Connected Staffordshire
Engaging Lichfield residents for Public Health

Health and community engagement

Engaging with local communities to raise awareness about the health and wellbeing initiatives offered by both statutory and community and voluntary services has been recognised as a **key step to develop a successful strategy for prevention**.

The Marmot review outlined how involving communities is central to promote health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities, and NICE issued guidance (NG44) around how such an engagement would need to be approached.

> " The extent of people's participation in their communities and the added control over their lives that this brings has the potential to contribute to their psychosocial wellbeing and, as a result, to other health outcomes. "

Marmot Review

About the Lichfield pilot

The My Kin Wellbeing application was tested with users in the Lichfield and Burntwood areas.

The objective of the pilot was to evaluate whether users aged 40+ would **engage with health promotion messages** and activities that were sent to them.

In particular, the take-up of NHS self-assessment tools and the appeal of activity suggestions was evaluated over the course of three weeks.

Sentimoto worked closely with the Public Health team in Staffordshire to evaluate the effectiveness of the digital solution.

Where service directories fail

Across the UK, service directories have been commissioned to list the range of services across counties or district areas. Such directories are however often difficult to maintain, and as a result tend to only list organisations rather than the times and locations of events run by the organisations.

Our market research has shown that citizens find such lists **inaccessible and difficult to navigate** as a signposting tool.
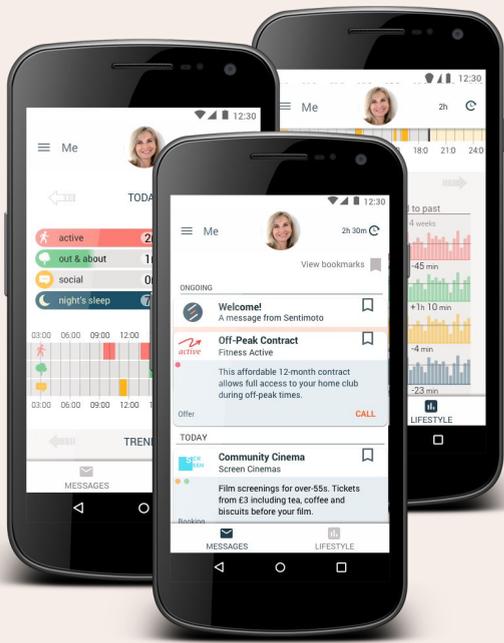
What was done in this pilot?

The My Kin app's appeal to the public as a Staffordshire-specific wellbeing tracker app, and its effectiveness as a health engagement tool were tested over the course of three weeks between September and October 2017. Test users were recruited in the Lichfield and Burntwood areas through traditional media (newsletters and internal Staffordshire County Council promotion) and social media (Facebook, Twitter). A total of 136 users of an expected 100 downloaded the application, with ages ranging between 40 and 76.

In addition to core Public Health notifications, messages r**aising awareness** about **community events** and **local health and wellbeing activities** were sent out to users throughout the pilot. These were context-dependent, sent to audiences based on location and demographics.

Pilot outcomes

The NHS heart age calculator was delivered twice during the test period as an example of Public Health messages. Based on the data gathered from the smartphone, the message had the third-highest response rate, with a 59% click through rate onto the NHS web-page (CTR) the first time it was sent and a 23% CTR the second.

The Council's wellbeing planner had a poorer performance, with a 23% CTR on the first instance and a 18% CTR on the second.

Activity suggestions had an average CTR of 22% for fitness activities and an average CTR of 20% for community events.

NHS Heart Age Calculator
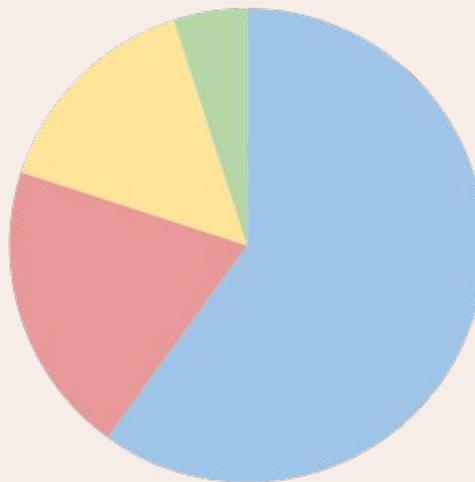
- I followed the link and completed the test online
- I received the message but did not progress to the online test
- I did not receive the message
- I might have received the message but I didn't follow up

Figures. Top left, screen shots of the My Kin application, used in the study. Centre, user-feedback on NHS Health Check, responses match CTR rates from the application itself. Bottom left, user feedback on the most useful.

Most useful feature

Pilot learnings

The pilot provides good starting evidence that a digital application is an effective way of engaging citizens with Public Health messages while providing continuous value to users through the promotion of wellbeing activities.

Respondents to the feedback questionnaire identified the suggestions of wellbeing activities in particular as being one of the most useful features even though the application was promoted as an activity and wellbeing tracker. This reinforces the market research learnings around the **lack of** provision of an **effective digital sign-posting** service for wellbeing activities.

Find out how technology can help deliver scalable prevention and health engagement: email info@sentimoto.com

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