
Health and Social Value

No. 02

One of a series of case studies from the Health and Social Value programme.

Collaboration creates social value in Milton Keynes

A commitment to reducing health inequalities in Milton Keynes has driven collaboration between voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE); the local authority and the clinical commissioning group (CCG) through the health and social value programme. The VCSE is now working in a more focused and constructive way and social value has been integrated into the commissioning process.



Department
of Health

IVAR Institute for
Voluntary Action Research

Key points

- A joint commitment that services have to change and that non-traditional approaches to health and wellbeing need to be developed is needed from all sectors.
- Recognition that VCSEs already deliver services and support in health, wellbeing and social care reinforces the need for strong leadership and organisation in the sector.
- Effective communication structures and processes between the VCSE and statutory bodies is a key component in ensuring changes can be made.
- Focused outcomes and clear language understood by all participants are key factors in the partnership.
- It is important to build upon what already exists rather than reinvent the wheel.
- The pace of progress will depend on local circumstances, economic conditions and the ability of partners to engage.

ABOUT THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL VALUE PROGRAMME

The Health and Social Value programme is a three-year programme, funded by the Department of Health and delivered by Social Enterprise UK (SEUK) and the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR). The programme is specifically designed to support local areas to deliver and commission for social value in health and care; in this way it aims to support the implementation of the Public Services (Social Value) Act at the frontline.

The programme brings together key players in local healthcare to consider what social value means in their area, how it can be embedded in commissioning and procurement of health services, and how this can lead to improved health outcomes on the ground.

The programme works with senior decision-makers and leaders from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local authorities (including those on Health and Wellbeing Boards) and from the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. Through a combination of facilitated group sessions and external experts, the programme focuses on specific actions: to deliver culture change and the partnerships necessary to create tangible improvements in local healthcare.

The programme also aims to improve VCSE organisations' understanding of their own impact in terms of social value and increase their knowledge of the commissioning process.



Find out more: socialenterprise.org.uk/policy-campaigns/policy/delivering-social-value

Background

The Milton Keynes Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-15 set out a commitment to reduce health inequalities, build on community strengths, shift the budget allocation towards primary and secondary prevention, and respond more effectively to the needs of different groups in the community.

This provided a platform and recognition that the Strategy could be delivered more effectively by improved engagement with VCSE organisations and integrating the concept of social value into the commissioning process.

The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) has an elected VCSE representative and efforts were made to create a stronger reference group for the VCSE in order to communicate with HWB. A loose grouping called 'Speaking with One Voice' (SWOV) had emerged along with the existing Community Action Milton Keynes (CAMK)

Initial discussions indicated that this work was taking place against the background of severe financial constraints and that there was little shared understanding of the social value concept. VCSE membership databases were also felt to be inadequate for the purpose of providing information to commissioners.

What we did

- Funding was made available from the Joint Commissioning Team for both the development of a VCSE reference/leadership group and for the mapping exercise.
- A subgroup of the main health and social value programme came together to develop the Social Value Charter, define social value in Milton Keynes and a set of local key drivers linked to the six Marmot priorities for addressing health inequalities. These correspond to a set of key drivers, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the CCG Strategic Priorities and legislation including the Equality Act and Localism Act.
- A Community Interest Company carried out a mapping exercise and identified a range of support and training levels required for different organisations. Those that wanted to be commissioned needed to be fit for purpose.
- The SWOV group has been increased to include members of this programme and has led the discussions around social value and created a better on-going dialogue between the VCSE infrastructure organisations.

Our approach

A cross-sector group representing the VCSE, local authority and CCG came together for a series of joint workshops to develop and integrate the concept of social value. The following joint objectives were agreed:

- A Social Value Charter would be developed that would be approved by all sectors and include outcomes, indicators and ways of measuring social value.
- A mapping exercise would be commissioned that would identify existing VCSE provision relating to social value in the health and care economy.
- The provider market would be strengthened to include stronger leadership forums and the development of smaller community based groups.
- Greater understanding of the commissioning process would be obtained leading to greater trust between commissioners and providers.

What was the impact?

- The Social Value Charter has been adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board and work has started on a toolkit to clarify how it can be implemented in practice. A number of contract tenders have included a social value component and the VCSE is aiming to achieve greater consistency across council departments.
- The VCSE is collaborating more as a result of both the mapping exercise and a stronger representative group. A number of focus groups and delivery partnerships are underway for VCSE organisations wishing to cooperate. A recent joint bid with the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) has been submitted for European funding tackling poverty and social inclusion.
- Training and support is being provided for VCSE organisations wishing to measure their social value.

Future Impact

It is anticipated that social value will be rolled out more in health commissioning and procurement. The experience in Milton Keynes demonstrates that the pace of progress will depend on local circumstances, economic conditions and the ability of partners to engage.

We expect there to be continued improvement in understanding social value measurement amongst the VCSEs in Milton Keynes particularly. This is important in ensuring that the social care sector providers are ready to respond to what the commissioners may be asking for.

A better understanding between commissioners and providers will lead to further partnership opportunities across healthcare and more broadly the public service delivery environment where social value applies.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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Social Enterprise UK

We are the national body for social enterprise. We are a membership organisation. We offer business support, do research, develop policy, campaign, build networks, share knowledge and understanding, and raise awareness of social enterprise and what it can achieve. We also provide training and consultancy for clients of all kinds.

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Institute for Voluntary Action Research

We work to understand, support and strengthen voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisation and management using action research. We work collaboratively; concentrate on problem-solving; and want our work to be relevant and practically useful.

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