AIMS OF THE PROJECT

Linking health and the voluntary sector

This pilot project in Oxfordshire explored the lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic, for the role of the voluntary sector in ‘Integrated Care Systems’ (ICS). Taking a mixed-methods approach, the research examined the role of ‘voluntary, community and social enterprise’ organisations (VCSE) in Oxfordshire in supporting older and more vulnerable people, and the potential for voluntary sector involvement in ICSs.

OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS

Opportunities for joint working

- New ways of working and quick-relationship building.
- New partnerships formed.

Barriers to joint working

- Different cultures and mindsets in health and VCSE.
- Speaking different languages.
- Financial constraints in the VCSE sector limits capacity to reach out beyond their core mission.

HEALTH SECTOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure broad engagement with the VCSE, so that all voices, both large and small, are heard and integrated within ICS systems.
- VCSE should have adequate representation in decision-making bodies in ICS systems, and within work programmes and work streams.
- Prioritise the role of social prescribers in forging links between health and the VCSE at the hyper-local level.

VCSE SECTOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Funding is critical to the future of the VCSE sector, and will dictate the potential for linking with ICSs.
- Community workers in urban neighbourhoods play a key role in linking VCSE provision and health needs.
- There is potential for Parish Councils in rural neighbourhoods to act as intermediaries between the health sector and local needs.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT:
WWW.BROOKES.AC.UK/RESEARCH/HEALTHY-AGEING-AND-CARE/
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