



Throughout 2021 partner organisations advocated for an inclusion health approach to the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Using and sharing their differing assets, partners identified, targeted and supported under-served groups to overcome the barriers between them and vaccination. Barriers included digital and language exclusion, lack of transport, mis-information, poor communication, anxieties and fears. Under-served groups included those who were homeless, BAME, disabled, or living in deprivation.

REFERENCES:

- 1 Vaccine Inclusion, *Reducing Inequalities One Vaccine at a Time*, April 2021
- 2 *Impacting vaccine policy and practice*, June 2021
- 3 *Grants to Combat Vaccine Hesitancy and Testing*, December 2021

Scan QR codes to access references



Our aims were to:

- ▶ Highlight the needs of people who find healthcare and other public services hard to access and who need more support to do so
- ▶ Harness third sector intelligence and resources to identify, engage and support people at greatest risk of missing out on the vaccine because of inequalities or hesitancy
- ▶ Promote and facilitate targeted communications to reach under-served groups
- ▶ Promote and facilitate assertive outreach approaches to vaccine delivery
- ▶ Advocate for improved data collection on vaccine take-up amongst under-served groups
- ▶ Influence national vaccination policy and implementation



The Lothian Micro-Grants Programme

ELHF invested £20,000 from its endowment funds, EVOC managed and delivered the grants and all four Third Sector Interfaces promoted the grants. Grants were up to £500 per application. The programme boosted the capacity of voluntary and community organisations wanting to carry out grassroots activities in support of the COVID-19 vaccination programme and testing. By December 2021 thirty-one grants totalling £14,693 had been distributed, benefitting 4,084 individuals across Edinburgh and Lothian.

Our methodology and actions

- ▶ VHS's national study *Vaccine Inclusion: Reducing Inequalities One Vaccine at A Time* identified unmet needs, data gaps and scope for improvement (April 2021)
- ▶ NHS Lothian, Lothian's four Third Sector Interfaces, and ELHF developed a third sector-led inclusion health approach to the vaccine
- ▶ Partners developed a Lothian-wide micro-grants programme to support grassroots organisations to target, engage and support under-served and marginalised groups to take up both the vaccine and testing (April 2021 onwards)
- ▶ EVOC published an interim evaluation of the micro-grants programme, with case studies (Dec 2021)
- ▶ Key learnings were shared widely, e.g. with the Scottish Government's Covid-19 Vaccine Inclusion Steering Group, Public Health Scotland's Scottish Immunisation Programme Communication and Information Advisory Group, and the Deep End GPs Group.

Community Activities

* Deaf Action developed BSL videos to support deaf people's understanding of the vaccine and how to get it. *

* Handicabs (Lothian) drivers provided a transport service to vaccination centres, and reassured nervous passengers, especially people who had been shielding. *

* West Lothian African Women Network held a COVID safe event with healthcare speakers and experienced members of their community, to clarify vaccine myths and encourage vaccine uptake. *

Lessons for the future

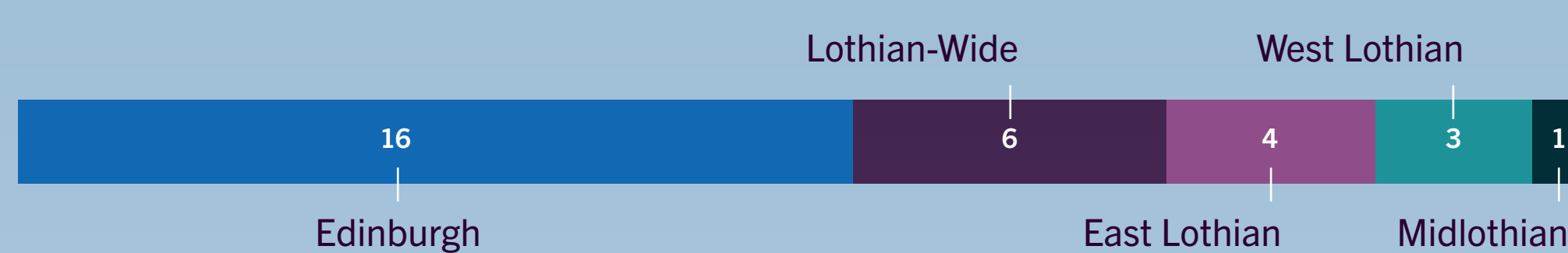
NHS Boards should view the third sector as part of a whole system approach to ensuring all vaccination programmes are inclusive and seek to mitigate health inequalities. The third sector is not routinely seen as a partner in the design or implementation of vaccination programmes, but its high level of reach and trust in under-served communities can be harnessed to improve individual and population outcomes.

NHS Boards should consider using endowment funds to develop micro-grants programmes in partnership with the third sector, to assist an inclusion approach to public health programmes like vaccination, testing and screening.

Patient Feedback

“ Thank you so much for taking me for my first vaccine this afternoon. I was so nervous but my driver was lovely and walked me to the door and made sure I was ok. It was so reassuring to see him there afterwards too. This was my first journey to somewhere I don't know without my friends in years! ”

Geographical Spread of Activities



Activities Funded

