

# **Using Motivational Interviewing to promote health across the lifespan whilst emerging from the pandemic**

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## **Background**

Motivational Interviewing is a psychological approach to consultations which explores an individual's motivation to make life changes which will benefit health. It can be used across the lifespan and has a robust evidence base which applies to all the challenges to health.

## **Aim of the study**

This presentation will cover our work as community nurses in embracing the philosophy of Motivational Interviewing in our interactions with clients. We will show how this approach can be adapted to universal health care.

## **Results**

We have taught Motivational Interviewing within university and practice settings and have conducted research into its impact on practice. Our research has shown a positive impact on collaborative work with clients and their engagement in behaviour change. A student commented '... it did change how I did things ... how I ask questions ... it's more a conversation and more open than just throwing questions at people, so it's not a tick box exercise when you go and do a visit.'

## **Conclusions and implications**

The pandemic has exacerbated existing problems in community health. Mental health has deteriorated, and this has resulted in increase in alcohol misuse, levels of obesity, mental health disorders, social isolation, and relationship difficulties. None of these issues can be resolved overnight. However Motivational Interviewing with its emphasis on therapeutic communication is likely to contribute to recovery. It can enable clients to process their difficulties and come up with their own solutions and goals. It could be an important part of helping people heal after the pandemic.