

Healthy Times

CN4C's VIVA Team;
Summer 2023 report In
collaboration with
Cornwall ICB



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Together for Health Equity: Our Journey Begins

Let's explore how it all started. A meeting between ICB (Integrated Care Board) and VIVA sparked a mission to amplify unheard voices. Our focus? Health disparities in often overlooked communities. Guided by the ICB's vision, VIVA members collected stories to uncover health discrepancies of health care. Each VIVA member chose a cause close to them, picking appropriate research methods. Our aim? To illuminate disparities, highlight positives, and inspire change. Join our journey for unity and progress!

Our findings

We've engaged with diverse groups such as Ukrainian's, homeless people, domestic violence, socially anxious, home education, parents of young children . Their stories highlight barriers like language, social expectations on them, and limited access to services. We've heard their calls for empathetic care, personalised support, and accessible services.

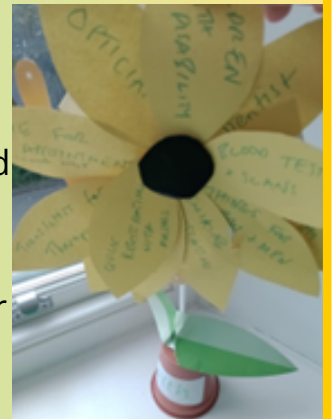
These voices collectively emphasise that health inequalities persist. Solutions like specialised hubs, better communication, and understanding are essential. It's clear we must create a fairer and more inclusive healthcare system. As we reflect on these experiences, our path forward becomes clearer. Change is needed, and we're committed to reshaping healthcare. Let's ensure everyone, regardless of background, gets the care they deserve.

community

The Ukrainian Community



The Ukrainian community reported marginalisation stemming from language barriers and social differences. We went about gathering evidence of this with gingerbread people and sunflowers. This allowed us to get a better understanding of who they were as people and a fun way of easily expressing what mattered to them. We made four sunflowers each representing family, health, work and education, and wellbeing.



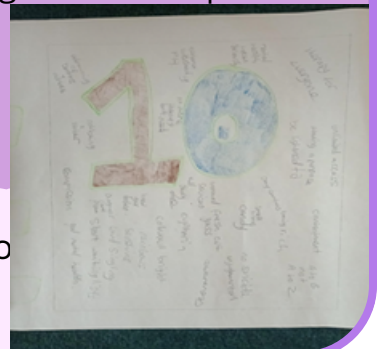
The key asks were; mental health support especially for young people, dentists and employment opportunities with sponsorship roles.

People who experienced Domestic Violence



A team of 3 VIVA members, themselves survivors of domestic abuse, reached out to a recovery group lead by the Susie Project. They aim to support women overcoming domestic abuse. This group reports that they often feel silenced and side lined by healthcare. These survivors faced challenges in speaking up and responding to medical queries due to their past trauma. To give these women

a stronger voice we used co-design tools like scaling walks and gingerbread people. These tools allow them to express themselves more efficiently.



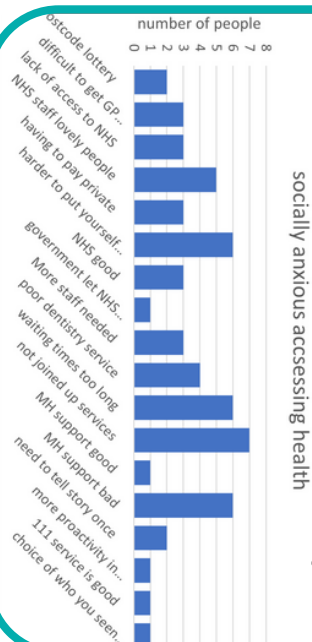
The key findings were; waiting times, the appropriateness of who saw them and mental health support throughout all stages.

Socially Anxious People

Another group facing health inequalities is individuals with social anxiety or those who hesitate to step forward due to their quieter demeanour. These people often struggle to voice their thoughts in community gatherings and may feel unheard. Two members from VIVA engaged with social groups organised by Quiet Connections, located in Redruth and Falmouth. Through conversation with the organisation it was decided that traditional co-design tools may not be the best fit. A questionnaire was designed and given out on a One-on-One basis to respect the individual's comfort.



The key findings are; dentists, waiting times, services not being joined up and a lack of good mental health support.



workshops

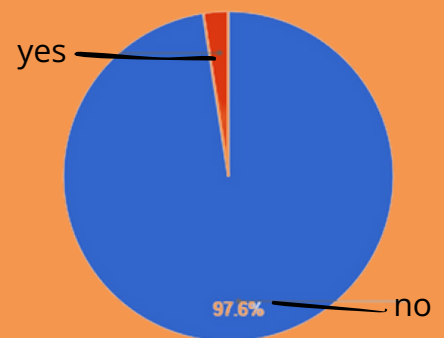
Homelessness

We held a group at CN4C to learn from people who experienced homelessness about their healthcare challenges.

There were mixed feelings about accessing care. They recommended empathetic and accessible services, including a Homeless HUB and in-person care. Many felt distrustful of the health service due to judgments based on homelessness.

This highlights the need for better healthcare for homeless people, addressing inequalities and building trust.

Do you trust the NHS?



The key findings; judgement levels are high, its hard to access preventable services so a trip to A and E is the only way to be seen.



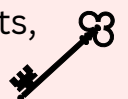
Parents with Young Children

Two VIVA members and an ICB representative joined a Warm Tums session at CN4C. This group was chosen because parents often overlook their own health needs. This session had 6 mums and their under 4 children. Feedback varied, midwifery and some NHS staff were praised, but access to services and 'rude' receptionists were an issue. Limited availability, funding gaps, mixed breastfeeding support and maternal mental health challenges were also discussed. Younger mums sometimes felt dismissed, and support for mental health differed.

Some members of staff seem to gatekeep services

It feels like I'm not taken as seriously as other mums because I'm younger

The key findings; limited access and availability to doctors and dentists, maternal mental health and care is good once you access it.

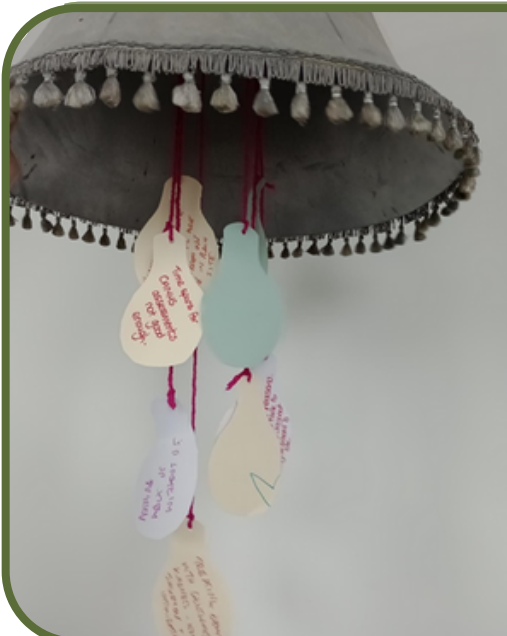


Home Education

VIVA organised a CN4C based session to hear from home educating families about the health service. They value kindness and active learning, but face challenges like assessment timeframes and lack of mental health support. Parents valued flexibility and integration in home education but noted financial disparities and judgments from professionals.

Fears of judgment and limited support were highlighted, especially for mental health and EHCP decisions. This event shows the need for better health service understanding and support.

The key findings; appointments not accessible, limited support due to long waits, mental health support unreachable



reoccurring trends and what people said



A word cloud of feedback and trends. The most prominent words are 'waiting-time', 'stressful', 'mental-health', 'dentists', 'nurses-lovely', 'no-appointments', 'no-face-to-face', 'underfunded', 'stuck', 'no-time-to-care', 'no-support', 'no-understanding', 'more-appreciation-for-front-line', 'casts-shame', 'expected-travel-distance', 'divides-the-community', 'hard-to-access', 'damaged-me-further', 'time-consuming', 'midwifery-excellent', 'lonely', 'underfunded', 'stuck', 'treat-me-as-me', 'don't-understand', 'access-difficult', 'no-appointments', 'hardworking', 'judgement', 'bleak', 'professional-boundaries', 'exhausting', 'quick', 'triggering', 'challenging', 'passed-around', 'fear', 'abandoned', 'traumatising', 'hard', 'difficult', 'rushed', 'bleak', 'professional-boundaries', 'exhausting', 'quick', 'treat-me-as-me'.

the steps to reach the stars

The emerging trends in this project highlight a need to shift towards inclusive, culturally sensitive solutions, and not to overly rely on technology focused healthcare. On top of this the trending response from marginalised people was that they felt they had nowhere available for their situation that was judgement free and safe. We should be able to make healthcare accessible to all by utilising co-design methodologies and trauma-informed care to create tailored services that embody both physical and mental well-being.

Discover the Power of Co-Design and Meet the Inspiring VIVA Team!

Allow us to introduce CN4C's remarkable VIVA team, born from the heart of co-design initiatives – a collaborative approach that unites communities to tackle concerns, conduct research, and uncover solutions. Co-design empowers every voice within the community to be heard, making research more inclusive and impactful. These projects have nurtured a space where individuals, driven by their life experiences, convene weekly to embark on projects ranging from poetry books to live events and research ventures. By sharing their personal journeys and stories, barriers dissolve, prejudices shatter, and 'us' and 'them' blur into a shared journey.

If you'd like to see the full report or learn more about our work and the team behind it please see our viva website.
<https://www.vivacommunitydesign.co.uk/>

The next steps involve developing these trends through continued engagement, co-designing innovative strategies, and policy development to ensure that health inequalities are effectively tackled and great healthcare access becomes a reality for all.