

LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

# INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## Where should the public be in public health?

Mark Gamsu

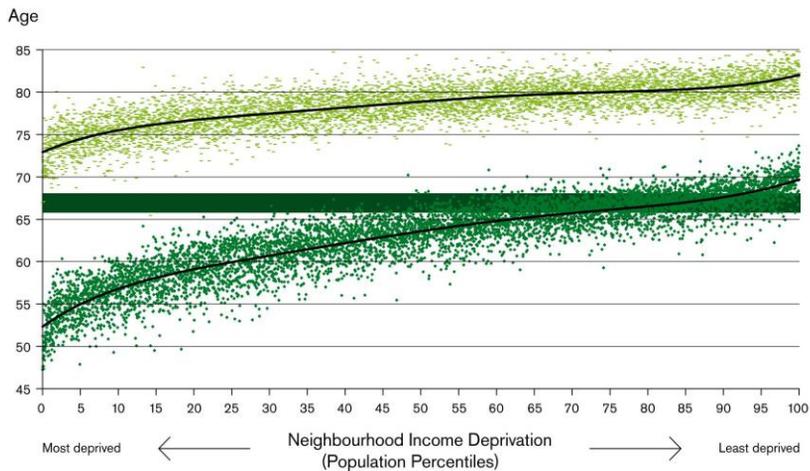
Jane South

School of Public Health seminar, LSTHM

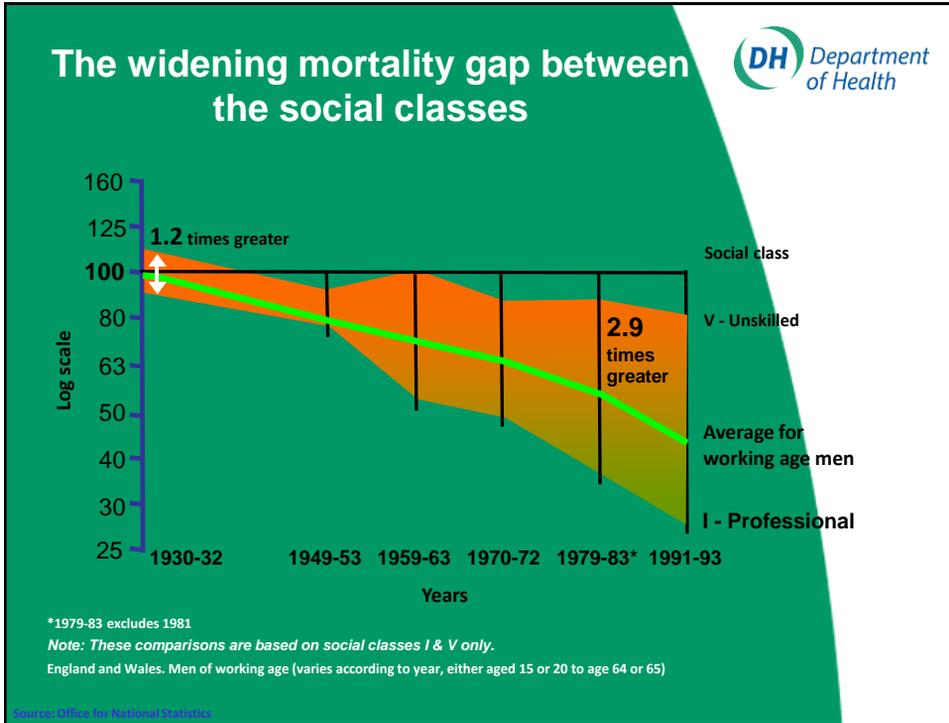
25<sup>th</sup> March 2013



Figure 1 Life expectancy and disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) at birth, persons by neighbourhood income level, England, 1999–2003



Source: Office for National Statistics<sup>5</sup>



**People in Public Health**

Welcome to People in Public Health. People in Public Health is a national study of local approaches to developing and supporting lay people in public health roles.

The study was successfully completed in October 2010 and final reports are now available. Please click on the links below:

- NIHR Executive Summary (pdf)
- NIHR Final Report (pdf)
- NIHR Final Report Appendices (pdf)
- NIHR Research Briefing for Practice (pdf)

The experience and skills of lay people are a valuable resource for health improvement. This study aimed to understand the different approaches to involving citizens in public health roles so that services can better identify, develop and support individuals willing to make a contribution to health in local communities and organisations. We hope the findings from this study lead to an increased training within public health practice.

- People in Public Health – NIHR SDO funded study into lay roles in public health
- Community health Champions – Altogether Better
- Health trainer evaluations – Health Trainers England
- Walking for Health
- DH’s Health and Social Care Volunteering Fund
- Peers in Prison Settings – NIHR HS&DR funded evidence synthesis

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## Bridging

'We can talk to them in their own language, that they can understand, because we're just normal people. And I think they trust us because we are normal people. .... And I think we get through to quite a few people, don't we? Because they trust us. I think it's trust.'  
(Volunteer, Neighbourhood health project)

'It's not that sort of authority figure that's part of this establishment coming over telling me how to live my life sort of thing, you know, it's informal, it's done on the scene sort of thing, you're asking when you have finished your pint let's go over and wee into that bottle...'  
(Volunteer, sexual health outreach)



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## Peer support

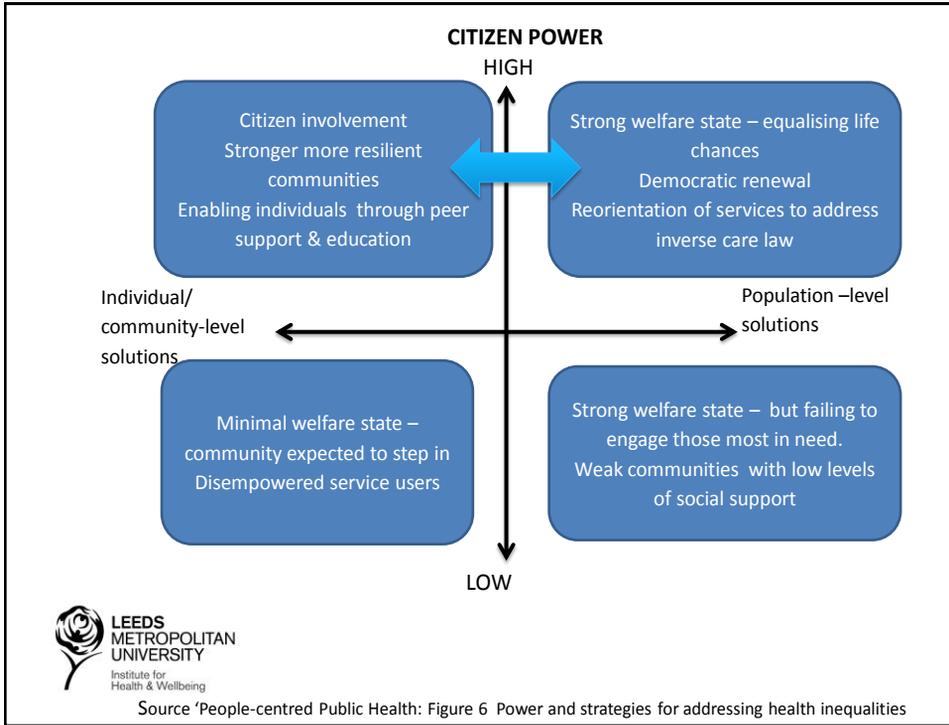
'Well I moved to [name] nine years ago and I find it very hard to get to know people, how do you meet people, and I used to get very depressed actually. I never said hello to anyone, there was never a familiar face and I wanted to feel I belonged, and after joining the group I do feel like I belong. I feel I have an investment in the area whereas before I felt like I was just someone who'd moved here.'  
(Participant, Walking for Health).



## Pathways for individuals

'I think doing volunteer work gives people more confidence especially when you've been poorly and you've been right down there. It builds your self-esteem up and I enjoy it. I wish I was working again but I can't because of my illness. It's gone from one thing to another just getting involved. I honestly think it more people could spare the time to do a bit of voluntary work then they would enjoy it.'  
(Community Health Champion)





## People-centred public health

'Citizenship is about democracy and it is about rights. Involving members of the public in public health should not be about reducing public services. It is a way of reducing barriers to the resources that support good health and should be framed as a strategy to increase equity in health.'

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**alt gether better**

### AMAZING STORIES

#### FACTFILE

<p><b>NAME</b> Abdul Qasbi</p> <p><b>ALTOGETHER BETTER PROJECT</b> Bradford Seniors Show The Way</p> <p><b>WHAT HE DID</b> Trained as a Community Health Champion after a referral from a Health Trainer. Learned key messages about the topic health, stress and joined those on to members of the Asian community in Bradford through regular talks at a local community centre. Run healthy 'cook and eat' sessions and helped to design a special menu for Diabetes Week. Runs regular therapeutic art walks for a group of older Asian men.</p>	<p><b>WHAT DID HE</b> Brought realising to the heart of the community of five people as others to see their</p> <p><b>ABOUT</b> Health has lowered his blood pressure and men from the Seniors group are now more physically fit.</p>
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"IF PEOPLE WHO SAW ME THREE YEARS AGO SAW ME NOW, THEY'D HARDLY BELIEVE IT WAS THE SAME PERSON. I'D RECOMMEND IT TO ANYONE!"

## Questions and challenges

- Questions of scale
- Questions of voice
- Questions of evidence
- Questions about how radical public health is prepared to be



## Acknowledgements

- 'People in Public Health', study funded through National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Service Delivery and Organisation (SDO) Programme: <http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/piph>
- Evidence reviews & thematic evaluations on community health champions, commissioned by Altogether Better: [www.altogetherbetter.org.uk](http://www.altogetherbetter.org.uk)
- Health Trainers [www.healthtrainersengland.com/](http://www.healthtrainersengland.com/)
- People Centred Public Health (2012) South, J. White, J., Gamsu, M. The Policy Press  
<http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781447305309&sf1=contributor&st1=Judy%20White&m=2&dc=2>
- South, J., Branney, P., Kinsella, K. (2011) Citizens bridging the gap? Interpretations of volunteering roles in two public health projects. *Voluntary Sector Review*, 2, 3, 297-315.

