

Experts by Experience – Birmingham event 22nd May 2015

Present: 25 attendees (as with the York event numbers would have been higher but for a community funeral)

Introduction

Following a run through of the report by Adrian Jones a group discussion focused on different recommendations and aspects of further work as detailed below.

We have been told that monitoring in health data will be implemented.

Next steps are to ensure other recommendations get action at a local and national level.

There is a template for a letter to draw the report to the attention of parliamentarians and political buy in is key.

Media engagement - depends on local editor could have positive or negative impact.

Health

- Equalities Impact Assessments (EQIA) includes a right to challenge which can be exercised if you feel commissioning decisions have not fully considered their equalities duty.
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessments are very important strategic document to be represented in as it gets Gypsy and Traveller health on the agenda of your local health and wellbeing board
- Staff turnover is a threat as it means loss of knowledge and processes
- ESD2 has been a way in to working with individual hospitals to include GT in their work plans, in the north west.
- Online records represent an opportunity (for those with IT literacy)
- Community Health Needs Assessments give data by which to highlight health inequalities to local commissioning bodies.
- Care Quality Commission are doing some engagement work with DGLG currently
- Further info from Leeds GATE / FFT's Health Inclusion project can be read here: <http://www.leedsgate.co.uk/2015/04/08/health-on-the-margins-reports-and-information/>

Judicial Systems

- lots of people don't disclose their ethnicity in prisons due to bullying. One service in the midlands gives GT £10 extra on phones as they are more likely to be ringing mobiles, this encourages disclosure.
- Gypsy Roma Traveller Police Association is working on a judicial system toolkit with Romani Arts Company
- Liverpool Community Care has groups running in Northwest prisons through chaplaincy projects. This provides pathways and culturally specific support which encourages disclosure. Governor needs to be on board for it to be a success.

- Positive practice was identified in midlands prisons where Gypsy / Traveller prisoners act as Traveller Representatives helping others from their communities through the prison systems, including with literacy.

Monitoring

- Monitoring is monitoring of services not people! It shows how good or bad a service is doing and is not intended to keep track of Gypsy / Traveller people themselves
- Census undercounted showing there is much more to be done in developing trust and confidence in monitoring

European Funding

- ESIF T9 vulnerable migrants programme includes Roma
- How do we ensure Gypsy / Traveller people benefit from this and how do we hold this to account?
- Lots of effort being put in by local organisation to scope out local arrangements and to identify lead partners. Getting involved as a delivery partner for large contracts across regions represents time and reputational risk to organisations involved.
- Is there an opportunity for ESIF funding to plug some gaps in prisons release programmes?

Accommodation

- Unauthorised Encampments are still a big determinant of public perception of Gypsy / Traveller people and therefore receptiveness to site provision
- New approach being trialled in Leeds: Negotiated Stopping - an agreement made by discussion to facilitate the cessation of movement
- This is a process and it involves building relationships, dialogue about where to go, making a agreement as a group with the local authority, issuing a social contract, the provision of skips and toilets and 3 months stops
- Process has led to new site provision in Leeds
- It makes a moral, political and economic argument. The economic one being particularly important in engaging local politicians - saves council £200,000 a year
- Allows local authorities to filter white noise of complaints and become solutions focused, picking out what is actually an issue and what is a community relations problem.
- Leeds GATE have applied for a project to promote this as a national solution, watch this space.
- Other benefits identified are better community relations, less crime in areas with an NS site, proactive not reactive policing meaning financial and resource savings, direct accountability and contacts for local people living near camps and individual not collective blame for breaking of social contracts.
- <http://www.leedsgate.co.uk/2013/11/25/negotiated-stopping-versus-transit-sites-whats-the-difference/>
- Discussion around access to Social housing - how to prove a local connection? - Eviction notices, family connections, places of birth
- In Leeds going into social housing doesn't remove you from priority homeless list and you can take trailer with you.

Education

- Challenges presented by new schools (e.g.- academies) less accountability to local authority and not as much incentive to engage in citywide projects.
- heads can be a big barrier, getting positive relationships at this level of management is key.
- Schools need to monitor racist bullying as hate crime, which they are reluctant to do as it is damaging to their reputation and Ofsted reports so can see it as too serious to report.
- Positive practice: Show racism the red card project in Wales
- Travellers Education Services, their funding is no longer protected and we are seeing many teams being scaled back significantly, whilst this represents a loss of resource it is also an opportunity to evaluate what effective practice looks like in this area. Starting by asking the key question of what difference was made by TES?
- Whilst there are more Gypsy and Traveller children in schools, especially primary schools there were still some ongoing issues identified:
 - high levels of bullying
 - removal of child being bullied, so locating the problem in them not the school
 - perception of children being put in "Gypsy classes" even when there was obvious academic ability
 - TES suffered from best mates syndrome (TES workers knowing families for generations and not challenging anything), they built good relationships but they weren't backed up by an appropriate framework.
- Is this an opportunity for innovation, what might this look like?
 - pushing for anti bullying policies which name GT in all schools
 - including specific targets in children and young people's plans
 - use of restorative conferencing approaches
 - funding bridging services
 - using critical race theory to explore how schools aren't geared up to teach anybody different -learning from experience of other communities
 - co-production with young people about what they want from education
 - Gypsy Schools?- an academy in Birmingham has name GRT specifically as welcome. This needs to balance the right to an education in a place of safety with issues of segregation and silo for Gypsy and Traveller young people. If the school provides an education to wider communities also then this could work.
- Elective Home Education is a safeguarding issue as is moving across local authority boundaries, serious case reviews highlight these
- Recommended read: Kat D'Arcy, Travellers and home education
- Badman report - removed safeguarding requirement from EHE law due to middle class lobby

Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month

- Best practice in Wales with Romani Arts Company doing this without funding but on back of good partnerships

Employment

- Need people working in systems to genuinely change them
- How do we make apprenticeships work for GT young people? Especially those who are electively home educated
- Good practice: Gypsy Skills project in Surrey, apprenticeships and on the job learning backed up with basic skills of numeracy and literacy
- scrap metal legislation put a lot of people out of trade. Councils weren't ready for it and didn't know what they were doing, there were examples of Gypsy / Traveller people trying to get licenses and the council not being ready to administer this. Where was the EQIA on this legislation?