

Pressure Drop – A Community Response to Better Heart Health

Celebrating what can happen when communities, healthcare services, local organisations, and individuals come together with a shared purpose — to improve health, build trust, and create lasting change.

Pressure Drop was set up to talk about something that affects many families, many communities, and many lives — high blood pressure.

High blood pressure, sometimes called the “silent killer”, often has no obvious symptoms. Many people feel completely well and do not realise they are at risk until they experience something serious, such as a stroke, heart attack, or heart failure.

But the good news is this: high blood pressure can often be prevented, detected early, and managed successfully.

That is what the Pressure Drop event was all about.

Pressure Drop was created because we recognised an important health challenge in local communities. Across the Black Country, people from African and Caribbean backgrounds experience poorer blood pressure control and higher risks of complications linked to high blood pressure.

But this is not simply about medicine.

The conversations we heard showed something deeper.

Many people spoke honestly about feeling unheard, misunderstood, or disconnected from healthcare services. Some described experiences of discrimination, lack of trust, or feeling that healthcare was not designed with their community in mind.

Those experiences matter.

Because improving health is not only about encouraging healthier eating or increased physical activity. It is also about trust, respect, understanding, and making healthcare feel welcoming and accessible.

That is why Pressure Drop brought health support directly into the community.

Held at the African Caribbean Community Centre in Dudley, this event created a space that felt familiar, open, and inclusive — where people could come together, enjoy activities, ask questions, access health checks, and speak openly about health.

This was not simply a screening event.

It became a place for conversations, learning, connection, entertainment, and trust-building.

We would like to recognise the incredible partnership that made this possible — bringing together healthcare organisations, community groups, volunteers, and local leaders, all working with one common goal: improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities.

A special thank you goes to our special guests and contributors who helped make the day memorable and engaging.

We were honoured to have Dr Lucy Martin open the event and support this important conversation around health and community.

We were also delighted to welcome reggae artist and health advocate Macka B, whose message showed how creativity and culture can play a powerful role in promoting wellbeing and encouraging healthier lifestyles.

And of course, thank you to Miss Ida, whose performance brought energy, warmth, and an important reminder that health messages can be delivered in ways that connect, inspire, and stay with people.

We also want to recognise our fantastic stallholders and partner organisations.

Representing services across healthcare, public health, education, wellbeing, social prescribing, smoking cessation, respiratory health, stroke prevention, bereavement support, and community support — they helped create a one-stop opportunity for people to access information, ask questions, and connect with services.

The enthusiasm, expertise, and willingness to engage made a real difference throughout the day.

The response was incredible.

Over one hundred people attended.

Fifty-five people took part in health checks.

What we found reinforced why this work matters.

About 4 in 10 participants had elevated blood pressure.

Nearly one in five participants was living with obesity, increasing the risk of future heart disease.

But one result stood out more than any statistic:

Every single participant agreed to share their results with their GP.

That tells us something powerful.

When services are delivered in a trusted way, and people feel respected and included, engagement improves.

This event was not only about identifying health risks.

It was about starting conversations.

It was about creating confidence.

It was about showing that communities and healthcare services can work together.

People told us they left feeling more informed, more motivated, and more connected.

They spoke about making small but important changes — checking blood pressure regularly, reducing salt intake, managing stress, staying active, and seeking help earlier.

Healthcare professionals also took away important lessons: to listen more carefully, to understand different experiences, and to design services alongside communities rather than for communities.

Pressure Drop showed that meaningful change is possible.

When communities lead, when partnerships work together, and when people feel seen and heard, better health outcomes can follow.

This is not the end of a project.

It is the beginning of continuing relationships, continued listening, and continued action.

Because everyone deserves the opportunity to live a healthy life — regardless of background, ethnicity, or postcode.

Thank you to every organisation, volunteer, healthcare professional, community leader, performer, stallholder, and resident who helped make Pressure Drop possible.

And thank you to everyone who continues to champion healthier communities.