

## **People in Public Health literature review methods**

### **Inclusion criteria**

*Types of studies:* Studies of any design that evaluated or presented primary data on the engagement of lay people in public health roles

*Types of participant:* Studies of individuals carrying out a public health function, trained or supported in some way in the context of the intervention. Formal professional or paraprofessional certificated or degree/ tertiary education in public health or choosing health priorities were not required for the role.

*Types of intervention/ activity:* Studies of activities defined as public health, health promotion or health improvement in the UK context. The primary focus was on interventions which aimed to reduce health inequalities or those which addressed the "Choosing Health" priorities. Papers about generic lay roles (e.g. lay health adviser) which were not related to specific health issues were also eligible for inclusion.

*Types of outcome measure:* all outcomes reported. Outcomes were categorised as service (training/ organisational); uptake or effectiveness.

### **Search Strategy**

The following electronic databases were searched for publications from 1992 to November 2007: MEDLINE/ PubMed; ASSIA; CINAHL; ERIC; LISA; Social Services Abstracts; Sociological Abstracts; Worldwide Political Science Abstracts; PsycLIT; NHS Economic Evaluations database; The Cochrane Library; NICE (HDA/ HealthPromis database); CSA Social Sciences; Web of Science; IDOX

Key **search terms** included: lay train\* or lay educat\* or peer train\* or peer educat\* or community health activist\* or lay support \* or peer support\* or link work\* or community health educator\* or community health trainer\* or health advoca\*.

Reference lists of retrieved articles and relevant websites were searched. National and international experts were contacted.

### **Study Selection**

Two researchers screened titles and abstracts retrieved from electronic searches against the inclusion criteria, after piloting the process on a small number of records. If there were any disagreements that could not be resolved by discussion the full publication was obtained.

One researcher screened retrieved publications against the inclusion criteria, using a standardised form, and decisions were checked by a second researcher. Any disagreements that could not be resolved by discussion were taken to a third researcher.

### **Data extraction**

A data extraction form was developed using examples of eligible papers. The form was piloted on a small number of studies, by two researchers working independently, to ensure a consistent approach to data extraction. The data extraction form was developed synchronously with a Microsoft Access database. The effectiveness outcomes of studies were not the focus of the review so were not extracted in detail. Validity assessment was not undertaken.

***For further details of methods, see the full report, or contact us***  
***<http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/health/piph/contacts.htm>***