

TOOL 10 – THE MODEL CONTRACT

BACKGROUND

'Communities Improving Health' is an initiative being funded by the Public Health Agency through the Networks Involving Communities in Health Improvement (NICHI) Project, and is managed by the local **Community Support Networks**.

During the period _____ to _____, the 3 NICHI Officers across the PHA Northern Locality will provide support to a small number of communities who have identified, or are aspiring to work towards addressing, local health and social wellbeing needs and issues. The support will include assisting the community to identify local needs, to develop their ideas into an outcome-focussed action plan, to implement a monitoring and evaluation framework and to record and share the learning from their experiences.

APPROACH

Communities Improving Health will use a community development approach to improving health and social wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

"A community-led approach to health improvement is concerned with supporting communities experiencing disadvantage and poor health outcomes to identify and define what is important to them about their health and wellbeing; the factors that impact on their wellbeing and take the lead in identifying and implementing solutions." (Dailly & Barr 2008)

Community development practice is based on five core values, as outlined below:

- Community Empowerment – enhancing the ability of communities to exercise control and influence over their own circumstances.
- Collective Action - working together to identify and implement action, in recognition of the value of diverse cultures and contributions.
- Equality and Anti-discrimination – actively challenging discriminatory attitudes and practices and involving those who are most marginalised to ensure the needs of all are represented.
- Social Justice - enabling people to claim their human rights, meet their needs and have greater control over the decision-making processes which affect their lives.
- Working and Learning Together – promoting collaboration between community, voluntary and statutory agencies to maximise resources and share learning.

A community development approach to health attempts to work upstream, tackling the root causes of ill health, such as poverty and disadvantage, and supporting the development of conditions that promote wellbeing. Strong communities, with good social capital and networks, tend to be more resilient and ultimately healthier.

The Communities Improving Health approach will therefore promote active intervention to address the personal, social and community conditions that may influence quality of life and, by extension, people's health. The approach will build on the assets and resources that already exist within communities and facilitate opportunities for further capacity development.

The overall purpose of Communities Improving Health is to contribute to the creation of healthier, sustainable communities. The ingredients of a healthy community can be identified as healthy people, strong community & quality of life and this initiative will support communities to implement actions that address one or more of these elements.

PROCESS

As already highlighted, this will be a community-led approach to health improvement and consequently the activities and outcomes identified within each community's action plan will be non-prescriptive and context-specific. The NICHI Officers have, however, identified a framework for action which will guide the process of planning and implementing change. The stages of this process are outlined below:

Stage 1 – What needs to change?

This phase will involve the community identifying the needs and agreeing desired outcomes. These will be framed within the dimensions of 'healthy people', 'strong community' and 'quality of life'.

Stage 2 – How will we know if change has occurred?

The next stage will involve identifying outcome indicators (both qualitative & quantitative) in order to assess how much has changed and how beneficial this has been. This will require gathering evidence from a variety of sources at the outset (baseline), during and at the conclusion of the process.

Stage 3 – How will we go about it?

An action plan will be agreed, which will identify the resources needed to facilitate change, clarify the methods and processes that will be used and define the specific actions to be implemented, i.e. who will do what and when.

Stage 4 – How will we know we did it?

At this stage, the indicators will be agreed and reporting mechanisms will be used to monitor progress and check whether the activities that were planned, were actually carried out efficiently, effectively and equitably.

Stage 5 – Did we do it & how useful was it?

This is the evaluation phase and involves collecting and evaluating evidence to check whether the planned outcomes were actually achieved and whether these can be attributed to the specific activities that took place. Any unexpected changes, positive or negative, should also be identified. All stakeholders will reflect on learning, review progress and consider what needs to be done next.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITIES IMPROVING HEALTH INITIATIVE

NICHI's aim is to develop the capacity of communities to define their own issues, identify what needs to change, along with possible solutions, and act collectively as agents for change. As such, the role of the NICHI Officer is not to dictate or dominate the planning process but provide support with facilitating the community's progress through the five stage model, outlined above.

The role of the **NICHI Officer** will include the following:

- Provide measurement tools, e.g. for needs analysis, consultation exercises, baseline study and evaluation.
- Consult official records and compile area profile information to contribute to baseline study.
- Co-facilitate and record feedback from community consultation events, monitoring meetings etc.
- Support development of the action plan, including identification of clear outcomes, outcome indicators & outputs.
- Link community with relevant resources and capacity building opportunities, including training, funding & services as required.
- Share the learning and experiences of the project with relevant stakeholders as appropriate, including PHA.

The community's role, under the leadership of the nominated representative, is to agree and deliver on the content of the action plan – i.e. engage in consultation exercises to identify needs and priorities, agree a vision for change and participate in capacity building opportunities and any other activities identified in the action plan.

The role of the **community group** representative will include the following:

- Share findings of any previous needs analyses undertaken locally.
- Convene & promote community consultation events.
- Identify and link with relevant partners within the community to promote collective action.
- Co-facilitate consultation events.
- Organise and implement baseline measurement.
- Gather evidence throughout the process to assist with monitoring and evaluation.
- Deliver on the action plan, utilising existing community resources and assets and engaging in capacity building opportunities.
- Support & promote engagement in the activities identified within the action plan.
- Gather evidence to assist with ongoing monitoring and review.
- Undertake evaluation and encourage community participation in all feedback exercises.

If you are happy to proceed with the 'Communities Improving Health' Programme, to work in partnership with the NICHI Officer between _____ to _____ within the approach and processes outlined above, please sign below to indicate your commitment to this initiative.

Group / Organisation:

Correspondence Address:
.....
.....

Contact Number(s):.....

Contact Email Address(s):

Name of community representative(s):

Signature: Date:.....

