

Widening Participation & Increasing Equity *in South-East London's Health & Care Workforce*



June 2024

Co-Designing Meaningful Change



The overall aim of the project was to:

- co-identify key barriers to job access in healthcare for specific groups and communities, and
- co-create solutions to overcome identified barriers and enhance diverse representation in our workforce.



Under-Represented Groups



- people with caring responsibilities (including young carers)
- people from Black, Caribbean, or African heritage;
- migrants/refugees/asylum seeker
- deaf and hard of hearing individuals
- neurodivergent people



Collaborative Work

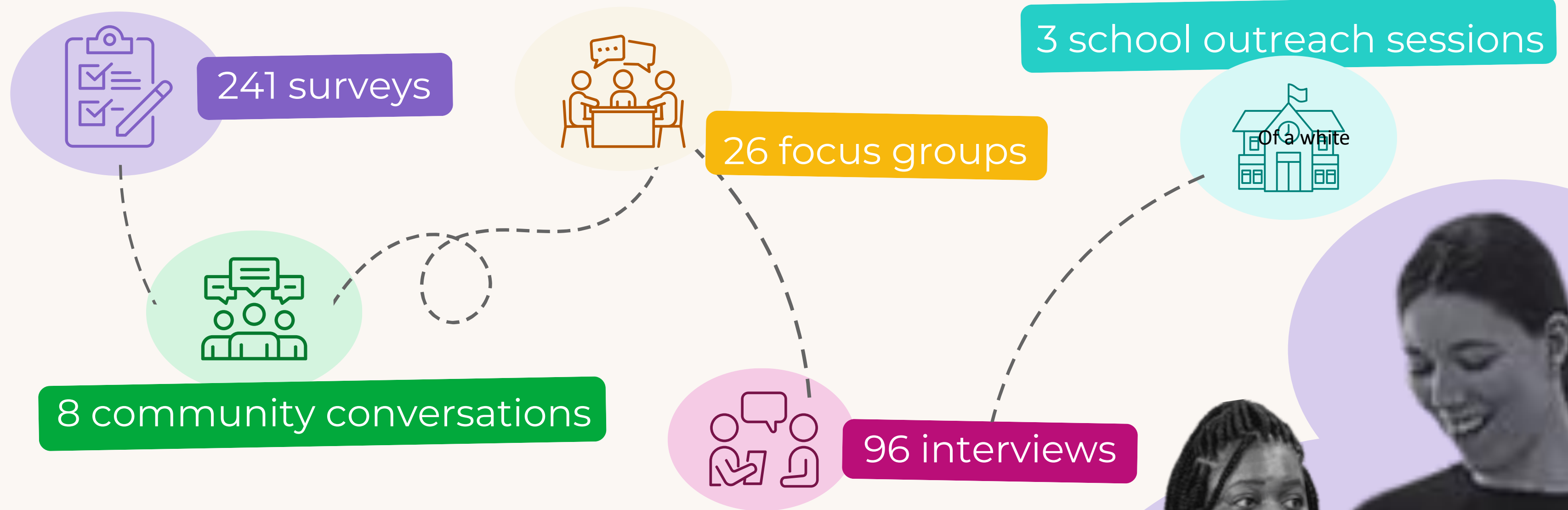


The project was:

- funded by Health Education England (HEE)
- coordinated by SEL Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Strategic Alliance and SEL ICB
- and developed and delivered by specialist 'By and For' VCSE organisations and the communities they are embedded in



Experts by Experience

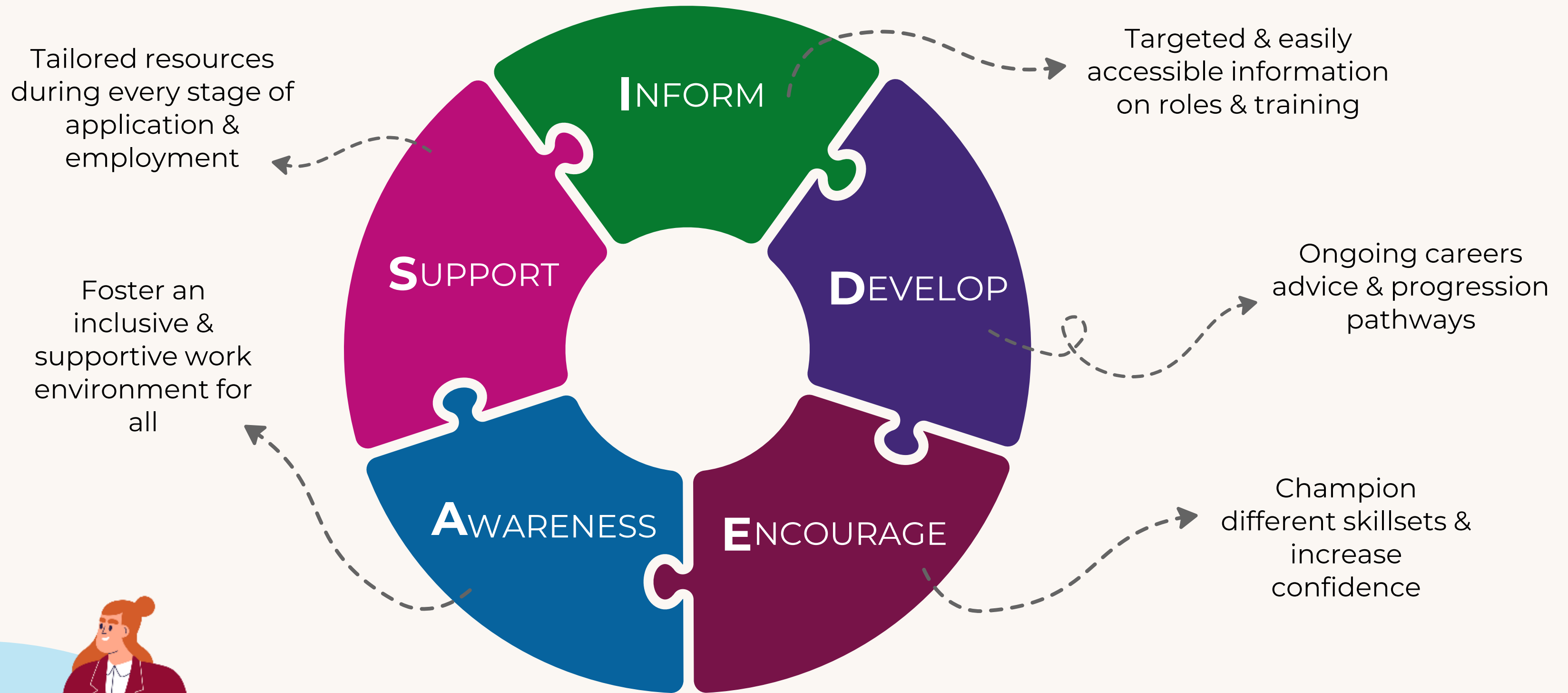




Co-Identified Barriers to Employment



Co-Created Solutions - IDEAS



Barrier: where to find jobs



Solution: **Inform**

- Collaborate with 'By and For' charities & specialist recruitment agencies
- Personalised 'health job coaching'
- Attend community hubs
- Help migrants/refugees/ asylum seekers access job shortage list and provide information in a clear way that addresses the knowledge gaps they may have



Barrier: where to find jobs



Solution: **Inform**

- No jargon, easy to read job adverts
- BSL video to explain how deaf & hard of hearing individuals can access additional support
- Raise awareness of existing financial assistance
- Develop 'recruitment checklists' for neurodivergent people, i.e. things you will need for an interview
- Vet agencies placing migrants/refugees/asylum seekers



Barrier: Inaccessible recruitment practices



Solution: **Develop**

- Advertise roles in diverse places not just NHS sites
- Co-review recruitment documentation to make sure it is simple & accessible for all
- Dedicated in-job growth pathways for underrepresented groups
- Support migrants/refugees/asylum seekers immigration case work
- Develop a package of support to enable job-security & job-retention

Barrier: Inaccessible recruitment practices



Solution: **Develop**

- Buddying scheme for neurodivergent people
- Individualised support plan
- Develop cross-system community of practice for migrants/refugees/asylum seekers
- culturally-informed employment support for people of Black, Caribbean, or African heritage, including tailored clinical supervision

Barrier: Poor Career Advice & Lack of Confidence

Solution: Encourage

- Attend job fairs in specialist community settings
- Co-develop skill-enhancing workshops
- Create 'in-job coaches' to ensure inclusive work environment
- Champion role models
- **neurodivergent people**: use 'job-carving'
- Provide trainings on Access to Work training at all stages of pathway into employment, regularly updated
- **Young carers & young people**: collaborate with other established youth programmes such as Cadets



Barrier: Poor Career Advice & Lack of Confidence

Solution: Encourage

- Bespoke apprenticeship schemes
- **migrants/refugees/asylum seekers:**
 - support call to reform Right to Work
 - collaborate with local volunteering centres to create pre-status work experience opportunities
 - support the validation of overseas qualifications
- **people with caring responsibilities (including young carers):**
flexible & adaptable training opportunities



Barrier: discrimination



Solution: **Awareness**

- Co-design Awareness training with By & For organisations (a key priority in particular for **deaf & hard of hearing community**)
- Collaborate with existing training providers
- Co-develop Cultural Humility & Anti-Racist & Anti-Exploitative employment practice
- **migrants/refugees/asylum seekers**: adopt sanctuary principles and a protected whistle-blowing process

Barrier: inaccessible recruitment practices



Solution: Support

- **deaf & hard of hearing individuals:**
 - provide adequate BSL interpretation for all stages of recruitment & on-boarding process
 - allow interpreters into written exams
 - understand different needs of each individual
 - provide information beforehand to layout of room or ensure online interview platform is accessible
 - ensure new recruits are being supported whilst Access to Work is being processed

Barrier: inaccessible recruitment practices



Solution: Support

- Collaborate with supported employment agencies & local specialised charities
- Ensure application platform and documents are user-friendly & accessible
- **neurodivergent people:**
 - provide interviews in advance or more to more informal conversation
 - Allow trial shifts with a job coach

Barrier: inaccessible recruitment practices



Solution: Support

- **neurodivergent people:** explore preferred method of communicating with managers
- **people with caring responsibilities (including young carers):**
 - develop lone-parent/carer policy to allow flexibility around caring hours & emergencies
 - lobby for government investment into childcare with goal of providing free or highly subsidised on-site provision
- **Black, Caribbean, or African heritage:** consider creative childcare solution, involving older members of community

Next Steps

IMPLEMENT

Over the next year we will be working with all SEL Anchor institutes and the specialist VCSEs and communities who led this project, to support and progress the **implementation** of co-developed solutions

REVIEW

We will come together again in Spring **2025** to explore **progress** of implementation and **impact**

ASSESS

We will be assessing **long-term impact** on workforce representation in Spring **2026**



To learn more, please email
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