



G&T News

*News and an informative read
from the SECAMB Gypsy & Traveller
Community Team*

17 June 2014

We want to see better health outcomes for Gypsies & Travellers and a better understanding of their way of life, dispelling some of the 'myths' along the way. To support this publication we've developed a web page on the staff zone - go to the link [Staff zone/ My SECAMB/ Get involved/ Gypsy & Traveller Community Team](#)

Health and the Travelling Community

Did you know the following about Gypsy & Traveller communities?

- Life expectancy for both men and women is 10-15 years lower than the national average.
- Mothers are 20 times more likely than the rest of the population to have experienced the death of a child and/or miscarriages.
- Children are more likely to have low birth weight and high child accident rates.
- Children are between one and a half and two times more likely to die in the first year of life than children in the settled community.
- Children have the poorest health of any minority community in the UK.
- Over 70% of traveller children experience tooth decay, with one third of all ages never having seen a dentist.
- Health problems are between two and five times more common than the settled community.
- In later life, adults suffer higher rates of long-term illness, ill health or disability, limiting their ability to lead a normal life.
- Among the significantly higher rates of illness are respiratory disease, heart disease, chronic pain and sensory difficulties.
- Mental health problems such as anxiety and depressions are also significantly more prevalent.



Who are Gypsies & travellers?

The main groups that people use to identify themselves are listed below, however they are not complete and vary according to personal family definitions:

- Romany Gypsies - sometimes called English Travellers or English Gypsies

- Irish Travellers (or travellers of Irish Heritage)
- Scottish and Welsh Travellers
- New Travellers
- Bargees (who live on the waterways in barges)
- Fairground and show people.

About the G&T community team

Aim:~ Our aim is to raise awareness and eliminate negative attitudes through education. This will improve outcomes and experience for Gypsy and Traveller communities.

The team members are:~

Robin Scott (CTL, Hailsham), Peter Glover (IBIS Educator & Trainer, Farnborough), Andy Adsett (ACA, Horsham), Nick Bastin (CTL, Eastbourne), Patience Keet-Harris (Technician, Uckfield), Kerin Lewis (Paramedic, Eastbourne), Sally Smith (DTL, Lewes EOC), Bonita Baker-Dean (Paramedic, Paddock Wood), Malcolm Legg (CPL, Chichester), and Angela Rayner (Inclusion Manager, Chertsey).

The team meet quarterly and attend events such as Epsom Derby Day. If you have any experiences that you would like to discuss with a member of our team, please don't hesitate to email one of us.



Team members attended the 2014 Derby day at Epsom Racecourse to introduce themselves to the community

Mythbuster

'All Travellers live in Caravans' - there are 300,00 Gypsies and Travellers in the UK; two thirds of who live in brick and mortar houses.

'Gypsies & Travellers are foreigners' - Gypsies have lived in Britain for over 500 years.

'Travellers get rich by not paying taxes' - Gypsies & Travellers work and pay taxes just like everyone else. Travellers may appear wealthier because their wealth is more on display - they may not have spent £200,000 on a house, but rather invested their money in a caravan, trucks and cars which are more visible and also depreciate in value, unlike housing stock.

What SECamb staff need to know:

- Police back-up is not required when attending a Gypsy or Traveller site, unless the red marker system indicates so.
- Many members of the community do not visit a GP, so their continuity of care may be difficult; and their understanding of health problems may be limited.
- It is normal practice for these communities to attend in large numbers if one of their family members is unwell. In this situation, please try to identify a senior person in the group to talk to and who, in turn, will be able to convey information to the rest of the group.
- Women from these communities will prefer to be seen by female health professionals.

**Interested in joining the Gypsy & Traveller Community Team?
Please email Angela.Rayner@secamb.nhs.uk for more details**