

REDUCING COPD HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN HASTINGS

A targeted neighbourhood programme linking secondary care COPD expertise and enhanced primary care and community support

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This programme brought together stakeholders across the neighbourhood to develop a more integrated, joined-up approach to COPD care in Hastings. Key outcomes included:

- Establishment of a **multidisciplinary team (MDT) working with secondary care** to support complex COPD patients.
- Delivery of **enhanced OPTIMISE reviews** for patients experiencing two or more COPD exacerbations per year, with a focus on those living in the Core20 population.
- Strengthened **community and voluntary sector support**, including the development of the **BreatheEasy VCSE support group**, providing additional support and self-management opportunities for people living with COPD.

Hastings Context and Need

A clear health inequality

3.2%
COPD prevalence

19%
smoking rate

43%
live in Core20

- High emergency admission burden and fragmented care.
- Lack of consistent use of the community respiratory team
- Inconsistent structured annual reviews.
- Limited communication across the COPD pathway.
- No community VCSE respiratory support.

What We Did

Data analysis identified **Core20 patients experiencing ≥2 COPD exacerbations per year** as a priority group for targeted intervention. Stakeholder engagement informed the following interventions:

- BreatheEasy VCSE group**
Fortnightly support for patients and families.
- Primary care – enhanced OPTIMISE reviews**
Targeted structured reviews for higher-risk patients
- Specialist MDTs**
Complex COPD patients reviewed with specialist input secondary care- Dr Ionita

What are OPTIMISE reviews

The OPTIMISE review is a 45-minute appointment:

O **Optimise treatment**

- Tobacco** dependence - offer smoking cessation
- Maximise vaccination**
- Support wellbeing**
Anxiety levels and depression: consider onward referral, incl. social prescribing and fuel poverty services.

P **Pulmonary rehabilitation** - refer as appropriate

I **Inhaler technique** - ensure correct and all devices are the same

I **Increase physical activity** - refer to Active Hastings

E **Education & self-management** - ensure a written self-management plan is given

RESULTS AND IMPACT

"The MDT has been a great opportunity to ask questions and learn from respiratory specialists."

DELIVERY AT A GLANCE

6
SPECIALIST MDTs
with Dr Ionita, Apr-Sep

184
OPTIMISE REVIEWS
Completed Jan to Jun after training sessions

35-40
PEOPLE SUPPORTED
each week through BreatheEasy

+33
PULMONARY REHABILITATION
additional assessments

+19
RESPIRATORY REFERRALS
to community respiratory services

Who received the OPTIMISE reviews?

Age Demographic of the COPD patients having OPTIMISE reviews

184 patients seen
96 female and 88 male
64 patients were current smokers

Patients MRC grading

104 Warm Home checks happened.

2 Patients were referred to social services following review.

48 Patients were assessed for anxiety and depression.

"Having time to discuss housing and social circumstances led to valuable conversations."

Review nurse feedback

Positive Impact

31 Opportunistic pneumococcal vaccination and referral were built into the review.

13 RSV vaccinations completed.

64 Smokers received smoking cessation advice.

"We were able to correct several patients' inhaler technique" - primary care respiratory nurse

FROM INEQUALITY TO IMPACT

IDENTIFY
Core20 + repeated exacerbations

CONNECT
MDT + primary care + community

REVIEW
184 structured OPTIMISE reviews

IMPACT
Referrals, plans, prevention and support

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

Targeted population-health intelligence, longer structured reviews and neighbourhood collaboration brought specialist advice, prevention and community support closer to people with the greatest need.

The programme shows how a neighbourhood pathway can address clinical, psychological and wider determinants of respiratory health in one coordinated model.

CONCLUSIONS

- Stakeholder working across the neighbourhood enabled improved action on COPD inequalities.
- OPTIMISE reviews created space for holistic input for our patients.
- BreatheEasy provided recurring support for patients and families.
- Long-term evaluation should test sustainability and impact on admissions.

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Hastings Primary Care Network • Primary Care Respiratory Conference