

Community Media Association conference - 10th Sep 2016

HEALTH FM

1 year Community Radio Fund project that aims to:

- set up a network of community radio stations interested in the field of community radio broadcasting and health
- collate and share information on community radio health projects - evidence that they work, project ideas, potential partners/sources of funding ...
- support around 10 stations with small grants to develop new work in the area of health radio (UK-wide but with a focus on Greater Manchester stations to explore the City Region's devolved health budget)

The project is NOT about providing health content.

Why do health radio?

- Benefit to local people/community - furthering social gain objectives (and supporting case for charity registration)
- Income-generating activities - sustaining the station

Hopefully both!

Ways in which community radio can be used to promote health/health issues:

Broadly speaking:

- The station's programming publicises issues
- People benefit by participating at the station

More specifically:

- Community engagement
- Support individual volunteers with mental health issues
 - 1 in 4 of population have or have had mental health issues
 - Station staff can attend a 'Mental Health 1st Aid' course (MHFA) or suicide prevention training (MIND). Your local Mental Health NHS Trust might pay for this. Cost for MHFA course is £2-300 for 3 day course or £70 for 3 hr session. See <http://mhfaengland.org/first-aid-courses/first-aid-standard/>
- Tackle isolation. Penrith has a sparse population, they attempt to address this issue, produce a (paper) magazine and wire listeners in in remote areas.
- Tackle insomnia e.g. broadcast output at night specifically for people who can't sleep

- Preventative - particularly with respect to mental health issues as above, tackling loneliness, insomnia, stress
- Broadcast/disseminate health information
- Guide listeners to sources for help
- Use '**Word On Health**' - a not-for-profit health issues content provider - produces free weekly interview-based radio reports on healthcare issues to be aired on independent and community radio stations - providing stations with material to broadcast and giving free editorial coverage to healthcare charities and patient groups. To date has covered 529 conditions! It has high production standards and as well as being good for standalone broadcast can be used to introduce a topic for local discussion - see <http://www.wordonhealth.com/about-us.php>
 - o Several stations already use this service, and find it useful. Although - some stations reported that it's hard to pick up the content? It's sent as emails - it would be better if it could be downloaded straight onto Myriad. Drystone recommend nominating one person to receive the emails and put onto Myriad.
 - o There's also 'Talking Health' and 'Talking Business' - <https://www.rmit.edu.au/news/podcasts/talking-health>
- Awareness-raising amongst volunteers
- Be a contact point for local help groups (e.g. MS/diabetes) e.g. helping to recruit volunteers and broadcasting interviews
- Provide hospital radio-type services. Drystone (Yorkshire) have stepped in to broadcast material that their local hospital radio (now closed) used to.
- Provide services funded by local Public Health departments and CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups - bodies that commission hospital/community NHS services and ensure that they are delivered)

What different stations/organisations are doing

- **Reprezent** - worked with Newham CCG to help raise awareness of mental health issues by young people. This included a 5 day broadcast campaign with features on mental health issues affecting young people (e.g. eating disorders, depression) and a feature on the station website.
- **Somer Valley** - has good working relationship with their local care and health provider and the local authority's health department e.g. got sponsorship from local Public Health dept to produce ads and a feature/podcast re local health services, and delivered a media training course to Public Health staff.
- **Academy FM, Folkestone** - have run a number of health projects including:
 - o an intergenerational project about dementia, funded by the County Council - aimed at young people who were concerned about their grandparent's developing dementia
 - o a project, funded by the Wellcome Trust in which young people interview local professionals about a science/medicine question they have e.g. cancer, heart disease - interviews are then broadcast.

- Thinking about running a 'tea table' project in a local shop to help combat loneliness of elderly people - place for shoppers to sit down and talk to someone - with the potential for recording local people's stories
- **Camglen - Glasgow** - a health-focussed community radio station set up by the HappynHealthy Community Development Trust - tackles health issues by providing volunteering opportunities and broadcasting ads and features
- **Swindon** - have good relationships with local colleges and work with the charity Autus - <https://www.autus.org.uk/home> - to support young people with Aspergers/autism. Autus trains young people with autism using laptops to create a virtual learning environment. Young people have visited the Swindon station to participate in a virtual job centre.
- **Radio Cardiff** - have participated in a Council-funded 'Being Well' mental health project: service users put together questions for service providers - volunteers were trained volunteers to do the interviews (including with the Welsh Assembly) and put together a 30 min show. Good marriage of content provision and benefit to participants.
- **Takeover** - children's radio station - possibly not appropriate for young people to broadcast about health matters? (but see Rerezent and Academy FM above). Have helped diabetic association recruit younger volunteers
- **Angel Radio** - station aimed at people aged 60+. Uses reminiscence therapy and has daily exercise programmes.
- **CMA** - ran the 'Radio Nation' project in 2013 to encourage more people from black and south Asian communities to join the organ donation register - awareness-raising jingles were produced in community languages and played by 17 community radio stations - funded by the Dept of Health, who found that it did have an impact.
- **New Health Economics (NHE)** - Looking at using a funding pot available as part of the NHS's 'Sustainability and Transformation Plans'. These are 5 year Plans which outline how to ensure that health and care services are built around the needs of local populations. NHE is working with the CMA to explore the application of STPs to the community radio sector.
- **iWoman Media** - has funding from Wellcome Trust for an experimental arts and broadcast project

Barriers to running projects

- Talking to project commissioners - how to contact/access agencies e.g. CCGs (establish a relationship with them) and what to say
- It is difficult to get funding for health projects – e.g. Word On Health has struggled to get funding - can be hard to secure funding even if you can show positive outcomes?
- Not enough time - "even if I did know the route to find funding - and I don't know the route"
- Finding an expert who can talk about the subject in the right language for listeners (e.g. Gaelic at Raidio Failte in Belfast)

- Making the output of good enough quality
- Making a subject attractive to the listener e.g. “The Sickle Cell Anaemia Show” ?!
Can tackle health issues with ‘hidden’ programming e.g. like Coronation Street having a story line about smoke alarms.
- Concern about giving out correct information e.g. stations - should you or shouldn't you take pre-records? Note - station isn't giving out health advice, it's a platform for professionals to communicate, who may have varying opinions. Please be acutely aware of Ofcom's sensitivity about any broadcaster giving out unproven health advice – especially if not appropriately flagged.

Other

- need to talk to government about using community radio to promote positive health messages
- small amount of seed funding (e.g. from Radio Regen's small CRF pot) could pay a student to coordinate workshops and do production/editing on health issues i.e. we could do more health programming if there was dedicated production time

What next for Health FM?

- Circulate workshop notes
- Carry on the conversation!

Note from Radio Regen – our next stage is a mapping exercise – to further explore who's doing what. This might take some time. Only once that's done can we start to think about where we might put our micro project funding. In the meanwhile we'll start a Health FM page on the Community Radio Toolkit and post the best things that we come across. We are also happy to advise stations on fledgling health projects.