

UKOTs Public Health Programme Newsletter

March 2023

In this edition:

- KEMH Pathology and Food, Water & Environmental Laboratory visit
- Fit tester 'train the trainer' programme
- New mental health anti-stigma contract
- UKOTs Programme Epidemiology Network

Welcome! This publication provides updates for colleagues and partners across UKHSA, OHID and the Overseas Territories. If you have any queries, feedback or contributions please contact: UKOTs.Programme@ukhsa.gov.uk

KEMH Pathology and Food, Water & Environmental Laboratory visit

The UKOT Laboratory Technical and Quality Manager visited the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital (KEMH) Pathology and Food, Water & Environmental Laboratory in the Falkland Islands to support readiness for the laboratories first application for accreditation. The primary purpose of the visit was to conduct a joint review to provide an updated overview of the present status of the Quality Management System in the Multi-Disciplinary Laboratory in preparation for ISO 17025 inspection – the most stringent laboratory level of accreditation. Teamwork and strategic leadership in Falklands has resulted in a strong functioning Quality Management System. Accreditation of the laboratory will be significant milestone in the strengthening of quality laboratory services, and readiness for inspection is a significant achievement in a small island setting.



Fit tester 'train the trainer' programme

At the end of January the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Specialist, Janice Toplass visited Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) and then the British Virgin Islands (BVI) to provide IPC support. In TCI Janice collaborated with Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) IPC colleagues to deliver the first face to face training of a PAHO developed respiratory training programme which included fit tester 'train the trainer'.

The objectives of the training workshop included: building IPC capacity in line with international safety standards; training health care staff to be able to undertake fit testing of respiratory masks and to be confident to cascade training to other staff members where needed; increasing knowledge and training capacity around respiratory hazard identification; and introducing the PAHO Respiratory Protection Programme Manual as a resource for use in healthcare settings.



Following the success of the training in TCI, Janice travelled to BVI to deliver Respiratory protection programme training following the PAHO model. Colleagues in both TCI and BVI were extremely welcoming and engaged with the training which took place over 2 days. In addition to the training, the opportunity was used to work with the IPC leads and focal points to understand their IPC challenges and how UKHSA may support further

New mental health anti-stigma contract

We are delighted to announce we have appointed Implemental Worldwide CIC to work with the UKOTs programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. They will provide technical assistance and build local capacity to co-produce and co-design mental health anti-stigma projects over two years (two UKOTs each year), including social marketing campaigns and training anti-stigma Champions to share their lived experiences at 'social contact' events.



Mind UK co-designed anti-stigma campaigns for Bermuda and British Virgin Islands between April 2021 and July 2022. More information can be found [here](#). The same technical team (led by Sue Baker OBE) now under Implemental, will support four further UKOTs to co-develop and co-produce a strategic, research-informed, evidence-based, and costed mental health anti-stigma social marketing campaign plan and train relevant staff and Champions. The team will use evidence-based methods, as highlighted by the recent [Lancet Commission report](#) that the team have adapted for use across global regions. Peer learning amongst UKOTs, including Bermuda and BVI teams, will be a vital tool to support all project teams and Champions throughout campaign development and delivery. The team at Implemental are planning the criteria and selection process to identify the new UKOTs to work with and will be in touch in due course to invite UKOTs to express interest and apply.

"We know that the mental health legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic has left more people around the world struggling with their mental health and wellbeing. Sadly we also know that mental health stigma and discrimination are still deeply embedded across a diverse range of cultures and contexts, making it harder for people to seek help and overcome exclusion.

However, backed by a global volume of evidence from the recent Lancet Commission report and methods, tools, and research adapted with local partners and people with lived experience across regions (including in the British Virgin Islands and Bermuda) we know that change is possible and are honoured to have the opportunity to work with local partners, particularly people with lived experience, to lead change within four new UKOTs and build upon and innovate anti-stigma work and generate more evidence and impact in new locations."

Sue Baker, OBE

UKOTs Programme Epidemiology Network

The most recent Epidemiology Network meeting was held in March, with attendees from six of the UKOTs. Adelle Springer (Gibraltar) and Abbie Harrison (Montserrat) delivered an interactive session on Data Management, centred around 5 common 'data headaches' that most people working with data will be familiar with. Conversation was lively and solutions to many of these frequent issues using different analysis software were discussed. Several participants fed back afterwards that they enjoyed the session and found it really helpful!