

# CaN Covid Response

## The first 4 months

Covid-19, Pandemic, Lockdown, Stay at Home, Stay Safe, Keep Your Distance, Wear Masks, Keep Well, Save Lives.... These are the many slogans that up to now reverberate in everyone's ears around the world.

In the UK, from late March 2020, we have begun to see an unprecedented number of Covid-19 infections, deaths, loss of jobs, closed schools, fear, depression, hunger, and isolation. Responses from all quarters: frontline workers, scientists, government agencies, civil society groups, charities and individuals have been bold and urgent.

In Poplar and Tower Hamlets, we have been playing our part. Used to doing things differently, we swiftly moved our provision from in-person to digital. We moved quickly to ensure there was no gap in our delivery.

We provided advice, information and welfare guidance via befriending phone calls to those who are unable to go online especially the elderly and those with multiple barriers.

We mobilised furloughed local employees to become volunteers, helping cook and distribute hot meals, packaging food parcels, distributing food and other essentials to those who are shielding. We welcomed support from our local social sewing enterprise partner to make washable facemasks for our frontline staff and volunteers.

Employment Support and advice continued via phone conversations and skills training provided online.

**The Advisors have very big hearts! I would have gone down completely after I have lost my job but your warmth and readiness to help has made me feel less negative about life in the pandemic. Thank you for your kindness**

Meredith James

**"It's amazing what is being provided, it's a life line at a time in life when it is darker than usual...."**

Monique Mulder

**7,067**  
Food interventions

**90%** Receiving food interventions more than once

**58** Residents volunteering

**12** CaN Staff deployed to community response roles

**985** Residents supported with advice and guidance

**1,485** Young people engaged with during lockdown

**284** Vulnerable residents given daily befriending & welfare calls

**£67k** Distributed to mutual aid groups and other partners



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As our community centres closed, we reached out to Centre users virtually. We created the HARCA Centres Unlocked, a Facebook page offering live and pre-recorded health and well-being - related online activities for all ages.

We provided our most vulnerable residents with computer devices to keep them connected and able to access vital services. We worked with schools and other partners to give families devices and broadband connection. The offer also included basic Digital Skills Training.

Young people received regular calls from our youth workers, lifting their spirits, motivating them and keeping them connected. They are also offered counselling and cognitive behaviour therapy where needed. They received resource packs and access to an online programme across the three themes: Stay Active, Stay Creative & Stay Inspired which includes daily challenges and tutorials.

Some of the most vulnerable young people (including domestic violence cases, asylum seeker support and missing children) have been supported through continued partnership with the youth offending service, health care professionals and social services. We have also launched a brand new service over this period called Health Spot providing young people with confidential access to a GP to talk about anything to do with their physical or mental health.



**It's been such a struggle. I was having to get internet through my phone and my son and daughter, who both have school work to do, we're having to take turns. They've not been able to do a lot and they were falling behind. Having a proper connection and a device has made a big difference.**

**Stacee Fema, mother of three**

**22**

Residents supported into employment

**258**

Residents supported into training

**178** Digital group sessions for young people

**2,509** 1-to-1 digital meetings with young people

**294** Households supported with digital inclusion

**927** Active viewers of Online Services

**1,184** Total Views per week on average

**13** Partners delivered online services via HARCA Centres Unlocked



**Very grateful for your patience in making us learn how to do Zoom and Google Classroom. I am less nervous signing in now. Takes practice to get confident.**

**Nazma Chowdhury**