



Expression of Interest for Voluntary and Community Sector partners to support Lewisham Primary Care Networks to form Health Equity Teams

Lewisham Council is seeking proposals from Black Led Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations that can partner with Lewisham Primary Care Network (PCN) Health Equity Fellows to form Health Equity Teams. Teams are tasked with supporting work to address health inequalities around heart attacks and strokes (cardiovascular disease (CVD) affecting Lewisham's diverse populations and to improve health equity in Lewisham.

We are particularly interested in local, ethnically diverse organisations that can work within the geographical location of local PCN's. We seek to improve care, patient pathways into treatment and build genuine partnerships between communities, non-statutory organisations and healthcare providers.

An example of this would be a community organisation working with their local populations to raise the awareness of risks of having a high blood pressure or high cholesterol and providing advice, information and brief interventions to reduce harm and improve the lives of local communities, and through working with their local general practices to increase attendance at their local GPs for these residents or bring GP services to the community in outreach settings.

Organisations will bring their own expertise and understanding of the needs of the local communities.

Background and Context

Lewisham has a history of strong partnership working with communities. Our long-standing Community Development Team proactively engages with and undertakes community development activity with residents and the community and voluntary sector. The Council is involved in a range of partnerships to better understand the drivers of inequality.

Working in partnership with Birmingham City Council, Lewisham Council launched ground-breaking work into the health inequalities experienced by Black African and Caribbean communities, resulting in the [BLACHIR](#) report. This consisted of a series of reviews which aimed to explore the inequalities experienced by these ethnic groups and their drivers. The aim was to find approaches to break the decades of inequity in sustainable ways that will lead to better futures for local citizens.

As part of the Health Inequalities Programme, in October 2022, Public Health Lewisham started a commissioning process to recruit six organisations partnering with all six Lewisham Primary Care Networks (PCN) to support work to address health inequalities and achieve health equity.

The successful organisations worked with Lewisham Health Equity Fellows (HEF) to co-produce local projects to address health inequalities taking the opportunities for action arising from the BLACHIR report into consideration. This was the first cycle of the Health



Equity Teams Programme, and it ran from 2022 to 2024. Building on learning from Cycle 1, we are now looking to start the second cycle of the Health Equity Teams Programme.

Brief

We're looking to commission 6 Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCSOs), each to work with one of the six of Lewisham PCNs to support work to address health inequalities.

The VCSOs will work with the newly recruited Lewisham Health Equity Fellows to co-produce local projects to address cardiovascular disease and address health inequalities, taking into account the Opportunities for Action arising from the BLACHIR report.

The nature of the codesigned projects will focus on preventing and reducing heart attacks and strokes for Black and underserved residents. The interventions will be designed once the Health Equity Teams have been formed between VCSOs and Health Equity Fellows. The projects will focus on local need, health data and community voices.

Projects will be designed to deliver outcomes focusing on the BLACHIR Opportunities for Action, clinical targets such as checking blood pressures, and other public health interventions, such as support to stop smoking and community-led outcomes.

We are particularly interested in work to address cardiovascular disease through:

- directly targeting health inequalities in marginalised and underrepresented groups
- developing innovative approaches to providing accessible and targeted health care and culturally competent advice and support to live well
- streamlining pathways to facilitate access to general practice, and maintain compliance to medication
- supporting a holistic, social determinants of health approach in general practice
- supporting development of services which are engaging, promote health and help reduce health inequalities.

We want to work with six VCSOs based in Lewisham that can work with us from 2nd June 2025 to 31st March 2027. The maximum value of a single proposal is £40k per annum, and 80k over the 22 months. This includes all project delivery costs, attending training and development opportunities throughout the program.

It is essential that the VCSOs lead on the community development and engagement with the assistance from health professionals from PCNs and it should be noted that this opportunity can be used for the continuation of work already undertaken if it meets the requirements indicated in this Expression of Interest.



The indicative Timetable for this project is below:

Date	Event
6th March	Market Warming Event prospective Health Equity Fellows and VCSOs
10 th March	Applications open
11 th March	Market Warming/In person support session VCSOs only
19 th March	Market Warming/Virtual Support Session VCSOs only
25 th March	Market Warming/In person Support session VCSOs only
11 th April	VCSO Applications close
W/C 22 nd April	VCSO Moderation
Early May	Award of contract to VCSOs
2 nd June	Start Date HETs

How to Submit a Proposal

Proposals can be submitted in Word or PDF format, and a maximum of 3000 words (excluding CVs and any other accompanying evidence). Accompanying documents can be provided in Excel or other widely used formats.

Submissions should confirm the VCSO's ability to deliver against the requirements set out in this document, describe their relevant experience, and provide an outline of how they would work with Health Equity Fellows to codesign a project. The submission should also include proposed staffing for the project and costs of the project (including staffing).

Proposals need to be submitted via e-mail to publichealthcommissioning@lewisham.gov.uk by midday on 11th April 2025.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome early May 2025 and will be expected to commence work on the programmes 2nd June 2025.

Applicants will be required to agree within their Health Equity Team and the program team, regarding project working hours. This includes availability for regular meetings throughout the project, and training during the onboarding process



Application details:

Interested VCSOs will need to submit a proposal clearly demonstrating how they will meet the following:

Key Criteria	Organisations should include within their proposal:
Quality and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details on how they would engage members of the community – including any previous experiences of working with local communities. • Detail innovative methods delivering projects with good outcomes.
Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide annual costs for delivering the project (including assumed breakdown of staff time based on daily rates, and other resources) • Detail examples how previous work is value for money.
Integration, collaboration and service sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of how they would work with other partner or stakeholder organisations. • Detail how they would approach a working relationship with a Health Equity Fellow (HEF) • Provide examples of working with health providers, detailing experiences and how any issues were resolved.
Improving access, reducing health inequalities and facilitating choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the awareness of local needs and give examples of interventions or ideas that they could explore with HEFs, after the project has started, to meet local need • Give ideas on how to improve access to general practice to improve health and wellbeing.
Social value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State how their proposals would comply with the Council's Social Value policy and how the proposal will benefit the local community.
Organisations must also:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the Council's Code of Practice for Contractors • Provide copies of their insurance e.g. Public Liability Insurance



Background Documents:

Social Value Guidance & Example Key Performance Indicators:



Social Value Toolkit
for Suppliers 2024.pdf



Social Value Menu
KPIs.xlsx