



December 2023

Dear colleagues,

We are delighted to be able to share with partners an evaluation report of the '8 borough project'; an initiative driven by London's Black community for London's Black community. The 8 borough project originated in Lambeth where the community worked with health partners to co-produce **inspire**, providing a trusted and recognisable brand for the Black African and Caribbean community to talk about health during the COVID pandemic. COVID-19 shone a light on the health inequalities and the mistrust in health services felt so profoundly by many in the Black community. By working together the 8 borough programme has demonstrated what can be achieved when communities are listened to and the health system engages in community led dialogue.

This report provides an overview of the excellent innovative work delivered in partnership with inspire, the NHS Legacy and Health Equity Partnership and the 8 boroughs of Ealing, Hackney, Haringey, Lambeth, Newham, Camden, Brent and Islington both during COVID and beyond. It highlights the importance of working in partnership with VCS organisations, the need for ongoing community engagement, the adoption of a holistic and community centred approach, the value of using trusted people in trusted places to deliver health messages and the need for local engagement with support from regional networks to share best practice across the capital. The 8-borough initiative has formed the foundation for the inspire network to develop and thrive across all London boroughs. inspire seeks to give a voice to Black Londoner's to influence policy and delivery and to meet the diverse needs of the entire community.

This work has been possible through the vision and hard work of a large number of people who continue to work every day to ensure the voices that matter are heard. To all our partners, the VCS organisations and our communities who were essential to the effective delivery of this programme, we thank you.

Cedi Frederick, Chair of NHS Kent and Medway and co- Chair of Inspire for Black Londoners.

Juliet Amoa, Associate Director, EDI Community Health and Engagement in Lambeth Council and co-Chair of the London inspire Programme

Ruth Hutt, Director of Public Health at Lambeth Council and co-chair of the Association of Directors of Public Health London