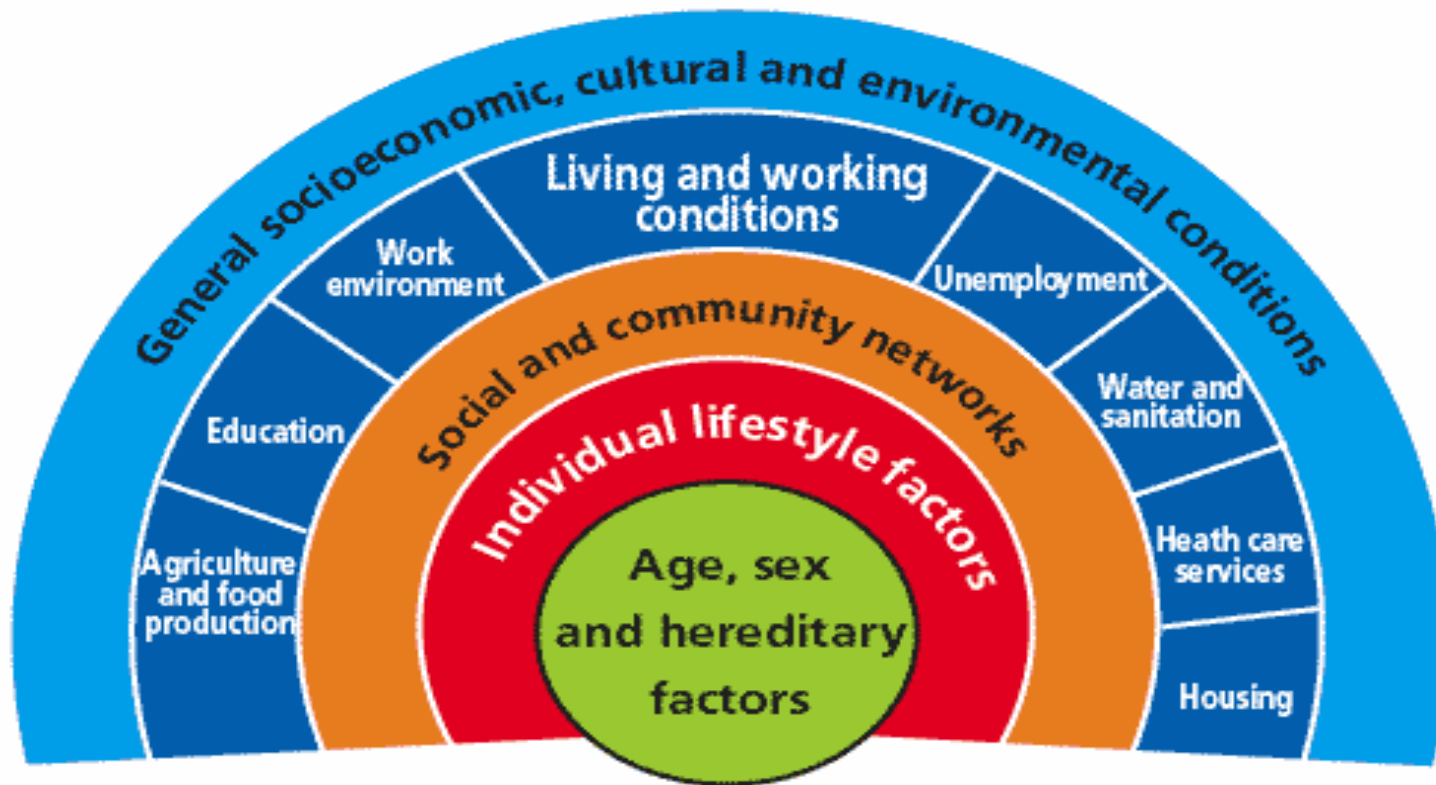


Eye health inequalities in the sight loss sector

Gozie Joe Adigwe

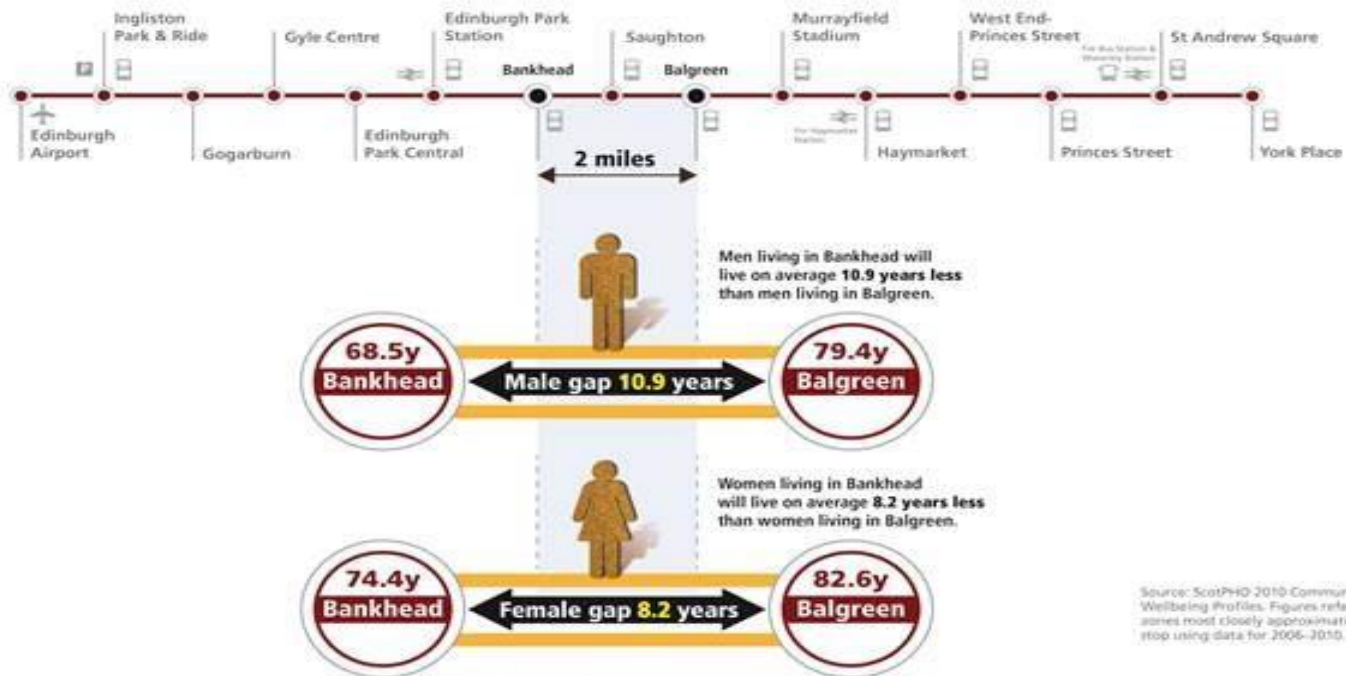
Senior Eye Health and Equalities Officer

Health Inequalities



Health Inequalities

Mind the GAP: inequalities in life expectancy in Edinburgh



Source: ScotPHD 2010 Community Health and Wellbeing Profiles. Figures refer to intermediate areas most closely approximating to each tram stop using data for 2006-2010.

Eye Health and Inequality

- **The risk of Diabetes in the South Asian population is up to 6 times greater than that in the White population, with an increased risk of visual impairment due to Diabetic Eye Disease.**
- **On income-based measures, Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Black African households in Scotland have higher rates of poverty than other ethnic groups. Poverty is a risk factor for ill health.**
- **Older people with sight loss are almost 3 times as likely to experience depression than people with good vision**

Eye Health and Inequality

- **People with learning disabilities are 10 times more likely to have serious sight problems than other people.**
- **1 in 5 people aged 75 and over are living with sight loss**
- **For Glaucoma the prevalence spectrum is affected by age and ethnicity. However, young Black African origin men are over-represented and experience severe forms of the disease.**
- **'A review of evidence to evaluate effectiveness of intervention strategies to address inequalities in eye health care' - Prof Mark Johnson, De Montfort University, Leicester**

The Glasgow Community Engagement Project (CEP)

- **RNIB-funded project under the 'prevention of avoidable sight loss' programme (2009 - 2014).**
- **One of five UK pilots working with 'at risk' groups. (other projects in Bradford, Hackney, Cym Taf, Belfast).**
- **'At risk' groups - black African, Pakistani, White low income**
- **Develop evidence of interventions that improve eye health**

Barriers to eye health

- No symptoms
- Poor previous experience
- Perceived cost of eye examination/glasses
- Work/family commitments
- Poor attitude of staff
- Language and communication
- Gender of staff



What makes people access Eye Care?

- Noticeable symptoms
- Information - where to go/what to do
- Deteriorating vision
- Previous good experience of the service
- Full explanation on the process
- Ease of making/changing the appointment
- Positive attitude of clinician/staff



The interventions

- Worked with the Pakistani community of south-east Glasgow (Govanhill, East/West Pollokshields); 40-65yrs.
- A programme of eye health promotion events in the local community. Also involved recruitment and training of Eye Health Volunteers and Community Champions to promote eye health among the target population.
- Working with health professionals to promote consistent messages to the target population with diabetes about attending both DRS appointments and optometrist eye examinations

Headline results

Intervention 1

- Small **increase** in the proportion of survey respondents reporting having seen, read or heard information about eye health (30.6% to 33.6%)
- Small **increase** in the proportion aware of eligibility for eye examinations in Scotland (65.3% to 71.5%)
- Small **decrease** in the proportion reporting an eye examination in the previous two years (79.4% to 78.6%)

Headline results

Interventions 2 and 3

- **Increase** in proportion of Pakistani patients attending DRS appointments between Q4 2012 and Q4 2013 (74.9% to 82.7%)
- Also a small **increase** among *all* patients over the same period (76.5% to 80.2%) (DRS data)
- However, small **decrease** in reported attendance at DRS (89.0% to 82.7%) (survey data)

Challenges and Enablers

Challenges

- Recruiting bilingual men as volunteers and community champions
- Targeting a particular age group
- High baseline eye care knowledge
- Expectations of community champions and primary health care practitioners
- Enhancing reach with limited resources

Enablers

- 'Inspirational' Community Development worker
- Local volunteers
- Collaboration with health services and other agencies - partnership approach acknowledged across the board, Chairman's Award nominee

Next steps and opportunities

- Development of Eye Health & Diversity training pilot in partnership with NHS GG&C; deliver across sectors
- Collaboration with Glasgow Caledonia University - research topic for final year optometry students
- Manifesto Asks 2010 Election - include maintaining and promoting free eye exams
- Place eye health and potential inequality within the framework of current policy context - See Hear, Health and Social Care Integration
- Public health priority targeted to 'at risk' groups, in partnership with equality orgs and grassroots agencies - be creative and cheap!
- Diversity strategy for the sight loss sector - Scottish Vision Strategy?