

Project Completion Report: Smoking Cessation among African & Caribbean Communities Assertive Outreach Project with City and Hackney GP Confederation

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Support When It Matters



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Overview

This project completion report has been prepared for Amaia Portelli, Director of Operations for the City and Hackney GP Confederation by Support When It Matters (SWIM) Enterprise CIC. The project responds to a request to prepare an outline proposal for a funded project to motivate smoking cessation among people of Caribbean heritage in the Confederation’s catchment area.

The aims of the project were to:

- ❖ Increase the number of enrolments in smoking cessation programmes provided by GPs in the Hackney and City Federation
- ❖ Motivate people of Afro-Caribbean heritage to stop smoking

The initial target was to motivate at least 50 people from Black Caribbean communities to sign up to the Smokefree Hackney cessation programme.



The campaign prompted **88** new referrals to the Smokefree Hackney cessation service between the beginning of October and November 10, 2020 through a range of in-person engagement, traditional and social media.

Engagement methods

On-street targeted outreach

SWIM organised four Smoking Cessation engagement events during October 2020

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|--------------------------------------|------------|
| ❖ Event 1: Kingsland Dalston Station | 09/10/2020 |
| ❖ Event 2: Stoke Newington Road | 12/10/2020 |
| ❖ Event 3: Mare Street | 16/10/2020 |
| ❖ Event 4: Hoxton Market | 29/10/2020 |

At each event, SWIM set up a stand crewed by a lead project manager, two community engagement workers and a volunteer. The stand, which displayed banners advertising the NHS Stoptober campaign and featured imagery relating to the target Caribbean British audience, was the focal point for conversations with passing members of the public. Anyone who engage with SWIM's outreach team was given a free mini pack of COVID-10 PPE, comprising a hand sanitiser, gloves and face masks, along with cards with details of the Smokefree Hackney cessation service.

In total, SWIM's outreach team spoke in detail to 257 members of the public, of whom **96** stated they were happy to be contacted again.

Public awareness campaign

SWIM produced posters adapted from the NHS Stoptober campaign artwork to be culturally specific to the project's Black Caribbean audience. Double-sided posters were distributed by hand to:

- ❖ All barber shops, hairdresser's and newsagents/convenience stores along the length of Stoke Newington, Dalston and Kingsland High Streets
- ❖ All barber shops, hairdresser's and newsagent's/convenience stores along Lower and Upper Clapton Road

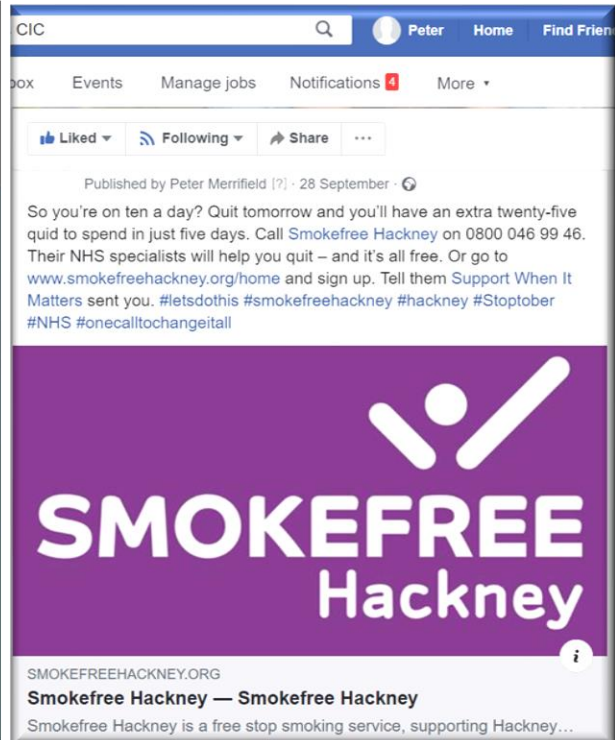
'Traditional' media campaign

SWIM gained coverage for the targeted Stoptober campaign in the [Hackney Gazette online](#). SWIM Chief Executive Peter Merrifield also contacted local radio stations to raise awareness of the campaign. Peter has been invited to a more in-depth interview about smoking cessation and other ethnic minority-related health issues by Hackney Social Radio in January 2021.



Social media campaign

To support outreach events, SWIM promoted Stoptober and Smokefree Hackney through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



Around 26,515 people saw content from SWIM's Facebook and Instagram posts, stories and ads, social information during October.

Outcomes

Between Thursday 1 October and Tuesday 10 November 2020, the Smokefree Hackney cessation service received **88** referrals directly attributable to the SWIM campaign.

Figure I below shows the progress of the referrals since they were received.

Figure I Referrals attributable to SWIM campaign October-November 2020

Total Referrals	Open Contacts	Agreed in Principle	Declined Service	Unable to Contact	Closed: No outcome	Never Accessed Service	Accessed Service
88	11	0	5	22	13	0	37

Our initial research suggested that people of ACH heritage represented around 8-9% of the total population of the target area. Even allowing for the fact that the SWIM campaign received a lot of interest from White Europeans, the number of referrals represents a significant boost to the 400-500 referrals achieved on average in previous Stoptober campaigns by Smokefree Hackney.

Observations and Next Steps

Black people in Hackney don't smoke as much as research suggests

Across all the events, around 70% of the people of African and Caribbean heritage (ACH) we spoke to did not smoke. Most people's comments were that they had given it up some time ago, or they felt it was a nasty disgusting habit, or they had never smoked at all. This feedback seems to contradict the available data on the percentage of ACH people who are classified as smokers. It was challenging to find people from the African Caribbean community to sign up or even discuss the smoking; they felt it was not relevant to them. However, those who did sign up agreed to be contacted on other health-related matters as well as smoking.

Older White people in Hackney are more likely to be smokers

The events in held in Hoxton market highlighted a significant minority of older White people who still congregated at local cafes still smoked in their sixties, seventies and perhaps beyond. Even though the event was clearly targeting the ACH community, a significant number of White European people came up to our stand to ask about the smoking cessation programme and how they could sign up.

Young people prefer vaping to cigarettes

Most young people we spoke to said they didn't smoke cigarettes regularly, but some either vaped or smoked other substances.

Dalston Kingsland station is a key site for health-related outreach interventions

The highest numbers of engagement were when we were set up outside Dalston Kingsland station. We also engaged people who congregate in the square behind the station, many of whom smoke and have other health-related difficulties.

Assertive Outreach is an effective means for primary care services to engage ethnic minority communities in health awareness and behavioural change

SWIM's experienced outreach team reported that passers-by were comfortable and happy to come up to the stand and engage with them to talk about smoking and other health-related issues. The combination of culturally relevant signage, empathetic and relatable staff and the opportunity to receive something back (PPE pack and information about the cessation service) attracted people to talk about their health in a way that's harder to achieve in typical primary care settings.

Targeting ACH people proved difficult as the proportion of people in Hackney from those communities in the target area is quite small. Surprisingly, it also appeared that a lot of Black Caribbean people had already stopped smoking or never started. However, SWIM's outreach approach seems appropriate for a future smoking cessation campaign targeted to other communities e.g. Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani men, older White men and women). Arguably more pressing is the application of a proven outreach approach to encourage a high take-up of the COVID-19 vaccination among ethnic minority communities, some element of which appear to be hesitant about its safety or sceptical about its effectiveness.

SWIM's average number of detailed engagements per outreach event was 67.