

Macmillan & Medway Voluntary Action
'A Year of Listening'
An Exciting New Community Engagement Project in Kent & Medway

What is the 'Year of Listening project'?

A 'Year of Listening' is an exciting new 12-month Kent wide community engagement project. Medway Voluntary Action (funded by Macmillan to deliver this piece of work in Medway & Swale) is working in partnership with local Voluntary & Community organisations and groups to engage with local communities and residents to understand the barriers and challenges local people are experiencing in accessing local cancer treatment and support services.

Who will be running the project?

The project began in September 2022 and will be delivered in Medway and Swale by MVA, who will ensure their work connects with the wider Kent programmes. At the end of the project MVA will communicate the outcomes to everyone who was involved.

There will also be an independent Stakeholder Steering Group, made up of cancer professionals and those who have lived experience of cancer, who will support the development of the programme and ensure it remains on track and in line with the project goals.

Why is this project being carried out?

Medway and Swale underperform in many cancer system indicators, and is therefore a priority area to identify the barriers and challenges local people are experiencing in accessing support and treatment. In addition to this it has also been widely recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic has also had an adverse impact on cancer diagnosis and treatments.

The programme will engage with and support Medway and Swale residents to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities within the existing system (in relation to accessing treatment and services), and their views will be shared with key decision-makers who have committed to taking action based on these insights.

Who do we want to hear from?

In this project we want to hear from anyone impacted by cancer and we particularly want to hear from:

- People aged over 60
- People living with a disability/limited daily activities
- People of the Global Majority (also referred to as BAME communities)
- People from LGBTQIA+ communities
- People who live in neighbourhoods with lower income and where there are fewer resources and opportunities

How you can get involved in this project

There are a few ways that either local organisations or residents can take part in this 'listening' project including:

- Undertaking free training to become a Community Health Researcher to conduct 1:1 interviews
- Host or participate in Community Interactive Listening Groups
- Join a Coffee Morning
- Take our Online Surveys
- Join the programme's private Whatsapp Group

Where can I find out more information about the 'Year of Listening' project?

This project is being managed by MVA on behalf of Macmillan. For more information, please contact them on 01634 812 850 or contact@mva.org.uk. Alternatively, you can check out the project area on their website www.mva.org.uk/organisations/macmillan-yol.