

Report framework

Background

The Family Nurse Partnership Team(FNP) have been in post in Erewash since 2011 working with young mothers under 19 years of age, currently there are just under 1.1 WTE in the team working with 27 young people in Erewash. The key driver for this programme was the desire to extend this programme to others and develop key aspects of it which enable service users to develop their own skills as leaders and also to influence decisions made about future health services.

Project summary

This is a collaborative venture aimed at empowering young mums to influence the way local health services are delivered through co-design. Participants engage in coaching and mentoring sessions followed by quality group workshops to gather their experience of health service provision.

The project is being delivered in an area with one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the country and works directly with young teenage mothers aged 19 and under to:

- Capture their lived experience of barriers to accessing health services eg maternity care, GP and out of hours and A&E.
- Identify new ways of commissioning healthcare and support for families and young people
- Engage with health service decision makers on an equal footing
- Empower young people with confidence through training, coaching and mentoring support

Outcomes

- Young parents empowered and enabled to give their feedback to professionals to improve services, through engaging them in confidence building.
- Vulnerable parents affected by multiple deprivation are supported to give their babies the best start in life.
- Young parents are confident to make informed choices, be in control of their pregnancy and birth and to make decisions post birth.

- Young parents are helped to be “in control” to identify strengths and gaps in local services, speaking for those who are seldom heard and have previously been fearful of professionals.
- Young mums feel confident because they have built up trust with someone from the local community who understands local context.

Measures of success

- Young parents report a positive experience of the programme
- Young parents report access to emotional support, information and parenting advice
- Young parents feel confident to make their feelings known to professionals
- Young parents feel confident to feedback their experiences and the experiences and needs of peers.
- The support group sessions evaluate positively
- Reduced reliance on and “inappropriate” use of other services, such as A&E, reduced crisis intervention
- Increased awareness in the CCG of the needs of vulnerable young parents resulting in more effective and appropriate service commissioning.

Impact

Over the sessions young mums and young mums to be took part in a number of activities designed to build their confidence and skills. At the evaluation session they felt ready to talk to CCG “officials” and shared their experiences of care and health services in an open discussion group. They showed the comments trees they had built and talked about how services worked for them. They confidently talked about suggested changes they felt would make the experience better for other people and what needs to change to put young mums more in control of their own care and the care of their child. At the start of the sessions they were not able to do this.

They also shared their experience on video and more importantly were able to talk about the impact the programme has had on them as individuals. Comments included “*I feel able to talk to people here, you’re not judged*”

Evaluation

Evaluation has been ongoing in the form of qualitative feedback from all involved in a 360 degree approach utilising learning journals, diaries, stories and surveys. A baseline survey determined the initial thoughts and concerns of those involved which was then measured again at points of the programme and the end.

Any workshops and group sessions are evaluated for effectiveness, usefulness and impact.

At the evaluation session on March 18th their experience of a range of services was discussed and they also talked about their experience of the programme overall and what they had gained from it. (videos or personal experiences and photos to follow)

All the mums demonstrated an increased awareness of health service provision, how to access services, who to contact etc..

They were also able to talk through some proposed changes to services such as contraceptive services to be offered at the Children's Centres so they don't need to go to the drop in service. Other suggestions they made which are being implemented include access to a health visitor pre-natally and increased service hosting at the Children's Centres. It was refreshing to be able to discuss and agree these on the same day rather than having to go and set up a group and project to take them forward. This made the girls feel listened to.

Key learning – 'how to'

Assumptions

We assumed that young mums would want to take part, and they did. In some areas this may have been a high risk strategy, but we were confident enough with the experience and advice from Ripplez to know that, if approached in the right way, people would take part and more importantly would develop as part of the process,

Process / methodology

- Partnership working between Erewash CCG, Ripplez CIC Family Nurse Partnership and Long Eaton Children's Centre – worked together to establish a group of young parents and develop confidence programme to empower them to have their say about current services. For the final session of the programme relevant

professionals from each service, as well as representation from Erewash CCG, attended the group for the young parents to present their feedback to them.

Impact/effecting change

To prepare for change a “culture of readiness” was developed. As a small CCG it was easier to deliver effective communication across the organisation and therefore ensure everyone was aware of the project and on board to listen to the findings and make changes. Usual methods were used to communicate the programme aims and potential outcomes including local media, local groups, newsletters and presentations at groups and committees.

This was further facilitated by the fact that the aims of this programme addressed a number of strategic objectives and therefore the findings had potential impact on a number of other work streams and transformation programmes including the Out of Hours service review, changed GP working, working with voluntary organisations and improving services for children and young people. Consequently there was a culture of interest in this project.

Shared learning

Meeting the young mums at a Children’s Centre which they are familiar with worked well, it not only provided facilities for their needs, but also added an element of confidence for them.

The young mums “gelled” very well because of a large amount of shared experience and shared needs. Coincidentally their demographics were also well matched in terms of age, gender, residence etc..

Talking about personal experience and emotional well-being was greatly aided by the use of arts and crafts sessions. This provided a focus for activity and facilitated the expression of their needs. They were then able to talk about their needs through the art.

Having a few “quick wins” early on in the process worked, by seeing their ideas being listened to and then acted upon quickly they gained momentum and confidence in the process.

Lessons learned

No matter how vulnerable, hard to reach and difficult to engage with you think people are, given the right support, skills and knowledge they will talk to you.

Provide people with the skills and then meet them on common ground, literally in their location of comfort and you will be able to engage with people.

You will always learn something from every sessions

When people who are not used to talking are heard by those who are not use to listening, then real change can occur.

Quality assurance/accountability

One of the key factors to the success of this programme has been the skills and experience of those people carrying out the engagement activities. They were able to use traditional engagement tools but were also able to think outside of the box and bring new ideas to improve participation and enable the young mums to really open up.

Ongoing communication was in fact one of our governance tools, talking about what was going to happen, how it went and what would happen next was key to ensuring everything was on track and everyone was accountable for their aspect of the programme.

The vast experience of the Ripplez team meant that many of the risks of delivering the programme were reduced and eliminated