

## Forging Forward: Innovating Health Promotion Strategies for the NEET Community

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### Abstract

Globally, since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a considerable increase, with more than 22% of young people aged 15 to 24 who are neither in education, employment, or training (NEET) contributing to poor health outcomes. Participation in health-promoting occupations is a vital condition of health that improves health, well-being, and quality of life. An exploratory 'conversation café' was facilitated using the World Café method and semi-structured interviews. With representatives from public health and primary care sectors to discuss the role of primary care and multi-agency working to improve outcomes for the NEET population. Perceived underlying reasons for the disparities, their experiences, community collaborative problem-solving and recommendations for improving prevention efforts and influencing policy were discussed. Qualitative data was examined using thematic analysis. Participants 'solved' problems as a community by exchanging ideas, reflecting on their experiences, and suggesting ways to improve prevention programmes and policies. Health and care practitioners debated what their role could be. This was attributed to a lack of knowledge and skills regarding what the NEET population require to engage in education and work and a lack of clarity regarding whose 'responsibility' it is to address these issues. Based on the findings from the conversation café, a focused, consistent primary care and multi-agency community approach is needed across the system to address the social determinants of health and influence policy and guidance for the benefit of the NEET population. Further research is currently being conducted with the NEET population by the researchers.

**Keywords:** community services; gender disparities; multi-agency working; social inequalities; vital determinants of health