

Extending Our Reach

Extending Our Reach Guide

Introduction

As an Association we are working to ensure that barriers to participation are broken down. This work will make sure that local, regional and national communities are able to participate in and engage with association activities, services and products. Communities come in all shapes and sizes. They have common interests that unite them such as religion, culture and identity. They can be both geographic and non-geographic

MND does not discriminate. Regardless of an individual's ethnicity, faith, gender, location or sexual orientation one individual is as likely as the other to have MND once prevalence is taken into account and it is important that all people feel able to use Association products and services.

It is apparent that, at least anecdotally, there are limited numbers of people from different ethnic and faith backgrounds using Association services or volunteering.

This work will help to:

- Test anecdotal evidence
- Identify barriers to participation
- Gain a greater understanding of community needs and cultural differences
- Redesign and re-engineer services and products

and enable us to achieve our promise – No one faces MND alone.

This handbook provides some thoughts and ideas on how best to extend our reach by engaging with communities. It shows how to plan activities and explains some of the methods that can be used.

Planning

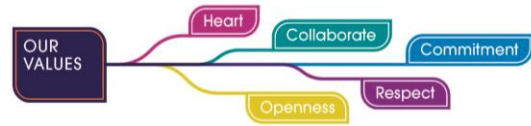
Groups and Branches are encouraged to start thinking about the communities in their local areas and how they might want to engage with them.

It can take time to develop relationships and build trust with communities that don't currently engage with the Association. Planning and prioritising will greatly increase the chance of building effective links to and developing relationships with these communities. There are different things that will need to be considered, including:

- The level of participation that is needed or wanted
- How communities can be identified
- The best way(s) to engage
- The resources and time that may be needed
- Which methods of communication to use

Identifying communities

You may already have an idea of the make-up of your local area and have some idea of which communities currently do or don't engage with the Association. However, this may not be the full picture – there may be communities that you do not know about.



The Association's community engagement team has created community profiles to show the make-up of each local authority area. Once local intelligence is factored in, these profiles will help to highlight any communities that are not currently engaging with the association.

How to Engage

Trying to engage with communities will take time and may need a combination of different approaches.

- Email – to individuals or organisations
- Social Media – interacting with a community on social media
- Dropping in – to a community centre or event
- Flyers leaflets – sent or hand delivered to a selected audience.

Regardless of the approach taken written information should be simple, easy to read and attractively set out. It is worth considering whether it could be produced in different languages. It is important not to rely solely on digital communication. Digital is not always as widely used as we might like to think.

Resources and time

It is important to consider what resources are available and the time needed to undertake this work. Some activities will need a greater level of commitment than others. The Community Engagement team can provide support and may have resources available.

Top tips

- One size does not fit all, be flexible
- Reach out but also welcome in-think about activities that are already taking place and how they might need to be adapted
- Engage on the community's terms rather than yours
- Bear in mind that some things are really important to some communities
 - Significant faith or belief days
 - Venue accessibility
 - Diet
- Identify the right people, for example:
 - Local Religious Leaders
 - Local Business people
 - School/college officials
 - Community Centre Leaders
 - Local Authority staff and members

There is a community engagement planner that can be used to help track communities identified, action needed, action taken and progress achieved.

Further Information and support

Further information and support is available from the community engagement team. Please contact Adam Brittain adam.brittain@mndassociation.org

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