

## **Socio-Economic Determinants of Health Inequalities: Peer Research**

### **Information for Community Partner Organisations**

#### **Research Overview**

The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) and Poverty Alliance are supporting the delivery of peer research projects as part of a wider programme on effectiveness of policy implementation in addressing social determinants of health in Scotland. Social determinants of health are defined by the World Health Organisation as the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes.

The research is funded by the Health Foundation and being led by the Scottish Health Equity Research Unit at the University of Strathclyde. It follows an independent review into the state of health and inequalities in Scotland by the Health Foundation, [Leave No one behind](#). This report highlighted that health inequalities in Scotland were widening despite continued policy focus and monitoring in this area.

The peer research programme is one of three strands of this programme which will provide evidence to enable the Scottish Health Equity Research Unit and Health Foundation to set out proposals for policy and action.

#### **Why is the Peer Research Programme being conducted?**

The peer research programme involves participatory research which aims to identify the thoughts, perspectives and opinions of community members on the gap between policy proposal and policy implementation. It also aims to identify the changes community members would like to see to improve housing, employment and wellbeing in their communities.

The programme will operate in four local sites in urban and rural parts of Scotland, focusing on the policy areas of housing and employability. Of particular interest to the research programme is how policies in these areas are experienced by young older men aged 25-40 and families with young children affected by low incomes.

#### **What are we aiming to do?**

The Scottish Community Development Centre and the Poverty Alliance have been commissioned by the Scottish Health Equity Research Unit to conduct research with peer researchers using a Participatory Action Research Approach (PAR). PAR is an approach to conducting research and generating knowledge centred on the belief that the people who are most impacted by research should be the ones taking the lead in framing the questions, and in the design, methods and modes of analysis and research reports.

## What will participating in the Health Inequalities Peer Research Programme involve?

We (SCDC and PA) wish to work with four local organisations to recruit a team of peer researchers. We will provide full training, support and mentoring to the cohort of peer researchers. Peer researcher and research participant expenses are available through the project funding and your organisation would also receive a one off payment.

This approach will enable peer researchers to identify the key policies, how they have been implemented locally, produce research which explores community members experiences of these policy's implementation and co-create recommendations for improvements in the future.

## The participatory research will run over a 9-month period.

SCDC/PA will provide ongoing support to local sites and peer research teams for the duration of the programme. We will hold two shared learning sessions to enable all four sites to come together – one at the midway point of the project and one towards the end.

Indicative timeline:

Activities	Timescales
Agree a partnership agreement with your organisation Identify and recruit potential peer researchers, identify and understand their motivations for participation and use this to inform the induction and training programme	1-2 months
Training programme	9 months
Data Collection and Processing	Same period as training programme
Co-Analysis of the Data	Same period as training programme
Project Conclusion and Evaluation	Following this programme and that of the other sites

## Project Key Stages

- **Peer Researchers** – we will hold an information session for prospective peer researchers to explain the programme and what taking part would involve. This will be set out in peer researcher information and role descriptors, including information on benefits for peer researchers of participation.
- **Training for peer researchers** – We will provide an accessible training and support programme informed by the peer researchers assets, skills, experiences, preferred learning styles and training needs. This will ensure that peer researchers receive

training on a range of topics that are relevant to their lives, research methods and research impact.

- **Fieldwork and data analysis** – Peer researchers will carry out the fieldwork section of the programme collecting the data. This would involve peer researchers collecting and analysing the data with the support of a named co-researcher from SCDC/PA
- **Support for peer researchers** – Each site and cohort of peer researchers will have a named co-researcher from the SCDC/PA team who will provide support to the peer researchers and where appropriate and required support them in the fieldwork.

### **Supporting costs and peer researcher remuneration**

To support peer researchers' participation in the project, the Health Inequalities Peer Research programme includes payment of vouchers (in discussion with individual peer researchers) during their participation in the project

- We envisage that each community researcher's participation will involve around 40 hours during the project
- Each peer researcher will receive vouchers of their choice for their participation
- Additionally, each peer researcher will be able to access a laptop and travel, and a contribution to caring expenses
- Alongside this there are support costs of £1500 to support your organisation's wider involvement in this project.