

Learning and insights from your project

Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is passionate about following a 'test and learn' approach. The Common Measurement Framework (CMF) forms are only one part of a bigger learning and evaluation picture and, while they capture a certain amount of information, they are not designed to capture everything about a project. We are keen to receive further insights and learning from your project, particularly when these might be useful for other projects within BAB or for informing future commissioning regarding social isolation and loneliness.

We recommend reflecting on learning as a team – face-to-face discussion is a great way to generate new thoughts and insights! You could also turn this reflection into a group activity, for example using flipchart paper and post-it notes.

Our question bank can be used to get you thinking - pick a few questions to get your discussion started or come up with your own.

Question Bank

- Who is making referrals to your project? Who is not? Why? How does this compare to your initial expectations?
- Which participants stopped engaging with your project after starting? What were their reasons? Are there any trends? Why? Can your project do anything to minimise this in the future?
- What are the demographics of your participants? Are there any people of a particular gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or disability who are not participating? Why? What can you do to reach these individuals?
- How do you make decisions about finishing work with someone? What is working about this process? What is not? Why? How do you ensure they are supported afterwards?
- What have you learnt about loneliness and social isolation that you did not know when you started? How will this influence the way you work? How can other projects use this insight?
- Do you think your project has made a difference in reducing the loneliness and isolation of the older people who took part? Why? What was the key factor which actually made this difference happen? If not, what would you change in order to achieve this outcome?
- If a participant has experienced a reduction in loneliness/isolation, how can your project enable this to be an ongoing change? What can you do to prevent them from returning to their previous levels of loneliness/isolation six months after they finish engaging with your project?
- Have you heard any comments from participants which gave you a new angle/perspective on loneliness and/or isolation?

- How are older people involved in the design and delivery of your project? What can you do to extend this involvement further (particularly to go beyond participant feedback to more comprehensive coproduction)?
- Which external organisations do you have a strong relationship with? Why? What makes it successful? Which external organisations do you have a difficult relationship with? Why? How can this be changed? Which organisations are you not working with at all?
- What advice would you give to similar projects who have already begun and have one or two years left of their contract? How can they tweak their service to improve?
- What advice would you give to similar projects who have not yet started?
- Have you learnt anything regarding...?
 - Finding older people to participate in your project
 - Reaching the most isolated and lonely individuals in the community
 - Accessibility and inclusivity
 - Transport
 - Recruiting and motivating volunteers
 - Completing the Common Measurement Framework (CMFs)
 - Maintaining participant engagement with your project
 - Using technology

All learning is useful in helping us build a better understanding of loneliness / isolation and how it can be addressed. Please send any learning – big or small – to the BAB team: clairechivers@ageukbristol.org.uk