

Hypertension Heroes in Medway

A Social Value Analysis by Healthwatch Kent The Summary



November 2022

Background

Medway Public Health funded a six month pilot to support blood pressure management within the community. Working with community partners, the British Heart Foundation and engagement experts EK360; an innovative pilot was created which focused on personalisation for people.

The purpose of the project was to reach people from identified communities within Gillingham which are part of the NHS Core20PLUS focus. They wanted to raise awareness amongst them about the importance of managing their blood pressure (hypertension) and support them to have the confidence to take their own blood pressure readings. Free Hypertension sessions were run throughout community venues and via community organisations.

To support the project and to understand its success, Healthwatch Kent has undertaken an independent review to determine how much social value has been generated by the project. This document offers a summary of that analysis.



The headline statistics:

During the six month pilot.....

320

people were given blood pressure readings

10

volunteers were trained to work their communities supporting and encouraging people to get their blood pressure checked and helping them to understand the importance of a healthy blood pressure



A total of £160,358.22 worth of social value has been generated



Every £1 invested in this pilot has generated £9.43 worth of social value



What changes has the pilot delivered?

Let's look at the changes people experienced, and what some of the people involved in the project told us:

People have an increased awareness of hypertension

"I didn't know you could have high risk of other stuff too if your blood pressure was high"

"It was good being able to take my BP, I feel I understand"

Reduced risk to health complications

"My Dr has asked me by letter to have a blood pressure reading done"

"I am having some personal problems and I'm very stressed and getting headaches, I wanted to check my blood pressure was ok"

Increased sense of independence

"I think it's incredibly valuable at the moment. People are struggling to get to see a GP and getting a blood pressure check is not something you would usually think to get done. It can indicate underlying issues and encourage people to make positive changes to their overall health"

Reduced health inequalities

"It's more accessible and helpful being here. It's spur of the moment, people come to you rather than psyching themselves up to go to an appointment, it's less stressful"

"It's a good idea. It will help people who wouldn't usually bother to go and ask for help"

Reduced anxiety

"Allowing people to have their blood pressure checked without having to visit a doctor and in a very informal setting when they hopefully feel more relaxed. It's brilliant"

Sense of achievement

"Very good health initiative. I have enjoyed meeting the public and showing them how to use monitors. I feel confident in what I am doing"

"I loved interacting with people and knowing I helped them"

Meet Jenny

We delved deeper into one person's story to understand how the experience of meeting the Hypertension Heroes benefited them.

When Jenny met the Hypertension Heroes, her blood pressure reading was very high. The volunteer Hypertension Heroes suggested that Jenny contact NHS 111 right away, which she did.

Jenny was taken by an ambulance and was given medication to reduce her blood pressure, something she never knew she needed. Since taking the medication, Jenny has already seen a significant improvement in her blood pressure.

"You have made a real difference to my life. I did not realise I had dangerously high blood pressure at all. If I hadn't met the Hypertension Heroes, I wouldn't have known until it was too late."

Jenny also told us about how she has changed her lifestyle since meeting the Heroes, such as exercising more and trying to stay stress free. Hypertension Heroes also signposted Jenny to Kent Association for the Blind to support her independence in dealing with a new visual impairment. She told us this too has been invaluable and she felt confident that her health is improving as a result.



If you would like to chat with us about the report you can reach us through the following routes:



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texting 'NEED BSL', Healthwatch's
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