

**University of Dundee**

## **How Community Health Workers support the Gypsy/Traveller community**

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*DOI:*  
[10.20933/100001315](https://doi.org/10.20933/100001315)

*Publication date:*  
2024

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in Discovery Research Portal](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Biazus-Dalcin, C., McFadden, A., & Quinn, E. (2024, Jul). How Community Health Workers support the Gypsy/Traveller community: Health Support. University of Dundee. <https://doi.org/10.20933/100001315>

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# Impact of the Gypsy/Traveller Community Health Worker Service in Scotland



Number of Gypsy/Travellers reached by the Community Health Worker (CHW) service from January 2022 to August 2023

**1,000+** **>** **1,000++** **>** **1,000+++**

GYPSY/TRAVELLERS      GYPSY/TRAVELLERS FAMILY MEMBERS      GYPSY/TRAVELLERS COMMUNITY MEMBERS

## How CHWs support the Gypsy/Traveller community: Health Support



### GP registration

An individual faced difficulties registering with a GP practice as they did not have proof of identity and address for re-registration (due to living in a caravan).

**The CHW called the GP practice, and the issue was quickly resolved, resulting in registration and access to a prescription.**

CHWs developed a poster that was distributed to all the GP practices in a Health Board to raise awareness of what people were entitled to, such as access to health services through a GP.

Stakeholder



### A&E support

An individual with breast cancer was taken to the hospital by ambulance with chest pain and a suspected blood clot. She was left all night in the A&E waiting room without support

**The CHW went to A&E, spoke with the nurse and the Gypsy/Traveller was diagnosed with a severe panic attack and recurrent infection.**



### Women's groups

CHW discovered that 15 of 30 women participating in a group had not had cervical screening. This was due to:

- > not receiving invitation letters
- > lack of confidence in accessing healthcare services
- > fear of embarrassment from site wardens receiving their personal letters.

**The CHW emphasised the importance of the test, assisted individuals to book appointments, and accompanied women to their cervical screening appointments.**



### Mental Health

CHWs organised

**60**

**one-to-one sessions for young people to support their mental health and wellbeing.**

A walk-and-talk group for young people, provides a safe space for sharing thoughts.

An individual who previously struggled with substance use, depression, and suicidal thoughts wanted to find a new home. She needed a GP letter of support. The Gypsy/Traveller was denied a GP appointment, which left them feeling stigmatised.

**The CHW arranged a same-day appointment and a supporting letter from the GP. The person was placed in temporary housing and added to the housing list.**



### Prescription

**The CHWs raised awareness of challenges accessing prescriptions.**

Scotland's Chief Pharmacist provided information that community pharmacies could offer patients up to one cycle of their regular repeat medicines through the unscheduled care Patient Group Direction (PGD) as an alternative to registering as a temporary patient with a GP.

### Where does this information come from?

This infographic is based on an evaluation of the Gypsy/Traveller Community Health Worker (CHW) service in Scotland. It was a multi-method qualitative study from December 2021 to August 2023. The evaluation included 16 individual interviews, 5 focus groups, 1 workshop, 2 informal discussions, and 1 site visit. The participants were stakeholders, CHWs and Gypsy/Travellers. 116 documents were analysed. For more information, access the final report: **McFadden A, Biazus-Dalcin C, Vidal N. Evaluation of a Gypsy/Traveller Community Health Worker service: Final Report. Dundee: University of Dundee, 2024. 82 p. doi: 10.20933/100001300**



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