

POSTER ABSTRACT

Birmingham Fairer Futures Fund: A community-based interventions programme taking an integrative approach to tackling the health inequalities of underserved communities

International Conference on Integrated Care (ICIC26), Birmingham, 13-15 April 2026

David Miller¹, Joy Krishnamoorthy²

1: Birmingham City Council, United Kingdom

2: Flourish Community Health Collaborative CIC, United Kingdom

Background: Birmingham health inequalities are stark with a 10-year difference in life expectancy across the city. The super-diverse city has strong communities/community assets. Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System (BSol ICS) implemented the Fairer Futures Fund (FFF) programme to tackle health inequalities and enhance integration between Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector and statutory organisations through better partnership working.

Approach: The FFF is a large grant-making programme funded by BSOL ICS and implemented in Birmingham/Solihull. In Birmingham, four sub-funds were created: Citywide Small Grants, Citywide Partnerships, Locality Small Grants and Locality Partnerships. Small grants for community organisations; partnership grants for community and statutory organisations working together. Here, we focus on the Locality Partnerships sub-fund - West Locality specifically (one of five Birmingham localities).

Each locality's VCFSE lead organisation took responsibility for developing the FFF Locality Business Plan and lead on delivery. These plans were based on locality data on health inequalities.

The infrastructure of the localities across Birmingham is at different stages of maturity with the West furthest advanced due to legacy systems and established relationships. The lead VCFSE organisation - Flourish - developed and implemented the programme through:

- A locality data deep-dive to understand population needs
- Employment of a logic model based on the Kellogg model with co-design central
- A funding process with expressions of interest for funding submitted followed by full applications for consideration by the West Locality Partnership and FFF Programme Board

A mixed-methods evaluation of the FFF, led by University of Birmingham, is expected to inform health sector commissioning decisions in Birmingham.

Results: In the West locality, seven projects were funded under the locality partnership grants, addressing the following priorities:

- Reducing infant/perinatal mortality - Bethel Health & Healing Network, Nishkam Civic Association
- Reducing prevalence/impact of heart disease, diabetes and other major diseases - Communities Engage and Thrive CIC, Legacy West Midlands, Young People's Education Community
- Improved mental wellbeing for children/young people (5-18 years) - Handsworth Association of Schools
- Improved adult mental health - Nishkam Healthcare Trust

These projects offer different ways of partnership working between statutory and VCFSE organisations. Integration examples:

- Services being co-designed by Primary Care, VCFSE partners and service users
- NHS volunteering learning/employment initiative for citizens in deprived areas
- Additional community-based clinical capacity for mild/medium level mental health concerns
- Referrals from Primary Care to:

- oPreventative community programmes for mental health and long-term conditions
- oSelf-management programmes - pre-diabetes/Type 2 diabetes and healthy maternity

Outcomes: data for beneficiaries, relevant for each project, will be collected using tools including mental wellbeing, blood pressure, BMI, physical activity levels, dietary changes, health literacy and social isolation.

The FFF programme is time-limited (until March 2028) and the approach to developing projects, priorities, and evaluation intends to ensure sustainability/legacy beyond FFF funding.

Implications: •The FFF programme/success of West Locality has supported the development of co-designed projects and a different way of working at locality level bringing statutory and VCFSE organisations together.