

1 **An integrated learning scheme for community practitioners involved in the care**
2 **of children and young people**

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39 **ABSTRACT**

40 **Background**

41 There are a wealth of health, education and voluntary groups providing services for
42 children and their families, but this care tends not to be integrated. A deprived
43 borough of London tested whether providing short training and networking sessions
44 would improve knowledge and referrals between services supporting children.

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46 **Methods**

47 This was an uncontrolled longitudinal study completed as a service evaluation. Three
48 sets of workshops were offered in each of four geographic localities from December
49 2016 to February 2017. Relevant local organisations were invited to send attendees to
50 all sessions. The sessions involved case discussions, teamworking exercises and
51 presentations from teams such as local health visitors and CAMHS. Mixed methods
52 were used to assess impacts including pre and post workshop surveys with a Likert
53 scale for statements such as “I know a lot about local health services”. These covered
54 knowledge of health/education/social care/voluntary sectors, confidence in navigating
55 local services, and communication between different services. Analysis of
56 quantitative data used unpaired t-tests as questionnaires were anonymised. Other
57 methods included structured telephone interviews and a one month follow-up survey.

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59 **Findings**

60 There were 302 attendances from 202 unique individuals. Attendees came from 22
61 local services from the health (n=99), education (n=145), social care (n=39) and
62 voluntary (n=19) sectors. The pre and post surveys (completed by 84% and 73%)
63 demonstrated significant increases in self-assessed knowledge of health/social

64 care/voluntary services and confidence in inter-sector working (all $p < 0.0001$).
65 However self-assessed knowledge and confidence had decreased by one month
66 follow-up (n=65). Respondents to the follow-up survey who attended all workshops
67 (n=24) had higher scores compared to those who did not, regarding knowledge of
68 voluntary services ($p=0.049$) and recent collaboration ($p=0.014$). Telephone
69 interviewees (n=30) suggested networking was helpful.

70

71 **Interpretation**

72 We found that participants had transient increases in self-assessed knowledge and
73 confidence in inter-sector working. The findings imply that professionals may find
74 such integrated schemes useful, but further development is required to embed
75 knowledge and connections long-term. Further research should assess the impact of
76 such schemes on patients or clients.

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80 Provider Network, hosted by NHS Newham CCG. Logan Manikam is funded by a
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82 005).

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84 **Contributions**

85 LM, RC and DdS conceived of and designed the study. EA undertook data collection
86 and writing. DdS, LM, RC and MP contributed to analysis and writing.

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88 **Conflicts of interest**

89 The training programme was funded by Newham Together, the Newham Community
90 Education Provider Network. The funding was provided to the network by Health
91 Education England. Part of the funds allocated for training were used to undertake the
92 evaluation which is the focus of this study. Neither the training funder nor training
93 provider controlled how the evaluation was undertaken, the results or the analysis.

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