Outreach programmes for health improvement of Traveller Communities: a synthesis of evidence

Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
To synthesise the evidence on outreach programmes to improve the health of Traveller Communities.

Authors' conclusions
Outreach workers need clarity about the purpose of their intervention, in terms of degrees of engagement (leading to the three outcome categories above). Where outreach aims to promote attendance at one-off events such as screening, the worker may not need to have long-established links with the Community. Changing behaviour or developing social capital, on the other hand, is a challenge that needs to build explicitly on long-established, trusting relationships. Any flexibility built into the intervention in terms of negotiating intervention topic can contribute significantly to the outcome. While true engagement with an issue must not be assumed from participation at an event, these events can be used as part of longer-term trust-building strategies. These synthesis approaches offer maximum translational potential for other marginalised groups. There is a need for more theoretically informed evaluations of engagement initiatives, in order to develop transferable lessons around how and for whom interventions work in different contexts. Further research is needed to test the explanatory potential of the framework in other socially excluded groups.

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