

Update on the COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention Community Health Ambassadors Network Briefing

Last updated 30 October 2020

This Southwark Council programme is being developed in partnership with Community Southwark to support the implementation of the Southwark Outbreak Prevention Plan. Because time is of the essence, the programme is being taken forward in an agile manner, learning from other boroughs and from national pilots, and will be taken forward in phases.

Objectives:

- **To amplify and increase the reach of key messages** on the prevention of COVID-19 and the Test and Trace process and guidance / rules, and wider health and wellbeing messages where relevant.
- **To empower local individuals** to play a role in keeping their communities safe.
- **To support a two-way communication about guidance, barriers to compliance, and concerns from communities at risk.**

Collaborative Working:

- Southwark Council working with Community Southwark will provide the latest information about the local, London and national response to COVID-19 to share by the Community Health Ambassadors with others – online, in print, or by discussing it with family, friends and colleagues.
- We would like Community Health Ambassadors to tell us what is and is not working - and what support or extra information their community needs.
- Community Health Ambassadors can choose to stay in touch with us in the way they find most helpful. This could be by email, telephone, at our weekly webchat, or by joining our Facebook and WhatsApp groups.
- Southwark Council will work with Community Southwark together on how best to respond to any concerns, worries or tensions in our local communities.
- If there is a local outbreak, Community Health Ambassadors will help Southwark Council address people's concerns. They will support Southwark Council to share key messages quickly and ensure that everyone knows what they need to do and what support is available to help them.
- Southwark Council has funded a 6-month post based at Community Southwark (as of 1st Oct) to work with Public Health on supporting the Outbreak Prevention work programme including development and implementation of the Community Health Ambassadors programme.

Reporting:

- A steering group has been established for the programme including colleagues from Community Southwark, the Community engagement, Communications team.
- The steering group will report to the weekly Outbreak Prevention Engagement and Communication Group chaired by the Head of Communications, Southwark Council which reports regularly to the Outbreak Prevention Board (OPCE), chaired by the Director of Public Health.

Wider Stakeholders to engage:

- VCS organisations and networks; Southwark Council - Comms team, Public Health Covid Hub; Environmental Health; CCG and local NHS; Partnership Southwark; Universities & Schools; local businesses

Ambassador development and delivery:

- Ambassadors will be given an induction on the key messages re. COVID-19 prevention, Test and Trace, and provided resources to disseminate and use to reach their communities in different ways. This will include digital formats or 'hard copies' e.g. posters and leaflets, if that is preferred by their communities.
- They will be invited to regular "keeping in touch" sessions (and a social media mechanism e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) so that they can be updated on messaging, and they will be encouraged to report back any issues they have identified amongst local community members, and submit questions on anything they are not clear about.
- Ambassadors will be supported by Community Southwark and will include safeguarding training.

All Ambassadors will need to sign a code of conduct that outlines the rules, regulations, and scope of the Ambassadors remit, which includes:

- **Delivery of key messages to residents / groups**
- **Signposting of relevant services** including Testing opportunities, Community Hub, Wellbeing Hub
- **Feedback on community intelligence** on risk/barriers to following guidance, and gaps in support

Engagement:

- All Community Southwark / VCS Network meetings have been alerted to development of the scheme. They include the BAME, faith, older people, children and young people and mental wellbeing networks and forums.
- Expressions of interest to join the scheme sent out via the Community Southwark newsletter.
- Discussion with CCG and wider stakeholders – to explore promotion of related issues e.g. flu vaccination, mental health support etc.

Recruitment:

- Community Southwark have created a webpage for the Ambassadors Network (available [here](#)), with a link for registration of interest available on the webpage.
- Recruitment call out has been made public and open to all in Southwark with targeted reach out to trusted VCS partners and universities.
- Currently there are 22 sign ups with an induction date TBC in the coming weeks.

Training and administration:

- The induction and training pack are currently being reviewed and finalised
- A Whatsapp group has been created as a contact point for Ambassadors, operated by Community Southwark
- A shared google drive has been set up containing resources available for Ambassadors to use.

Next steps:

- Finalise code of conduct
- Finalise training and induction pack

- Set a date for the first induction

Author:
Rosie Dalton-Lucas, Head of Programmes, Public Health
Rosie.Dalton-Lucas@southwark.gov.uk

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