

Lessons from sharing our journey: 3

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In early May we had the opportunity to share the journey we are taking to create the Centre for Health and Care Equity with colleagues from across the country as part of the Kings Fund conference [Tackling Health Inequalities: the need for urgent action](#). It was powerful to look back on what has happened even in the short time since we launched in November 2023.

We have delivered and / or started projects that connect the community, Council and academics. For example a local community group have collected detailed data from more than 300 South Asian women in Newham and support they receive for their emotional and mental wellbeing. An academic fellow from UCL is now working with the organisation to delve into this rich data set and develop insights for the wider system.

It includes work we have done with the London School of Economics and community groups to mitigate the impacts of overcrowding which exists at high levels across Newham. Community groups and community organisations including schools and voluntary organisations were key to the data collection – directly and in supporting academics to reach residents. These organisations, residents, NHS colleagues and academics came together to consider research insights and develop recommendations. While housing remains a particularly challenging issue in Newham – and our levers locally are limited – the work is now informing the collective response to reduce the harms associated with overcrowding.

There is more happening on topics ranging from increasing infant feeding to reducing smoking and vaping, improving rates of oral health and reducing rates of youth crime and violence.

We've agreed a quarterly collaboration of UEL academics, local community organisations and council staff to focus on shared issues and priorities – and UEL are supporting on a practical basis with space and hosting (often one of the most practical challenges). We co-hosted a roundtable with QMUL on [decolonising healthcare innovation](#) and what this means for health in Newham and wider.

We're also putting in place our leadership – with an Advisory Board and Delivery Group. Both of these will include members from voluntary, community and faith organisations and residents ([more information on the Centre website](#))

Alongside the chance to reflect on our own progress was the opportunity to be inspired and have our thinking stretched by our fellow panel members.

[Dr Andy Knox's](#) experience of the potential collective joy, time to breath and the need to experience discomfort was energising – and a powerful reminder of how collective action is more than just the work. We are particularly keen to see how (within our shoe-string operation) we can implement some form of fellowship for the Centre.

[Sarah Smith](#), Deputy Director for Improving Population Health, [West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership](#), inspired us with a number of the activities that the Partnership have developed including in particular the work that is being done in each place to reduce the inequalities that are being experienced across the area.

The audience questions, particularly around how one sustains community participation and community partnership really made us think about our own approaches and our methods for ensuring that the Centre operates in a way that reflects, responds to and sustains community interest, enthusiasm and energy. 3