



University of the
West of England

Health: The Design, Planning and Politics of How and Where We Live

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

What's system resilience got to do with housing and transience? A look at the NIHR CLAHRC NWC Neighbourhood Resilience Programme (NRP) in Blackpool.

- **Format:**

Written paper

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- **Abstract**

As austerity measures strain the public services and welfare system across the UK, we hold our breath every time the concept of "community resilience" is invoked as a panacea to solving social, financial and health problems. Tired of this old message, the Neighborhood Resilience Programme (NRP) argues that without support from Local Authorities and other organisations the impact of community action will be limited. This is

because communities are often made responsible for their fate and yet they have the least power over the social determinants of health. Part of the solutions lies in enhancing the resilience of the “system” whereby residents work alongside personnel of agencies in the public, private and third sectors working in those communities to influence structural change. We explain how Claremont Together (CT), one of the neighborhoods of the NRP in Blackpool, operationalizes this way of “thinking systems” to improve housing conditions in the ward. CT is a group composed of residents, representatives from the Claremont First Steps Community Organisation and a range of professionals from Blackpool Council. Our engagement activities showed that poor housing and transience was a significant issue affecting the health and well-being of tenants, neighbors and the wider community. CT seeks to achieve three goals: (1) building capacity and understanding of system partnership working; (2) improving the quality of private rented accommodation in Claremont; (3) evaluating the impact of changes put in place on health. To achieve these goals CT has developed a concrete plan for action to: (1) engage in policy change by connecting with local, regional and national organisations that lobby to introduce a cap on rent; (2) take part in training on housing matters to leave a legacy of knowledgeable residents; (3) engage with vulnerable tenants through participatory methods. The Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care North West Coast funds the NRP.

• **Author(s) Biography:**

Ana Porroche-Escudero is a medical anthropologist with backgrounds in gender studies and social work. She is a Senior Research Associate at National Institute of Health Research Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care North West Coast (NIHR CLAHRC NWC). She is also a visiting scholar at the Public Health Research group at Alicante University, Spain. Her research interests include social determinants of health, upstream approaches to public health, community involvement in research and policy, critical pedagogy, breast cancer, cancer education and feminist methodologies. At CLAHRC she has various roles. With Professor Jennie Popay, she leads the development and implementation of CLAHRC’s strategy to embed health inequalities across the collaboration and co-developed the Health Inequalities Assessment Toolkit (<http://www.hiat.org.uk/>). Ana also researches on the CLAHRC’s Public Health Thematic programme focused on developing and evaluating structural approaches to enhance the resilience of eight disadvantaged neighborhoods. She leads work in two neighborhoods with residents and local authorities to facilitate local upstream interventions. She is an active member of the Spanish Network of Women’s Health Workers (RedCaps).

Jennie Popay is Professor of Sociology and Public Health at Lancaster University and Deputy Director of the NIHR School for Public Health Research. She has worked as a teacher, policy maker and researcher in academia and in the public and voluntary sectors in the UK, Africa and New Zealand. Her research interests include the social determinants of health and health equity; the evaluation of complex ‘natural’ policy experiments; and community empowerment. A qualitative social science at heart, she

has been involved in a wide range of mixed methods studies. Currently, she is undertaking research on approaches to assessing the impact of public involvement in research and on the impact on health inequalities of interventions aiming to increase community 'control'. She has held public appointments with the Commission on Health Improvement and the Commission on Patient and Public Involvement in Health and was chair of the national charity The People's Health Trust and a member of the Bevan Commission set up to advise the Welsh government on the future of the NHS and public health in Wales. Her roles in the CLAHRC NWC are Director Engagement, lead for the Public Health Theme and lead for the strategy to embed health inequalities across CLAHRC.

Liz Petch is a senior Public Health Specialist that is passionate about public health and aims to take a proactive role in reducing the unfair and unjust health inequalities that exist in the UK. She is inclusive in her approach and driven by the need for improvements in quality and outcomes from the statutory and voluntary sector. She currently leads on healthcare public health, intelligence and building resilient communities within Blackpool Council. She has 18 years senior public health experience working within the NHS and Local Authority and gained her Masters in Public Health in 2003. She has extensive knowledge and skills of partnership working, in particular with communities and the voluntary sector, and the NHS in prevention and early intervention work. Within her roles she has influenced local, regional and national work programmes and pro-actively linked with other areas of the country (e.g. North Wales) to advise on the specialist work programme of Asset Based Community Development. She has presented this work at various national and regional conferences and values the learning and experience that working at these levels has had on her current practice and thinking.

Dianne Moore is a CLAHRC NWC resident advisor. She is 64 years old and is married with one daughter and three granddaughters. She works full time and owns a home in the Claremont area (Blackpool) where she moved 16 years ago. She is originally from a community minded area in the Midlands where people know their neighbours and helped each other when needed. Once she moved to Claremont it became obvious that her neighbourhood lacked the same community spirit, and took her a while to get to know people as she lives in a big transient area. In 2016 Dianne joined the CLAHRC NWC. The reason for this was to try and make a difference to her community to make it a nicer place to live, to encourage landlords to improve their rented accommodations so families can put down roots and stay in the area and make Claremont into a great family orientated neighbourhood.

Kim Stammers is a committed CLAHRC NWC resident advisor. She has lived in Claremont for nearly 4 years. She joined the CLAHRC NWC because she had noticed that a lot of people didn't stay long in the area since it is a bit run down and not a community anymore. Kim hopes the NRP contributes to turn Claremont back into a place where people would like to live and raise a family.