the Population Health Hub will lead on one MATCH project, taking a system level approach to a particular inequality, identified based on where there is opportunity for significant impact.





Appendix 1 - more detail on projects from Years 1 & 2

The Population Health Hub has worked with each of the funded organisations from Year 1 to agree on a set of outcomes and how these will be measured. The majority of Year 1 projects are due to report on these outcomes in September/October 2025.

MATCH Year 1

MATCH Programme Area	Prioritised Change Ideas	Funded Change Ideas	Reflections
<p>Anti-racist commissioning: How do we test anti-racist commissioning principles to tackle health inequalities?</p> <p>Run and managed by Hackney CVS following a tendering process.</p>	<p>Address the obstacles experienced by young black people to having mental wealth.</p> <p>Support young black people to achieve resilience and success in their mental wealth.</p> <p>Embody an ecological and village approach, rather than an individual one, to supporting the mental wealth of young black people.</p> <p>Have a lived experience approach to supporting the mental wealth of young black people.</p>	<p>Young Black People's Mental Wealth Fund</p>	<p>The groups working with Hackney CVS have reported satisfaction with the process of funding and the ability to carry out work which isn't often the focus of funding.</p> <p>The monitoring & evaluation has proved tricky and Hackney CVS have reported that if they were to do this again they would start with a framework as groups were a bit overwhelmed with being asked to design the whole process.</p> <p>A safe space to discuss the mental impact this work has on organisations was run by ELFT was offered but this wasn't taken</p>



			up by many groups due to them being unsure exactly what the offer was. Some groups also expressed concerns that those running the space were not black themselves. Hackney CVS have said more work needed to be done to establish this group when projects were being delivered.
Food poverty: How can we support people out of food poverty as well as supporting their health and wellbeing needs?	<p>Projects that link residents and community food providers with guidance, training and support on nutrition, health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Projects that deliver cooking classes to youth clubs</p> <p>Projects that gather evidence and research that supports increased insight into food poverty and/or food pantry models.</p> <p>Projects that build business models for sustainable food distribution.</p>	<p>Weekly cooking club for youth club members and their families</p> <p>Community veg box scheme with tier pricing structure</p> <p>Researching food pantry models and adapting findings to pilot a sustainable, affordable and culturally appropriate food pantry to reduce reliance on food banks.</p>	<p>Different approaches from the three projects have helped explore different areas of combating food poverty and supporting residents. The projects provide valuable learning to support the move from traditional food bank approaches to more sustainable models..</p>
Maternity: How do we identify and tackle inequalities in maternity outcomes in an inclusive way?	<p>Drop-in information hub - antenatal and postnatal information for women</p> <p>Community doulas</p>	<p>Bridge Birth Project - a community doula service providing training to local people to become qualified doulas to</p>	<p>Doulas have been recruited and trained - started supporting women</p> <p>A dashboard to monitor</p>



	<p>Cultural awareness training co-produced with community and staff</p> <p>More translation available within maternity units.</p> <p>More information available at initial referral.</p>	<p>work alongside midwives at Homerton</p> <p>Multilingual Maternity project allowing Homerton Maternity service to translate key digital patient information into the top 6 languages of patients</p>	<p>inequalities in maternity outcomes and measure the impact of the work has been developed.</p>
<p>Prevention of poor outcomes from cardiovascular disease: How do we improve prevention of poor outcomes from cardiovascular disease using an anti-racist and health equity approach in City & Hackney neighbourhoods?</p>	<p>Utilise existing community infrastructure to deliver activities that improve heart health and build capacity and knowledge within the community to take action.</p> <p>Take tailored, whole of person approaches to increase communication, awareness and understanding of the barriers and enablers to good heart health and key local support services.</p> <p>Provide information and training for people on lower incomes in their workplaces.</p>	<p>Women, Weights, and Wellness - physical activity sessions using weight and functional movement, with wellness sessions using relevant and culturally appropriate practices to address stress and mental health</p> <p>Health health in our hands - online heart health talks and information sessions, women's walking group and Zumba classes</p> <p>Love and Maintain Your Heart - One-to-one and group support sessions focusing on healthy lifestyles, gentle physical exercise, and blood pressure checks</p> <p>Carib Beats - fitness sessions, health talks, dance activities, and</p>	<p>Specialist Clinical Pharmacist delivering Blood Pressure@Home service is providing support and capacity building to the funded organisations, including basic training on heart health, advice on key messaging and signposting.</p> <p>Monthly meetings have been held for funded organisations to share challenges and best practice.</p>



		health MOT checks to the community	
Women's health: How do we support young women to manage their periods (to tackle inequalities in wellbeing, self-management and adverse outcomes from these)?	<p>Support for school pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Continuation of peer support around periods delivered to primary schools with sixth formers: "Well Talk" programme-Improve information and support within schools e.g. schools period charter-Inclusion of period support in Super Youth Hubs <p>Maximise attendance at existing menopause support including Menopause Cafes</p> <p>Review existing information and revise to make information more accessible (use of Health Literacy toolkit); including information on periods, cancer screening, how to manage GPs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Support practices to better support women manage their health (existing support via Women's Health Hub PCN clinicians)	<p>Supporting women in the post-natal period to look after their health - Charedi women, Black women and Muslim women</p> <p>Peer support sessions for women with difficult periods (heavy/painful)</p>	<p>Two post-natal workshops have occurred, with efforts made to encourage attendance by women who may not usually access similar classes.</p> <p>Interest in the peer support project is strong, and efforts are being made to ensure women who might not know about or attend similar classes are invited.</p> <p>.</p>

MATCH Year 2



For the second year of MATCH, there are three programme areas.

MATCH Programme Area	Prioritised Change Ideas	Reflections
Mental Health support for Asylum Seekers: How can we better support adult asylum seekers in Hackney with their mental health, both in terms of prevention and resilience, and when they experience illness or crisis?	Projects that deliver social and leisure activities and facilitate peer support between participants (people seeking asylum, specifically those living in hotels run by the Home Office)	<p>There is a lot of value in the ideas that do not require funding, but these ideas can be easily overlooked.</p> <p>Work to support asylum seekers experiencing illness or crisis has continued outside of MATCH.</p>
Children and Young People's Mental Health: How can we refine and then harness the work already done towards developing an Children and Young People's Mental Health needs assessment to identify and implement opportunities for improving Children and Young People's mental health in City and Hackney?	<i>In progress</i>	<p>Residents appreciate that their ideas are not only listened to but also implemented. The MATCH approach is a more holistic approach to understanding the needs of a population than a traditional needs assessment.</p>
Healthy Weight Pathway: How can we improve access to and better integrate our local weight management pathways to address stubborn inequalities and improve outcomes for high risk populations (those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), learning disabilities (LD), mental health conditions, certain age groups and certain global majority	<p>Projects that increase awareness of and/or improve access to information about healthy eating and/or physical activity for people from priority groups.</p> <p>Projects that are tailored or targeted interventions to support people from priority groups to adopt and maintain healthier habits related to diet and physical activity.</p> <p>Projects that help to increase the knowledge,</p>	<p>There were several overlapping themes in the prioritised change ideas between the prioritised communities/groups.</p> <p>Residents with lived experience who were involved valued being able to participate and share their ideas and views. Health professionals/service providers appreciated working with residents and other professionals.</p>





communities)?	<p>skills, and confidence of people working with priority groups about how to eat healthily and/or be more active.</p> <p>Projects that involve delivering activities (including those under objectives 1-3) in community locations and/or settings used and trusted by priority groups or focus on increasing peer or social support around healthy eating and physical activity.</p>	
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We are currently assessing funding applications for change projects for the healthy weight pathways programme area and applications are currently open for the funding of change projects for the mental health support for asylum seekers programme area.

We are working with stakeholders and residents to refine recommendations and change ideas for the children and young people's mental health programme area.



Appendix 2 - Case studies



How can we support people to get out of food poverty while also supporting their health and wellbeing needs?

The MATCH Food Poverty programme area brought together partners working to support City & Hackney's most vulnerable residents experiencing food crisis and food poverty.

Bring the right people together	Examine data & insight and review pathways	Establish conditions for change	Generate & prioritise change ideas	Implement, test, and learn
<p>Involvement of stakeholders via the Food Network.</p> <p>Held steering group meetings and larger in-person and online events with stakeholders.</p>	<p>Information and insight gathered from the Food Network and steering group.</p> <p>Literature review on what has been shown to be effective.</p> <p>Decided not to involve residents directly but to represent their stories.</p>	<p>During in-person and online events, we asked participants what is going well, less well and what is one thing you would change.</p> <p>We then <u>collated all these ideas</u> and updated the steering group on the outcome.</p>	<p>We had around 30 ideas which we shortlisted down to six ideas.</p> <p>Then held <u>another workshop</u> to bring this down to four themes (in report appendix).</p>	<p>The MATCH grants process opened after the final workshop.</p> <p>Grants panel included resident representation.</p> <p>Funded projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Weekly cooking club for young people-Veg box subscription model with tiered pricing structure-Conduct research into local food pantry models

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How do we identify and tackle inequalities in maternity outcomes in an inclusive way?

The MATCH Maternity programme area brought together teams from the Homerton maternity services, statutory partners within social care and public health, voluntary sector services working in maternity settings, and residents & patients from the Maternity Neonatal Voice Partnership (MNVP), and parent groups to explore how to ensure a fairer service for black and global majority families using maternity services.

Bring the right people together	Examine data & insight and review pathways	Establish conditions for change	Generate & prioritise change ideas	Implement, test, and learn
In partnership with Homerton maternity services, facilitated two mixed stakeholder workshops including residents (lots of resident engagement happened outside of workshops to engage women in community settings too)	<p>Analysed data from births within the Homerton maternity unit and collated information from across North East London.</p> <p>Engagement with of women and families to collect gather local insight.</p>	<p>Worked with stakeholders to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What is working well in maternity services at Homerton- What is not working well- What are potential ideas for changing the elements that are not working well.	<p>Prioritised the key change ideas that stakeholders felt would have the most impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Drop in information hubs for women antenatal and postnatal-Community doulas-Compulsory cultural awareness training co-produced with community and staff.-More translation available within maternity units.More information at initial referral.	<p>The Birth Bridge Project have establish a Community Doula service by providing training for 32 local people to become qualified Doulas to work alongside Midwives at the Homerton Hospital.</p> <p>Homerton have translated their maternity information leaflets into six community languages and have also implemented compulsory cultural awareness training.</p>

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