

Primary health care for socially excluded groups

Objective

Important progress has been made to transform the lives and life chances of some of the most vulnerable members of our society. We have also been working hard to improve the accessibility and quality of primary health care in order to keep people healthier for longer and reduce health inequalities. However, there is some evidence to suggest that primary health care may be failing the socially excluded.

The Social Exclusion Task Force at the Cabinet Office is working with the Department of Health on a six month study examining primary health care for socially excluded groups. This study will look at how well the primary health care needs of the socially excluded are being met and will identify recommendations and tools for improvements.

As well as contributing new analysis about specific groups, the project will consider how we can improve access to, and quality of, primary health care for the most vulnerable in our society. It also aims to provide greater clarity about the contribution that primary health care services can make to social inclusion, and expose innovative ways of delivering NHS-funded care to those at risk.

Key lines of enquiry include:

Problem definition

- What are the health outcomes and primary health care needs for the socially excluded?
- What are their other health related needs?
- Which programmes and policies support the primary health care needs of socially excluded groups?

Fieldwork and analysis

- How well do services [health and non-health] meet the primary health care needs of socially excluded people?
- How are they involved in the design of services and shaping their own care?
- Who has a role in meeting primary health care needs and improving health outcomes for the most vulnerable?
- What support is available and what approaches are taken?

Policy development

- How do we make improvements and build world class public services?
- What needs to happen nationally, and locally? And how?
- Which areas of best practice should we look to replicate?
- What are the incentives to drive change?

The final short study report will be published in Autumn 2009.

Contact

If you have comments or queries, the project team can be contacted at the following address:
primaryhealthproject@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk.

