

Step Health By Champions Step

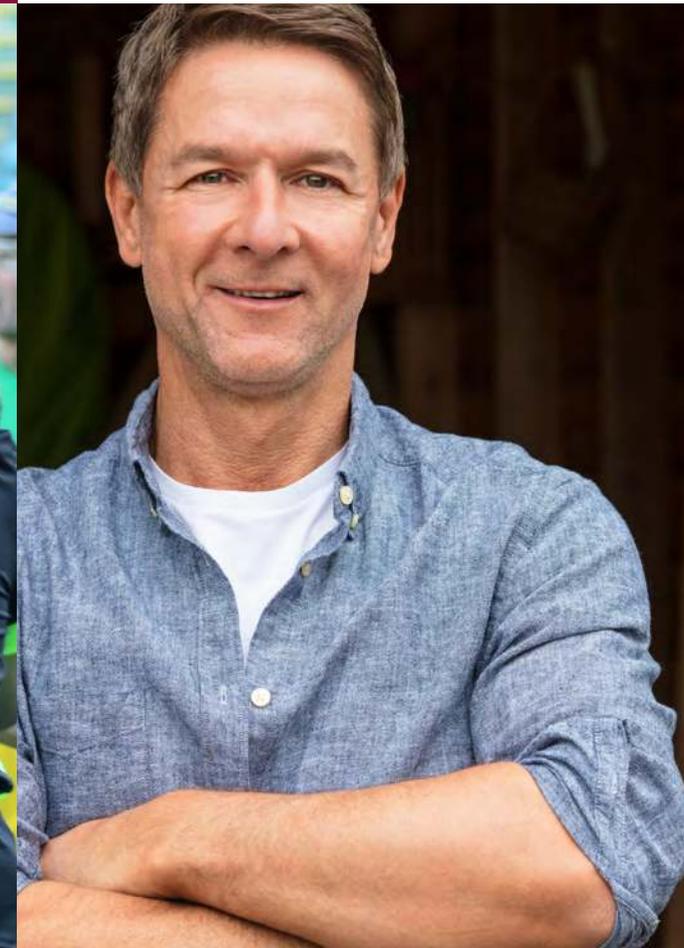
SBS Shed Community

Interreg 
EUROPEAN UNION

2 Seas Mers Zeeën

SBS

European Regional Development Fund



Overview of the Health Champion Programme

Background

Across Europe, men die on average 6.1 years earlier than women. Men also are more likely to develop preventable long-term conditions such as heart disease and are more likely to smoke and be overweight. They are also more likely to put off seeing their GP, or to try to deal with things themselves without professional support.

This means that men are not making full use of the help available. To reduce the inequality in health between men and women, we need men to change the way they interact with health, to understand that health isn't a taboo topic, and that seeing their GP for health concerns earlier isn't a waste of time.

The SBS Health Champion Programme has been designed specifically to enable men to talk to other men in an informal, community setting to support a reduction in health inequalities. It has been co-produced with men across the UK, France, Belgium and Netherlands as part of the SBS model to improve men's health, mental health and employability.

Step
Health By Champions
Step SBS Shed Community

About the Programme

The Health Champion Programme focuses on providing training and support for individuals within SBS Sheds, so that they have the skills and confidence necessary to make positive changes within their communities.

Health Champions will typically:

- Have conversations about health with their peers using an evidence-based approach to supporting behaviour change
- Signpost to local health services

Health Champions will be part of the SBS Shed Structure, and can be any member of the Shed.

Health Champions are not medical professionals and do not provide advice. Instead, they ask the right questions so the people they speak to can explore their own health issues, and make their own plans on how to take control of their health.

By supporting health in the community, the programme aims to encourage men to live healthier lives and seek help for medical conditions earlier, to prevent the development of long-term conditions.

How it works

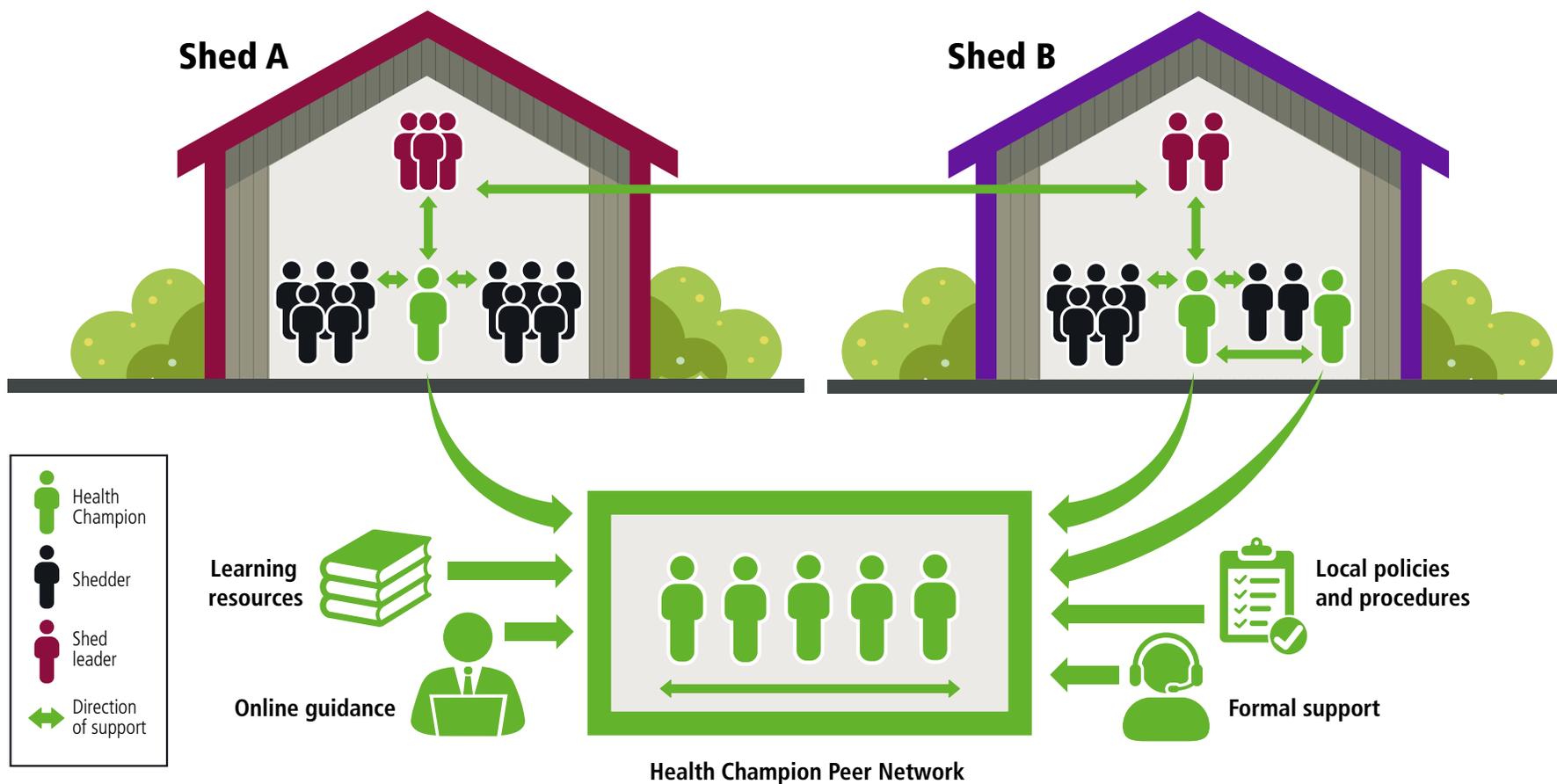
Each Shed will identify Shedders who are interested in becoming Health Champions. No previous experience is necessary. We recommend the Shed Leader attends the training first, so they can speak to interested Shedders about what the training involved, and whether it's right for them.

Potential Health Champions will attend an initial training session where they will learn how to have conversations about health with their fellow Shedders using evidence-based techniques proven to empower people to help themselves. Training will also cover an introduction to some key men's health issues, confidentiality, safeguarding and signposting.



Trained Health Champions will then return to their Sheds bringing this higher level of awareness of health and wellbeing with them. Having someone who knows how to have healthy conversations within their Shed will create an atmosphere and an environment where men are able to talk about health issues in a sensitive, productive way. Men will feel comfortable talking to someone in confidence, knowing that they won't be judged or be told what to do.

Each area will have a Health Champion Coordinator that will be able to connect Health Champions with the local offer and provide access to networking opportunities for health champions to support each other and share ideas.





Men already support each other, and the desire to help others is natural. The programme helps men support each other in a healthy way that works for them. The training gives Health Champions the confidence and the skills needed to do what they have always wanted to do.

Values

The Health Champion Programme is based on three core values:

- Health starts in the community, long before people need health services, and communities play a vital role in improving health and reducing health inequalities.
- Individuals already know what being healthy means, but it is not always easy to make healthy changes, though men are more than willing to help each other.
- Having conversations about health can contribute to improving an individual's health, which over time, will help to improve the wider community's health.



Health Champions

Role Objectives:

Trained volunteers act as Health Champions within their SBS Shed to facilitate healthy conversations with their peers in a non-judgemental way and signpost to other services if they are needed. Health Champions receive training and supervision to help them gain the confidence and competence to support health and wellbeing within their Sheds and provided with links to local community and health services.

Responsibilities:

- Have healthy conversations about health and wellbeing
- Provide informal peer support to people who want to maintain or improve their health
- Signpost people who ask for help on a range of health and wellbeing issues
- Reach out to peers showing signs of poor health to start healthy conversations

Health Champions will need to act in a responsible way. This includes:

- Maintaining confidentiality
- Respecting people's choices in a friendly, non-judgemental way
- Having empathy for other people's situations
- Leading by example

Commitment of Time:

Health Champions are volunteers and the amount of time they are able to give will depend on each person's availability. However, it is expected that the volunteer will be available as a Health Champion while they are attending their SBS group. They should attend on a regular basis.

Support for the role:

All Health Champions will operate within local Safeguarding and confidentiality policies, as well as data protection laws. Support will be provided in the form of written guidance, training and advice from the SBS Health Champion Coordinator in your local area.

The SBS Health Champion Coordinator will provide general support for the role and provide opportunities for networking and further development.

Person Specification

Essential Training	Completion of the SBS Health Champion training
Personal Qualities	Be a member of an SBS Shed Ability to maintain confidentiality Non-judgemental Good interpersonal and communication skills Confidence to be able to talk to other people Encouraging and supporting of their peers A good listener Desire to help others Positive outlook Ability to work with a diverse population in a respectful and non-discriminatory way Reliability

Learning from the pilot

How the programme was designed

The programme was developed through a series of local and international focus groups featuring project partners, Shedders and key stakeholders. Feedback from Shedders and trained Health Champions was collected throughout the pilot and fed into the programme development.

The initial training was based on Making Every Contact Count, but the focus groups made it clear that the training needed to be tailored specifically to men. Training, marketing and communications followed the same key principles:

- Use language that men use themselves
- Focus on positive representations of health, e.g. strength, fitness
- Focus on the benefits to themselves and their Shed
- Be clear that the programme is focused on men and that this programme is for them
- Be easy to read
- Have an emphasis on practical instructions

Some partners were able to provide a local, printed Health Champion manual to support their ongoing role. This included local information as well as tips to take care of themselves and provided a handy reference document to recap some of the key points from the training.

It is also important for Health Champions to feel connected to other Health Champions. This will improve their confidence, foster an atmosphere of mutual support and protect their own individual wellbeing.

Key learning

Having the support of the Shed Leadership to embed the Health Champion programme was key, and many leaders were also encouraged to become Health Champions.

Making the role simple and informal made it more accessible to Shedders who were apprehensive of taking on extra responsibility. It was important to ensure men did not feel over-burdened with a strict role profile.



How the programme was set up

Over 130 Health Champions were trained across UK, France, Belgium and Netherlands from 80 different Sheds. The training programme, while following a core structure, was adapted to the needs of local Sheddors.

Each area had a local Health Champion Coordinator who was responsible for:

- Ensuring training is available
- Promoting training within local SBS Sheds
- Providing support to health champions following training
- Ensuring health champions have access to networking opportunities

Shed Leaders also played a key role in:

- Ensuring Sheddors were aware of the programme and were supported to take part
- Supporting Health Champions to have conversations with Sheddors, for example by providing time and space for discussions to happen.

Health Champions were responsible for:

- Following what they have learnt in the training
- Their own health and wellbeing
- Taking advantage of networking and development opportunities provided by the Programme

Health Champions are not expected to give advice and they are not responsible for the actions of fellow Sheddors

Following training, the Health Champion Coordinator will provide oversight of the delivery of the programme, make regular contact with individual Health Champions to provide ongoing support and ensure Health Champions feel confident in their roles.

Key Learning

Keeping the programme simple made it easier for men to get on board. It made the role more accessible, with less pressure on the individual to achieve fixed goals. It also allowed them to make the role their own, as well as one that suited their Shed.

Training

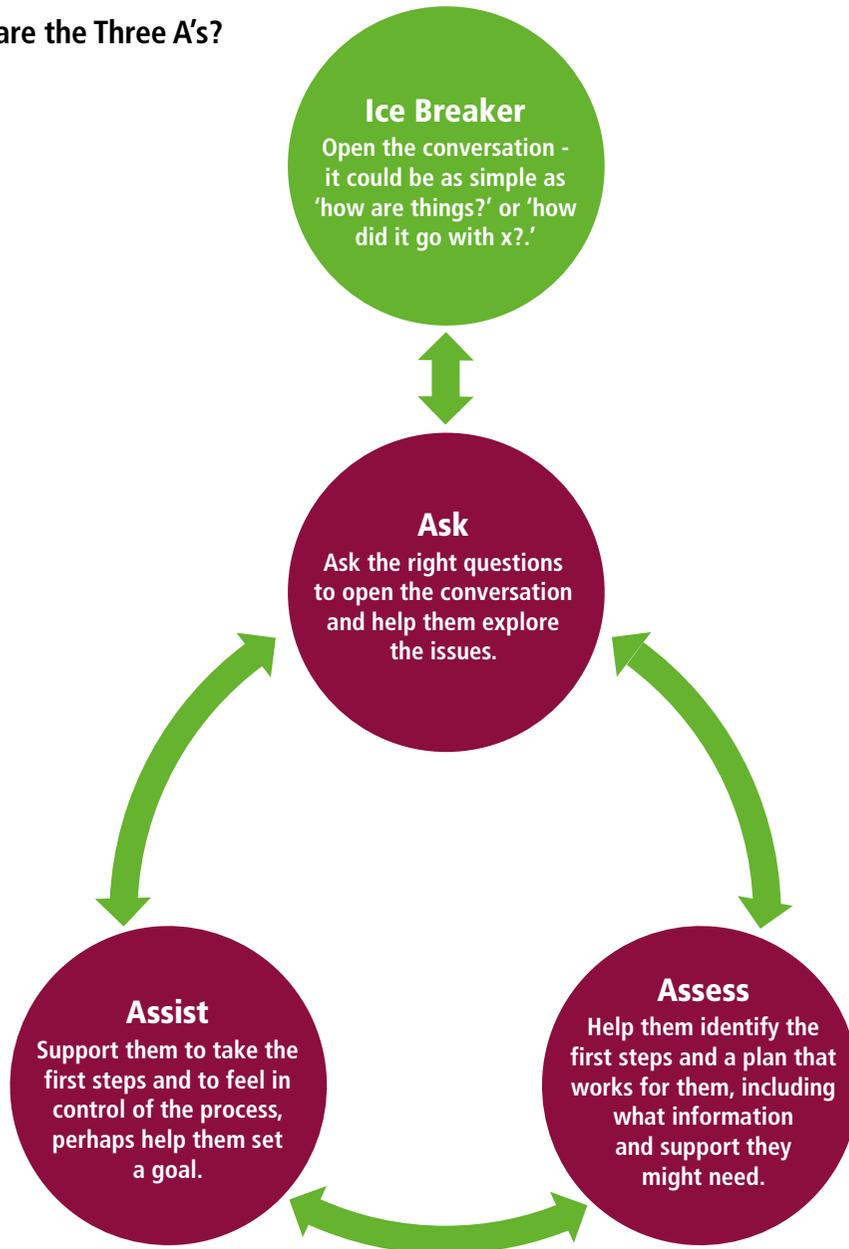
Health Champion training consisted of 6 hours of teaching time, including breaks, and was delivered in a range of formats from a full-day face-to-face session to a multi-session online training course. Training followed a core outline in each SBS partner location but was delivered in a way that meets local needs.

Training covered:

- Awareness of some of the issues that men face with their health
- Healthy conversations training, based on Making Every Contact Count
- How to signpost to other services
- The importance of confidentiality
- Your role as a health champion
- Further opportunities

Following successful completion of training, Health Champions were provided with a certificate to celebrate their achievement and a written guide to help them continue as a Health Champion. This guide contained some key health information, a summary of the key concepts, and a local directory of key services for signposting.

What are the Three A's?



Why Making Every Contact Count?

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is an evidence-based approach to behaviour change that utilises day-to-day interactions to support people to make positive changes in their physical and mental health. It is used extensively across public and community organisations in England.

MECC plays a key part in the delivery of the Health Champion programme and has been informed by toolkits developed by Health Education England Wessex, and adapted to our unique SBS Shed setting.

Training in MECC is highly recommended for all trainers delivering SBS Health Champion training.

For more information on MECC, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-every-contact-count-mecc-practical-resources>



Tip: Build in as much interaction throughout the session as you can, and make sure people are regularly moving around. You could build in extra time for networking or for an exercise activity.

Example training session plan

Duration (minutes)	Topic	Content
15	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping • Training objectives • Group agrees the sessions ground rules • Attendees introduce themselves
45	Brief introduction to men's health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive Quiz using local and national men's health statistics • Discussion exploring health inequalities and male mortality • Interactive exercise exploring participants experiences of masculinity and how these impacts on men's health <p>Learning objectives:</p> <p>Understand the most common men's health problems and their causes (including gender norms) and how lifestyle impacts on the health of men</p>
45	Healthy Conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive session introducing the philosophy and principles of Making Every Contact Count (Link to local MECC training plans where possible) <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the MECC approach and its application to the practice of being a Health Champion • Understand the limits of a Health Champion
15	Break	
30	How do men change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Behaviour Change theory • How the Social Determinants of Health impact our health • The importance of mental wellbeing, example: The Five Ways to Wellbeing <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the complexity of behaviour change and why people may struggle to make changes without support • Understand small steps that everyone can take to help improve mental wellbeing
30	The Role of a Health Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants explore what they expect from the role of being a Health Champion • Discussion on the key skills and qualities required <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the role of Health Champions, what they can/can't do and the skills/knowledge/attitudes required

Duration (minutes)	Topic	Content
45	Lunch Break	
25	Skills Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening skills • Questioning skills using Open Discovery Questions – How, What • Other communication skills <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand and apply basic listening skills • To become familiar with healthy conversation skills
45	Tips for having a good conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key 'do's' and 'don'ts' • Icebreakers • Structuring a conversation using Ask, Assess, Assist • Ending a conversation, including signposting <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the limitations of health champion conversations and how to protect themselves • Understand the role of signposting and how to identify suitable resources for signposting
10	Break	
25	Skills Practice	<p>Opportunity to practice conversation skills in pairs, pulling all previous learning together</p> <p>Learning objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase confidence in using conversation skills
30	Practical Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality and data protection • Safeguarding • Action Planning and next steps as a Health Champion <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of confidentiality and data protection • Understand what safeguarding means, how to identify someone who may have safeguarding needs, and what to do if you are worried about someone

About Step by Step (SBS)

Step by Step (SBS) is a collaboration between 10 organisations to develop and test a new model of community mental and physical health improvement for men.

The model has been designed to

- Empower men to move from poor health and/or isolation to healthy social participation or active engagement in the labour market.
- Promote a culture in which all citizens in all regions will have the confidence to make sustainable positive changes in their lives benefitting themselves & society.
- Contribute to healthier individuals, families, communities & workforces

The SBS model's primary aim is to engage with men in their local communities, particularly those who may be socially isolated and suffering from poor mental health or poor wellbeing.

For more information and to find your local partner visit www.sbs-wellbeing.eu

About Interreg

Interreg 2 Seas 2014 -2020 is an EU programme facilitating cross-border cooperation between England, France, the Netherlands and Belgium.

SBS has been funded as part of the programme's technological and social innovation priority. SBS's specific objective is to increase the development of social innovation applications to make more efficient and effective local services.

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October 2021

