

Improving dental access of young adults who experience homelessness

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Knowledge Exchange Seed Fund project

- Applied & awarded in Jan / Feb 2021
- To be delivered by end June 2021
- Primary aim: to raise awareness of **policy makers** about dental access for homeless youth
- Partnership with a homeless youth charity

Homeless youth charity

- St Basil's charity
- Based in Birmingham
- Activities across England
- We will co-produce content with ex-homeless young adults
- Young adults trained to undertake policy engagement
- 'Youth Voice' and 'Youth Homeless Parliament'



St Basil's charity YHP (above) and Youth Voice (below) - permission to post photographs

Project team

Myself &
supervisors

Charity national
engagement
manager

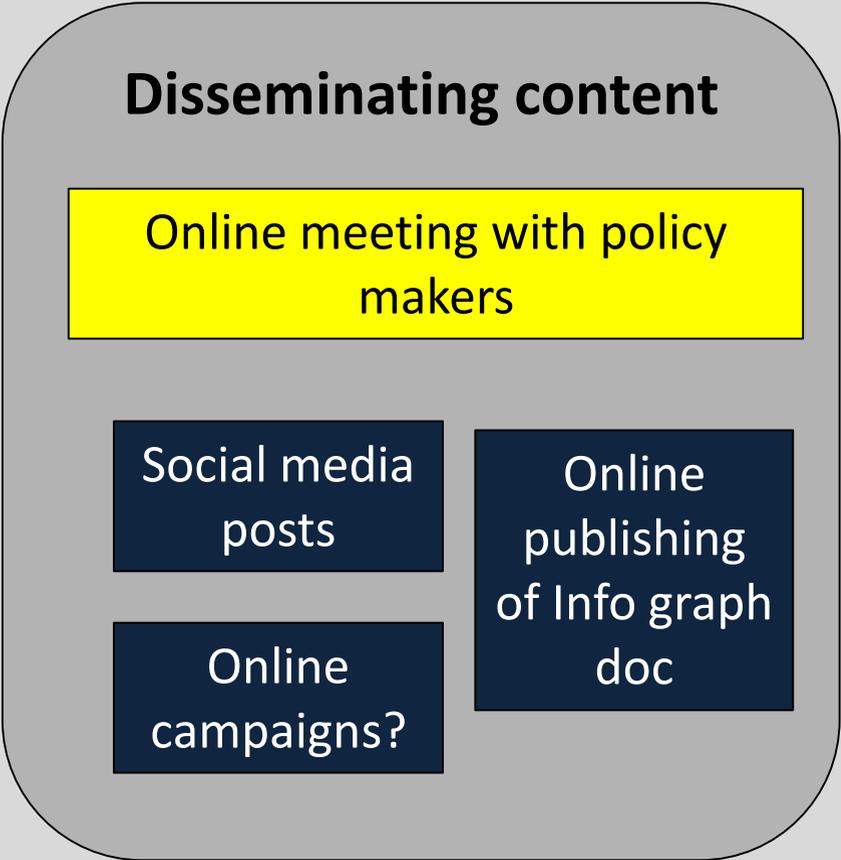
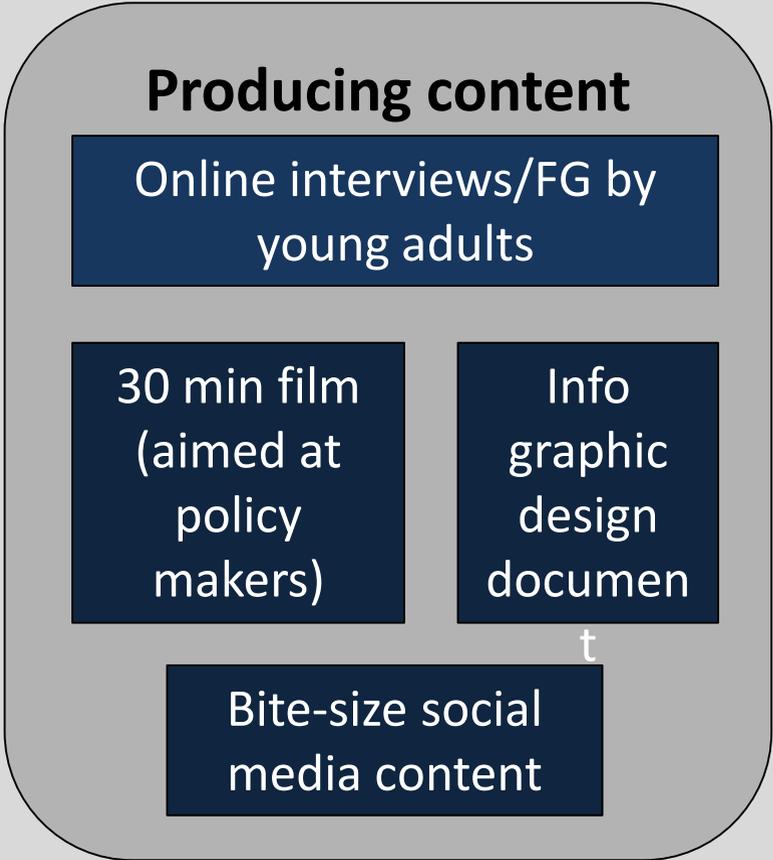
Charity CEO

3 young adult
interviewers

1 young adult
film-maker

1 young adult
social media
expert

Project plan



← Digital methods →

Project team



(Permission to post photograph)

Project team



(Permission to post photographs)

Why use digital methods?

- Ongoing Covid-19 pandemic
- Wider reach
- Youth friendly!
- Fast & efficient
- Accessible
- Lower cost
- Can develop & expand in future

Strengths of using digital methods to engage policy makers

- Still at planning stage
- Pandemic has normalised use of remote/digital methods of communication
- Able to reach a wider audience
- May be preferred (efficiency, time saving?)

Potential concerns of using digital methods to engage policy makers

- Attendance at online meetings
- Technological limitations / difficulties
- Building rapport
- Holding discussions
- Accountability / follow-up

Some learning points so far...

- Digital methods likely to work better under certain circumstances
- Impacted by social & interpersonal factors
- **Pre-existing relationships & trust**
- Importance of underlying infrastructures & processes
- Flexibility & adaptability
- Remote ways of collaborating
- Adapting material to the audience

Future plans

- To evaluate use of digital methods to engage policy makers
- To build on what has worked well
- Potential expansion of collaborations and partnerships for future policy engagement

Thank you!

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