



Terrence
HIGGINS
TRUST



CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

REPORT 2019-20

Advancing Racial Equality in Sexual Health
Programme Evaluation

TOGETHER
WECAN

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CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

Working in partnership with



Be Informed.
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“ Giving space to communities to say what they need is really important. Especially within communities of colour, we are not heard. We need services and professionals who work with us to understand that and to put us in a position where we can impart knowledge on professionals directly.

We also need to be empowered to educate our communities ourselves. We need a step up. We need to be given a platform to discuss the issues we face, what support we need, and to support each other. ”

A Champion of Change



ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Terrence Higgins Trust is the UK's largest voluntary provider of sexual health services. Recognising the need to provide a programme focused on improving health outcomes for racially minoritised groups and to remove racialised barriers to access within services, we partnered with the NHS-run Unity Sexual Health services for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) to address this.

We know that community-powered approaches have the best chance of creating meaningful change by

centring the people who we support and engaging them in the design and delivery of our services. These are our Champions of Change.

This review assesses what has been achieved over the period 2019-20 and highlights lessons learned. We have compiled data on our service delivery, feedback from our stakeholders and service users and interviews with our community Champions. This evaluation informs future programme planning from 2021.

LANGUAGE

Many feel the term 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic' isn't helpful because it's very broad, others feel 'The Global Majority' is more accurate. Some prefer 'People of Colour'. We also use the term 'Racially Minoritised Communities'. In this report we use a mix of terms because of how statistics are labelled and because we are reporting back on what people have told us using their own words.

EVALUATING:

- What has worked well?
- Where do we go next?
- How has this project benefitted our community Champions?
- How has it improved community access to services?

“ Champions of Change has done great work in promoting good sexual health in populations within Bristol who we don't always see in our sexual health clinics.

We look forward to the continued development of the project in future which will hopefully both contribute to a reduction in sexual health inequalities and reduce the stigma around sexually transmitted infections, testing and uptake of contraception. ”

Dr Lindsey Harryman
Unity Sexual Health

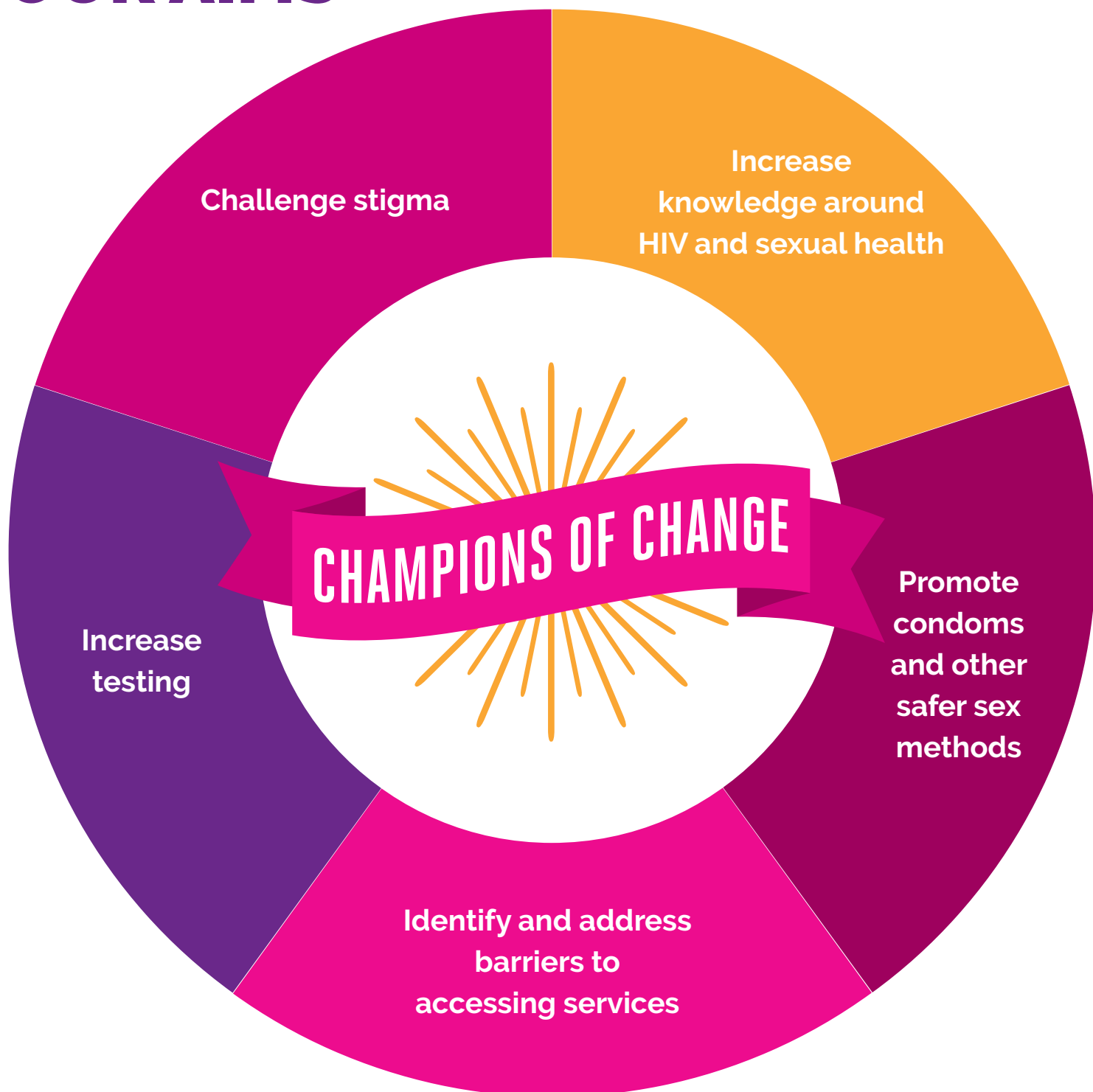
WE PROVIDE

CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

- Free training to staff in organisations who work with and for racially minoritised communities in Bristol around understanding and supporting sexual health needs.

- Free training for members of racially minoritised communities to become community Champions to promote good sexual health and HIV awareness within their communities, with ongoing support to devise and deliver their own outreach.

OUR AIMS



WHY IS THIS PROGRAMME NEEDED?

Bristol has a large and diverse BAME population, making up approximately 16% of its inhabitants

At least 91 main languages are spoken in Bristol

SEXUAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN THE UK

- Around 1 in 8 people don't know they are living with HIV.
- Of the 1,559 heterosexual people diagnosed with HIV in 2019, 37% were Black African men and women.
- Black African women are nearly twice as likely as Black African men to be living with HIV.
- Rates of chlamydia and gonorrhoea are 3 times higher in BAME populations than the general population.
- 50% of BAME LGBT+ people said they've faced discrimination or unjust treatment from the wider LGBT+ community.
- People from racially minoritised communities are less likely to access specialist health services.
- Bristol has an above national average rate of late diagnosis of HIV in Black African and Black Caribbean heritage communities.

Discrimination ● Stigma ● Mistrust of services ● Cultural barriers ● Exclusion

Some of the most popular countries of birth of Bristol residents are Somalia, Jamaica, India and Pakistan

COMMUNITY-POWERED ACTION

- Recognises that people who use services are experts on how they should be developed and delivered.
- Embraces the expertise and leadership of community members and organisations.
- Actively shapes and improves services.
- Informs strategies to prevent new transmissions of HIV.
- Creates effective change.

CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE IN BRISTOL

- Works directly with our well-developed community networks.
- Taps into the existing focus on community education and mobilisation.
- Learns directly from our beneficiaries how to best support needs.

Bristol is home to a large number of refugees and asylum seekers

“ In my community there is shame and stigma around sexual health. Especially for women, talking about your personal and married life is like a red line you can't cross so people don't know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They don't know their rights so it's important to find ways to do this.

It's also hard because a lot of the resources are in English. Now I have completed the Champions of Change course and have the knowledge and the certificate I can talk to people in my family and community and help them. ”

Faduma is a refugee, an anti-FGM campaigner and a Champion. She has helped to produce training materials and to educate her community on sexual health and HIV.



“ We are more than 'BAME', we need to be nuanced. Different portions of the community require different solutions. As service providers, we need to be responsive to the needs of the communities we're trying to engage.

We must help people to keep on top of their health and realise that you can live with HIV for a long time without knowing because the symptoms are not always self-evident. We need to bring home that some people are at a higher risk.

This can only be done by fully engaging communities. There are no better champions of understanding their own situations than Champions themselves. ”

Takudzwa Mukiwa

Head of Health Improvement Programmes

Terrence Higgins Trust

THE DIFFERENCE WE'VE MADE

450

engagements

- Signposting
- Advice
- Testing
- Condom distribution
- Relationship building

30

community events attended

- St Paul's Carnival
- Bristol Refugee Festival
- Pride
- Freshers' fairs
- Anti-Islamophobia event
- BAME LGBT+ meet
- Anti-FGM event
- Community meetings

11

training sessions delivered

Bespoke community info sessions and workshops:

- To local services
- To local medical schools
- In-person
- Online
- As part of the UYP training cycle offered by Unity Sexual Health

6

volunteers trained

Recruitment through:

- Large events such as St Paul's Carnival
- Community outreach sessions
- Attending local events and talks
- Community Champions:
 - 6 trained
 - 5 active
 - 1 stepped away for personal reasons

1000

condoms distributed

Locations include:

- Festivals
- Fairs
- Barber shops
- Hair salons
- Via Champions within their own community spaces
- Other community events

1 TRAINING FOR HEALTH STAFF, OTHER SERVICES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

WHO CAN ACCESS TRAINING?

Healthcare staff and other statutory services, charities, community groups, medical schools, or anyone working with and for racially minoritised communities.

WHAT WILL WE LEARN?

A key part of the Champions of Change approach is learning from our communities about the barriers they've faced accessing services and enabling them to identify their needs. This learning can be used to develop and improve support services so they fully reflect the needs of service users. We co-produce training materials with our Champions, who also help to deliver training sessions.

HOW ELSE CAN WE WORK WITH CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE?

We can also provide training such as HIV awareness or LGBT+ awareness, support for community health days, information sessions for you and your service users, or we can partner with you on a project such as developing health resources.



“ A brilliant range of information and presented really well. Great to listen to and explore case studies and professional/ personal experiences. It was a great launch pad for me to learn more and be aware of barriers and how to support people to feel comfortable in accessing help or exploring different topics. ”

Nurse and training participant



Kyia is a midwife and Champion who specialises in Black maternal health and understanding early sexualisation of young Black people. She helped to deliver a well-attended and well-received training session for professionals working with young people (UYP). She is now supporting Bristol Medical School with their [#decolonisethecurriculum](#) work.

“ I'm going to start asking my young people more about their experiences with healthcare professionals around sexual health. The training has definitely made me think more about my practice as a youth worker and also of the importance of familiarising myself with other local organisations I can signpost young people to. ”

Youth worker and training participant



KEY LEARNING

Be open to collaborating in different ways

Objectives and learning needs vary greatly.

Don't try to pin everything down at the start

Being community-led means we can't fully know from the outset the shape it will take.

Relationship building takes time

Consistency and patience are key. Getting involved in community events and being seen help to build trust.

Be mindful of language

A 'family health' session might feel more comfortable for participants.

Get involved with local medical schools

By working with medical schools, we directly reach the next generation of healthcare providers and help to change attitudes.

Bringing Champions of Change into the medical school has helped us to facilitate community contacts and allowed medical students to hear about the lived experience of people from these communities, including those living with HIV.

Not only does this often challenge students' stereotypes and biases, but it also humanises people's stories and lets them see the inspirational work occurring in these communities, which is separate to the NHS work they are more familiar with. This is invaluable and we are very pleased to continue this work with Champions of Change into the future.

Dr Joe Hartland

*Equality in Medicine Lead,
University of Bristol*



Our clients respond positively to first hand and word of mouth recommendations so it was important to be able to say we've been to the central clinic and met the staff. Our team felt valued. The HIV awareness session we received will help us to support our clients better and tackle stigma.

Refugee support worker

2 COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

WHO CAN BE A CHAMPION?

Anyone who identifies as being from a racially minoritised community and is interested in becoming a community advocate for HIV awareness and sexual health.

HOW DO I BECOME ONE?

Our free course is delivered over 2 full days on a weekend or 5 weekly shorter sessions.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

To become community advocates, to have conversations about sexual health, HIV, testing, safer sex.

WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN I DO?

You will help shape our service and the way that we support and work with communities. Our 6 community Champions to date have attended community outreach events; distributed condoms; given talks; helped friends, family and community members to access sexual health services; and helped to produce and deliver training. It is driven by what you think is important.

Rating of trainer



4.9/5

TOPICS COVERED

HIV awareness
Sexually transmitted infections
Contraception
LGBTQ+ awareness

Signposting

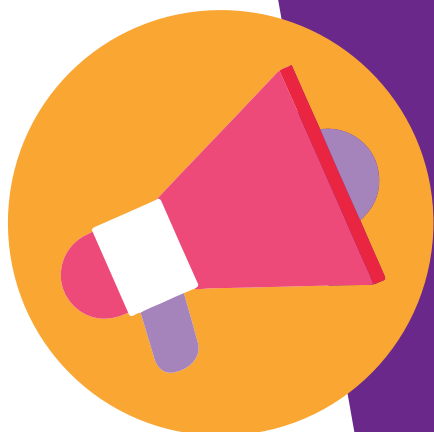
What services are available locally and how to access them.

Communication skills

How to talk about difficult subjects, how to combat stigma, how different communities and speakers of different languages talk about health, sex and relationships and what feels comfortable for you.

Clinic tour

A key part of the programme is building bridges between services and service users, and demystifying the process and being able to explain it to others. You will visit the clinic services, meet the staff at the central health clinic, and then go through a 'mock consultation' with the doctor.



“ Fun, interesting and supportive. ”

“ It feels safe and friendly, the trainer and volunteer coordinator is very accessible. ”

“ I loved it. I'm so glad I went. Every session I came out of I just felt really high like 'yeah I can do this, I can share it, I just want to tell everybody'. ”

WHAT WILL I GAIN?

Sense of community

"I enjoy it and it feels good to be part of this and supporting people to look after their sexual health. I'm amazed that Terrence Higgins Trust does this, it's such a good thing."

Volunteer satisfaction

"My communication skills have really improved. It's normalised talking about HIV and sexual health, now it feels as easy as talking about a cup of tea."

Communication skills

"Once you practise a conversation, it's easier to have the same conversation with someone else... and having the answer at your fingertips makes it easier."

I signed up because:

"I was curious about HIV"

"I wanted to better support a family member living with HIV"

"I want to have a positive impact on my community"

"I love talking to people"

"I know that health inequalities exist and I want to better understand and address them in my job as a nurse"

"I've always been a Champion of Change at heart and wanted to further my HIV community activism"

100%

of our Champions would recommend this programme to their peers

Our Champions said they feel:

"More able to talk to friends and family about sexual health"

"More able to talk to my partners about sexual health"

"Better equipped to deal with the challenges faced in maintaining good sexual health and wellbeing"

"Motivated to address these challenges in my community"

“ It gave me the confidence to manage my own sexual health better. ”

“ At 40 years old I learned how to put a condom on. No one had ever shown me or taught me. ”

KEY LEARNING

“ As a Black woman I am often treated as angry or loud, and misunderstood. I have to go with my dad to medical appointments as even though English is his first language, staff treat him like they can't understand him and he gets frustrated and then they react badly.

It's good to work with medical staff so they can learn to be more understanding of different cultures and not to just dismiss us as idiots. It's not just different languages that are important. Staff should understand that we have different ways of communicating and be open to learning our vocabulary and cultural contexts rather than shutting down as soon as they hear a different language or way of speaking. Be open to having a conversation with us. ”



Dayana is a Champion. She oversees condom distribution and provides invaluable community support. She is also involved in co-producing training and promotional materials.

CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE



Communities are diverse

Treat them as such and expect different needs and responses from different community groups.

Have resources available in different languages

Information that is accessible and relevant to our communities is vital.

Volunteers want different things

Some like to be more actively involved than others. Some prefer doing more public-facing engagement, others prefer to work 'behind the scenes'.

Keep checking in to see what's working

If it isn't, try something new.

Ensure capacity for volunteer management

Do not over-recruit, have a clear plan for volunteer support.

Support individuals

Ensure that they are getting what they want and need.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO OUR CHAMPIONS?

It was important that the training and experiences of our Champions volunteers was also beneficial for them. Part of the training at the start of this project included goal setting.

GOALS SET

- To be able to talk to children, partners and family members about safer sex.
- To understand RSE (relationships and sex education) and the HPV vaccine.
- To improve communication skills.
- To feel equipped to address stigma within communities.



Jason is an LGBT refugee and Champion. He attends outreach events to educate others on HIV and sexual health, distribute condoms and encourage testing.

All of our Champions felt these goals were met by the end of their training.

“It's changed my life, I would say. But I need to learn more. It changed my life – and not only me, but in my community as well.”

“We have to raise a lot of awareness because everyone needs to know about sexual health.

We need these community classes in clinics and GPs too but we need interpreters, without translation it doesn't make sense. We could be there all day but it would be a waste of time.”

“You've completely opened my mind and have given me the most important tools and confidence to be able to talk to my daughters.”

THE NEXT PHASE

We will continue to develop this programme into the future. As part of our evaluation we asked Champions, stakeholders and training participants for their feedback on what to keep doing, and what more we can do to improve the programme.

KEEP:

- ✓ Training free and flexible with hours to fit around work and family life
- ✓ A presence in the community and attending events
- ✓ Multilingual community educators
- ✓ Providing certificates for training
- ✓ Clinic tour
- ✓ Making clinic, GPs and medical services aware of particular needs
- ✓ FGM awareness
- ✓ Testing accessible
- ✓ Learning from communities about what they need
- ✓ Including Champions in training delivered
- ✓ Ongoing learning and meet ups for Champions.

WHAT MORE CAN WE DO

- ✓ Keep involving volunteers in events so they get more practice.
- ✓ Volunteers like a range of different activities, so make sure there is a varied amount of things to do, such as co-producing and delivering training and awareness sessions, community outreach events and more behind the scenes work like packaging up condoms for distribution.
- ✓ Keep up engagement and motivation by doing ongoing training and meet up sessions for volunteers.
- ✓ Regular engagement and knowing about events going on via a regular newsletter.
- ✓ Support Champions to deliver more of their own events.
- ✓ Make clear why we work with racially minoritised groups so that no one feels singled out.
- ✓ Translate resources into other languages.

“ Social media is important but it's not my world, we need to do things in person too. ”



Volunteer at Bristol Pride

OUR PRIORITIES 2021-22



Anyone who engages with the programme becomes a Champion of Change, equipped to share information about good sexual health. The more the programme is spoken about, the more beneficial it is.

- Creating a tailored Champions of Change programme for medical students
- Engaging more with young people
- Online awareness training
- Recruitment of more Champions
- Working with racially minoritised LGBT+ groups
- Working with hair salons and barber shops
- Using community spaces for bookable community testing clinics
- Co-produced print materials including a series of health promotion resources in different languages



Alison is an HIV activist and a Champion. She gives talks sharing her experience living with HIV, and helps to educate others on sexual health and stigma. She works with medical students to help improve patient experience.

“ Being able to reach out to people of colour and have honest conversations about HIV and sexual health has been a very fulfilling experience. ”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS





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Be Safe.
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Terrence Higgins Trust (Registered Charity: Reg. No: 288527) in partnership with Unity Sexual Health (NHS)
Unity Sexual Health is a partnership of eight organisations, led by University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.