



GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDY

NHS BLACKPOOL

ALTOGETHER NOW A LEGACY FOR BLACKPOOL



SUMMARY

Altogether Now – a legacy for Blackpool

is a multi-agency crusade, delivered by three partners - NHS Blackpool, Blackpool FC and Blackpool Council, serving the Blackpool community of approx 142,000 residents. The forthcoming change in structures across the NHS will see Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust superseding NHS Blackpool in the partnership.

Launched in 2010 this all-age, all-sport, all-inclusive programme is aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of every person in the seaside town irrespective of age, race, gender or ability, through increased physical activity and targeted health messages.

- It was described by Sebastian Coe - Chair of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) - as

"a really important initiative for Blackpool." He added: "It is encouraging to see so many different organisations working together for the benefit of the local community. This programme is all about encouraging and supporting everybody – irrespective of age, race, gender or disability – to become more physically active and, in so doing, improve their health and wellbeing."

- On a visit to Blackpool to see the programme in action, Jonathan Edwards – triple jump Olympic medallist and Deputy Chair of London 2012 Nations and Regions Group – said: *"Altogether Now is a fantastic programme that should be rolled out everywhere across the country."*
- Working with the Football League Trust, the concept of Altogether Now was presented to an audience of 72 football clubs at a national conference and a workshop involving 24 Primary Care Trusts to share best practise.

KEY OUTCOMES

The programme has gained recognition at national level. For instance:-

- This is one of the first projects of its kind to be recognised as part of the London 2012 Inspire programme.
- The programme was presented at the National Institute of Healthcare Managers Annual Conference.





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Key outcomes for NHS Staff

- As part of Altogether Now, NHS Blackpool signed up to the NHS Challenge 2012, which is aimed at getting more of the workforce involved in physical activity. The response has been incredible with the launch of a netball league, a football fives league and a running club as well as hosting inter-organisation tournaments with Blackpool Council.
- The programme has improved staff understanding and awareness of their own health and wellbeing as well as increasing staff fitness. In an internal survey 88% of respondents reported that attending the sessions had had a positive impact on their health and 80% said work morale had improved as a result of getting involved.
- Blackpool Football Club (FC) players have attended award ceremonies to recognise outstanding achievement and tickets to watch Blackpool home games have been offered to staff. These have proved to be a huge incentive to encourage involvement and recognise and reward increased participation.

Key outcomes for local people

- Health messages reach approximately 12,000 people at every Blackpool FC home game. The Trust is currently evaluating the impact of the Altogether Now programme through extensive surveys/feedback reports/patient pathways/ and area forums.
- Local people have started to take more of an active role in their own health.
- School children have become more engaged with healthy eating and physical activity which has had knock on effect upon their health and that of their families. In its first five months of operation, (March 2012) 1,183 primary school children and their families have taken part in the Fit2Go programme.

BACKGROUND

Blackpool is a seaside town with a world renowned heritage. An average of 12 million tourists enjoy the town's many family attractions each year. But sadly, for those living in Blackpool the outlook is not so bright. The town faces many complex challenges. It is the 12th most deprived local authority in England with high levels of unemployment, deprivation, crime, domestic abuse and looked-after children. It has the worst life expectancy rates for both men and women in the country; the highest levels of suicide and a high prevalence of mental illness and teenage pregnancy.

- Football has been used as a means of reaching young men, a group that is often vulnerable to a range of health issues, yet reluctant to seek help. Mental health support services delivered within the football club are now fully booked.
- Free Chlamydia testing is offered to fans queuing for tickets. In 2010/11 the annual national target for Chlamydia screening young people aged 15 -24 was 35%. Blackpool exceeded that with an achievement of 36.4%. The Trust is still awaiting the figures for 2011/12 but expect to once again surpass this.
- All of Blackpool's preparations and planned celebration of London 2012, including the Olympic Torch Relay, have now come under the banner of Altogether Now, ensuring that every person in Blackpool is able to connect and feel involved with the Olympic Games.

KEY AIMS

The key aim of Altogether Now is to improve the health and wellbeing of every person in Blackpool through increased physical activity and targeted health messages. It does not focus on the negative aspects of health in Blackpool but rather seeks to encourage and support people to be more proactive and take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

This programme arose following a directive by Mike Farrar, the government's Sport and Physical Activity Champion, which called on all health Trusts to link the health agenda to physical activity and work more closely with professional sports club in the challenge to improve health and wellbeing.

It was devised and developed by Colette Cassin, Head of Communications for NHS Blackpool between March and May 2010. Working in partnership with Blackpool Football Club and supported by Blackpool Council. The programme was officially launched on 28th August 2010 at Blackpool FC's first home game in the Premier League in front of 12,000 fans.





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KEY STAGES OF SET-UP

JANUARY 2010: The Government urges health trusts to link the health agenda with physical activity and work more closely with professional sports clubs in the challenge to improve health.



FEBRUARY 2010: NHS Blackpool begins talks with Blackpool FC and the seeds for an innovative partnership programme are sown.



MARCH 2010: a top level Steering Group is established with membership comprising the three Chief Executives of each partner organisation.



APRIL 2010: A Working Group comprising senior representation from the three partners is formed.



MAY 2010: four advisory groups – one for each 'Tangerine Target' – is established to support delivery at grassroots level.



JUNE 2010: The programme is recognised as one of the first projects of its kind by the London 2012 Inspire programme.



AUGUST 2010: Altogether Now –a legacy for Blackpool is launched at Blackpool FC's first home game in the premier league in front of 12,000 people – including former England Manager, Fabio Capello who proudly sported an Altogether Now rosette!.



September 2010: Year-long calendar of events and activities is unveiled.



OCTOBER 2011: The decision is made that all of Blackpool's preparations and celebration of London 2012 will fall under the banner of Altogether Now.



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RESOURCES

Tangerine Targets

A set of targets were developed by NHS Blackpool, Blackpool F.C and the local council as part of this programme. These targets were coined 'Tangerine Targets' and included; Physical Activity, Lifestyle, Childhood Health, and Mental Health and Wellbeing. These are the key areas in which reforms have to be made if the health of people in Blackpool is to improve. Each of the Tangerine Targets has a high profile Health Ambassador from the world of sport.

The Tangerine Targets are underpinned by the eight key health priorities for the town including; smoking, heart disease/strokes; alcohol abuse, substance misuse, mental health, sexual health, childhood obesity and cancer.

Blackpool FC players are Health Champions for each of these priorities supporting health messages and campaigns.

Calendar of events

The programme delivers a year-long calendar of sporting, recreational, cultural and educational events and activities aimed at 'adding years to life and life to years'. These include:

- **High School Impact Days:** Blackpool Football Club (FC) Manager Ian Holloway and his full squad have been targeting thousands of Blackpool teenagers undertaking motivational impact assemblies at every high school.
- **Sporting Champion:** Paralympian and world record holder Shelly Woods became confined to a wheelchair at the age of 11 after falling from a tree. She inspires hundreds of primary school children by demonstrating that no obstacle to sport is too great a challenge if the spirit is strong.
- **It's A Goal:** Vulnerable young men are notoriously reluctant to seek help; in Blackpool some mental health support services are now delivered in the football club changing rooms using the language and power of football to break down barriers.

HEALTH AMBASSADOR

TANGERINE TARGET

IAN HOLLOWAY – Blackpool FC Manager

Physical Activity

SHELLY WOODS – Paralympian and World record Holder

Lifestyle

JIMMY ARMFIELD CBE – football legend and Blackpool hero

Mental Health and Wellbeing

STEVEN CROFT - Lancashire County cricketer

Childhood Health

- **Family Road Shows:** Interactive health road shows are staged in the most deprived, health challenged areas encouraging local people to take an active role in their own health and increase physical activity by raising self esteem and aspirations.
- **Fit2Go:** Is a school-based healthy lifestyle programme that works with young pupils and their families helping them gain the knowledge they need to eat healthily and increase physical activity. A workbook, incorporating Blackpool FC players as cartoon characters and personal visits by the squad has proved a tremendous hit with the youngsters
- **Health films on the big screen:** The average football fan is said to represent the DNA of the local population. At every Blackpool FC home game a different health film is relayed on the big screen to an average of 12,000 fans. In addition two pages of the match-day programme are dedicated to health messages under the banner of Altogether Now.

RESOURCES

The programme is funded and delivered through shared resources and a shared 'pot' by the three partners. To launch the programme, NHS Blackpool contributed £5,000 with matched funding from Blackpool Council and Blackpool Football Club. This was for the production of awareness materials, and interactive merchandise such as work-books and information cards etc. The salary for the Altogether Now programme lead, Colette Cassin, is paid for in her capacity as Head of Communications for NHS Blackpool.

Fit2Go received £200,000 from the Premier League/ Professional Footballer Association Community Fund, and this was matched-funding by NHS Blackpool, with funding in kind by Blackpool Council.





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KEY CHALLENGES

- There is a high level of deprivation in Blackpool which brings with it a range of complex challenges. Altogether Now addresses this by not focusing on the negative but rather seeking to improve health through pro-active, positive messages. It specifically targets those who shy away from structured activities by raising confidence, increasing self-esteem and personal aspirations and using mentors, coaches and health champions such as Shelly Woods and Blackpool FC players to engage and encourage.
- The NHS is currently undergoing an unprecedented period of restructure. Health organisations are under enormous pressure to deliver this change and substantial cost savings at the same time. Trusts are financially challenged and there has never been a more important time to harness not only the support, trust and respect of public and patients but staff as well. By working in partnership this programme helps NHS Blackpool to achieve the engagement necessary to help rise to this challenge.

KEY LEARNING

Football Clubs are recognised as a crucial and emphatic channel to deliver vital health messages and interventions to a traditionally hard to reach audience, effectively reducing the demands on the local NHS.

Preventative campaigns, programmes and interventions, which are proactive rather than reactive, have helped to change behaviours, reduce costs and deliver longer-term benefits for the Blackpool community.

SUSTAINABILITY

Altogether Now is a sustainable programme based upon a sound evidence-base, with strong governance and setting of priorities at a local level. It is regarded as a ground-breaking model capable of replication throughout the country.

NEXT STEPS

All those involved in Altogether Now are aware that they are not going to turn the tide in Blackpool overnight. However, by continuing to work together for the good of the community, one thing is clear; this partnership will create a lasting legacy for Blackpool.

SUPPORTING MATERIAL

The following resources are available as an appendix to this case study

Appendix 1 – Booklet - Altogether Now: Celebrating London 2012 in Blackpool

Appendix 2 – Fit2Go Work book - for primary school age children

Appendix 3 – Altogether Now Poster

Appendix 4 – Altogether Now Postcard

FURTHER LINKS

- Altogether Now Site - www.blackpool.nhs.uk/altogethernow
- Previous eWIN Upload - [Getting started with Challenge 2012](#)

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- Colette Cassin
Head of Communications

Email:
Colette.cassin@blackpool.nhs.uk
Telephone: 01253 651581

