



Suzie Carrier

Job Title: Salaried GP
Locality: Salford
Project Title: Improving Equitable Uptake of Breast Cancer Screening

Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership



Project Aim

I aimed to understand the population served by Ordsall Health Surgery and their health disparities. Salford South-East PCN had prioritised improving breast screening uptake as the PCN inequality focus for the year and coordinated a working group to facilitate this. As a working group, our goal was to identify and overcome barriers to breast screening to enhance uptake during the September 2024 screening period.

What did I do?

I collaborated with a working group from Salford South-East PCN, Public Health Inequalities Improvement Team (PHIIT), Salford Health Improvement Team and the Manchester Breast Screening Programme. We analysed screening data and gathered insights from various questionnaires, leading to the development of several approaches: staff training, community education events, targeted screening endorsements and advertisements, media coverage, transport initiatives and follow-up with non-attenders of screening. We adapted screening endorsement messaging into our most spoken languages. Ordsall Health Surgery saw an increase in breast screening uptake compared to the previous screening cycle, from 48% to 64%.

What did I learn

Changing health-related fears and attitudes towards screening is challenging in a short time. Despite efforts, many still cited fear or anxiety as their reason for not attending appointments. Feedback showed improving health literacy and supporting patients with informed decision making was more impactful than incentivising screening. I also learned about my working style and the value of stepping outside traditional methods and my comfort zone to bring about change.

Has this changed how you work?

This project has expanded my horizons, allowing me to collaborate with external teams and integrate more with public health and my practice's PCN. I've become more aware of barriers to primary care services, and I am committed to addressing them.

I now consider how practice workflows might impact patient access, especially for those facing barriers. Despite increased breast screening coverage, our rates are still below the national target. We plan to evaluate and refine our approaches for future screening cycles.

What happens next?

The project faced significant challenges due to outdated IT systems in the Breast Screening Programme, there is a planned digital transformation in 2025. Approaches have been shared within our PCN and with other local PCNs to highlight effective strategies. Once we have the final uptake numbers across the PCN practices and have analysed the impact of follow-up approaches with non-attenders, we will establish protocols for future screening periods based on these insights and adapt to the planned digital transformation in the Breast Screening Programme. We are also planning a future women's health event in February 2025, inviting patients from recently screened practices, to improve health literacy around women's health issues and address screening fears.

To read more about Suzie's journey, scan the QR code below

