BN: Great, so if you don’t mind if we could start with if you tell us a little bit about your organisation and your role within that?

AP1: Yeah. So, I work for (name of location) Council. Work within the Active (name of location) team. So, within that kind of remit we’ve got a lot of things going on in terms of indoor sports delivery, outdoor sports delivery. We’ve got a lot of different programmes running in terms of things that we offer for young families and young children. There’s a lot of stuff, so pre and postnatal as well.

BN: OK.

AP1: We’ve got quite a lot of things going on really. We’ve got some healthy walks, open groups that we kind of lead on. We’ll train members of the public up to become walk leaders and then eventually take over these walks as their own, if you like.

BN: Oh nice.

AP1: With continued support from our side as well. So, there’s a lot going on. My particular role is slightly different from the rest of the teams as in my main remit is to deliver on the cardiovascular disease prevention programme within the community.

BN: Right.

AP1: So, my role is to get out into community settings and offer free mini health checks to local residents with the view of hopefully identifying as many undiagnosed cases of hypertension and atrial fibrillation. So, I’m working quite closely with local GPs and NPCNs in the area to direct as many people as we can to their services for any follow up healthcare, basically.

BN: Yeah. Oh great. So, what would you say your organisation, I suppose like locally or nationally, is what is their attitude to health promotion and prevention do you think?

AP1: I think it’s massively positive, to be honest.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: I’ve worked for other local authorities in the past and it’s always there in the background but this time with (name of location) I think there’s a real sort of proactive push.

BN: Oh right.

AP1: In terms of what they offer. A lot of free stuff, as I say, for young families and young children. And something like the project that I’m working on is very, very proactive in sort of preventative work, if you like, as opposed to in the past I’ve done a lot of work which is very reactive, so I used to work primarily out of hospitals and GP surgeries where I’d see people with diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol, recovering from strokes and so on where the aim was to try and support them through those conditions to improve their lifestyle, whereas this time it is very much more preventative trying to get in a few steps earlier to try and [02.51 unclear] things before it even gets to that point. So, I think in terms of the organisation, I think they are really, really proactive with their health and wellbeing.

BN: Yeah, that’s great. It does sound like that, to be fair. So, what motivated you to work within your role?

AP1: I’ve always had a background in sort of health screening and things like that, so it’s always been like I’ve got a very long background in terms of health, fitness and managed health clubs and stuff like that over the years but I always try to implement other things into those roles as in offering health screening and sort of picking up on public health initiatives and keeping an eye on the calendar for when it was Diabetes Awareness week and when it was Know Your Numbers week, and things like that. So, I could just I used to try and implement stuff like that into my working role. I guess it’s just always been a passion to, I guess, support with knowledge, knowledge really more than anything. I think if people can get a better understanding of how to improve their lifestyle and how to improve their own wellbeing then that’s where it begins for me. So, for me to do this particular role it was really good for me to get involved in this role because I got involved when it was kind of just sort of from scratch getting off the ground. So, it’s been something I can kind of mould to the way I wanted but it’s just really trying to spread the message and just sort of help support people before things become a bigger issue.

BN: Yeah, which does sound like it links very well with MECC I suppose.

AP1: Absolutely.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: Yeah, absolutely. MECC’s got a real, real strong foothold in everything that I do because it would be very easy to do a health check for somebody and say OK this is your results, these are your numbers, speak to your GP or you GP will be in touch. But what I try and do is I try and get that lifestyle conversation in there as well. So, it is about using, again MECC, using that opportunistic approach of I’ve got you here now for this health check, let’s not waste that opportunity to discuss well, you know, your blood pressure numbers are a little high today, is it OK if we discuss your lifestyle. Tell me a little bit about your lifestyle. Do you drink a lot of alcohol? Do you smoke? Are you physically active. And it gives the opportunity as well to signpost a lot as well, so can signpost onto a lot of our own services in terms of physical activity and we do some healthy weight programmes as well so we can signpost to a lot of stuff but as you probably know yourself, when you’re in these situations, when you speak to people in a bit more of a relaxed environment as opposed to a clinical environment, being out in a community somewhere in one of the venues that they attend themselves for their own leisure time, people tend to open up a little bit more.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: You tend to find out a little bit more and yeah, sometimes you do have to signpost to things that are a little bit out of my comfort zone, if you like, but through MECC and through the Gateway I know I’ve at least got that sort of comfort blanket if you like, to use that.

BN: Right.

AP1: At least give some sort of signposting.

BN: Yeah. Oh, that sounds great, yeah. So, obviously we’re going to be talking about the MECC Train the Trainer training, but had you received any other sort of MECC training apart from that?

AP1: Yes. So, I’ve done, I wouldn’t say lots and lots, but I’ve done MECC stuff before in the past through previous roles, because when I first sort of got into like the health check side of it, when I stepped away from offering in a fitness environment and then started offering in a more clinical environment, I started with the NHS so as an NHS health trainer, so I was given some MECC training there at that point and then I moved over to another local authority and they were still offering MECC training there as well, so it’s always been something that’s been quite prominent in the work that I’ve done.

BN: Right.

AP1: And then obviously when I started with (name of location), MECC was brought up again and for all I’ve done quite a few bits and pieces of MECC training, I was still eager to do it again because you get different approaches and different deliveries and so I’ve done quite a bit of it in the past, to be honest.

BN: Yeah. It sounds like it. So, have you only done one Train the Trainer before with all those other ones?

AP1: That’s the first time I’ve done, yeah.

BN: Right.

AP1: The first time I’ve done Train the Trainer. It’s always been like the core MECC training or the bite size stuff on the different aspects of your physical activity, your smoking, your alcohol and so on.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: But that’s the first Train the Trainer I’ve done.

BN: OK. It’s like you say, you’ve probably got a good idea of the different styles and approaches to delivering the training as well. So, if we could just sort of by trying to think back to before you did the Train the Trainer, so it doesn’t matter, you’ve probably received other MECC training, but before you did Train the Trainer, so times that you definitely were really familiar with MECC did you already feel quite confident in it before you went to Train the Trainer?

AP1: Yeah. Yeah, I felt quite confident before going into that training, yeah.

BN: And have you always felt the same about MECC, or was your feelings about MECC changed over time?

AP1: I would say it changed, because when I first started with the NHS, and I heard the term MECC and Making Every Contact Count I’d never heard of it before. I didn’t really have a clue what it was and it’s the first time I’d ever heard of it. After the first sort of the first piece of MECC training that I got, it works well actually. It worked as it should have because I walked away from it thinking all right, well for most of my working life the environment I’ve in I’ve been doing that. Just never recognised it as MECC. So, it changed in that sense of I didn’t know what it was, never heard of it, thought it was something completely new and then came away from it thinking yeah, I’ve been doing that for quite some time. But it actually, it shaped the way that I then engaged in those conversation because I think prior, we can all have the MECC conversations and you engage with people and you have those conversations and you might say well have you thought about using this service, or they might be good for you to try, or there’s a group here you could attend. But after the training I approached it differently as in it became a process that I tried to work through.

BN: OK. Yeah.

AP1: So, I tried to get through the ask, the act, the assist and tried to work through it like kind of systematically like that. As much as it’s meant to be a free-flowing natural conversation, it was just like a blueprint in my head about this is what the conversation needs to look like.

BN: Yeah, that makes sense. So more intentional after the training.

AP1: Yeah.

BN: Yeah. And can you remember what your motivation was like to deliver MECC training before you did the Train the Trainer?

AP1: I hadn’t really thought about it, to be honest. Firstly, I didn’t even know there was Train the Trainer options available. I’d never thought of it on that level, to be honest because it was just core training and all the rest of it and implementing it in the roles that we have. I didn’t know from our end, from our organisation that the plan was to roll it out and train other members of staff, so yeah, that didn’t really have any motivation in that sense, but then when we found out we were doing it, to be honest I felt more than comfortable doing it. I think because of being trying to implement MECC for such a large time during the work, working environment, it just felt like a natural sort of progression. I felt quite comfortable at the idea of having to then deliver the training.

BN: OK. That’s good. And are you sort of comfortable with delivering training? Have you ever done that before?

AP1: Comfortable with having to stand up in front of people and deliver a presentation, if you like, so because a lot of the stuff that I do as well, the main of my role, as I said, is the health checks but I also work on the Tier 2 weight management programme that we’ve got.

BN: Oh right.

AP1: So, every week that I’m standing up delivering health lifestyle sessions and stuff like that and using the PowerPoints and stuff, so in that sense absolutely fine, it’s not something that’s completely new. So, and a lot of the team are the same, to be honest. A lot of the team have to do very similar things with the programmes that they deliver on, so I think we’re all pretty confident about it and want to go ahead and do it.

BN: Confident. Yeah. Oh, that’s good. And so can you remember, now coming up to accessing the Train the Trainer, can you remember, were you invited by like (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator), or was it more your local authority encouraged you to attend the training. Can you remember how that the training came about?

AP1: Yeah, so it was basically our organisation had said we’re going to be putting this training on, who would like to go along to this training. I think with most things it is kind of like a it’s who would like to go along but ideally we’d like you all to do it.

BN: Right.

AP1: But I think the bulk of the team that I work on did the core training and then there was a select few of us who went on to do the Train the Trainer.

BN: Right.

AP1: But once, obviously, we’d put names forward and stuff it was (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) that sent out invites and stuff and obviously through that we got the pre and post evaluation surveys and things like that.

BN: Yeah. And can you sort of describe why you wanted to go to the training?

AP1: I just thought why not really. I’ve done so much of MECC in the past and I’d been trying to implement it into my working role for such a long time that, and a lot of the team that I’m working with haven’t had as much or if any experience with MECC, so I thought it was just only the right and natural and the fair thing to do for me to say I’ll do the Train the Trainer.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: And then try and support the rest of the team with that as well going forward.

BN: Right. Yeah, so it was sort of to help them as well.

AP1: As much as like me wanting to do it, yeah. I just thought if I’m on board with it then at least I can support them with delivery as well.

BN: Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense. And can you remember what support was like from your sort of management leadership about you attending that training?

AP1: Yeah, I think it was a pretty straightforward process, I think. It was good because a lot of the team leads and the management actually they got involved as well. They came along to the core training themselves.

BN: Right.

AP1: So, it was good in that sense it wasn’t just a case of you will all go and do this, it was more like let’s go and do it together, let’s all experience it together.

BN: Oh, that’s really good.

AP1: So, that was good in that sense.

BN: Yeah, that sounds like, yeah, and so the Train the Trainer, did you go in person or was it online?

AP1: In person.

BN: In person.

AP1: Yeah.

BN: And what did you think about that compared to I can imagine maybe you have done online MECC training before.

AP1: Yeah. I’ve done some online stuff. Yeah, I’ve done some online stuff and I’ve done a couple of face to face sessions as well, so I’m easy either way to be honest, but then everyone has their own learning style so people like to be in a room together and have it a little bit more interactive and I think sometimes you do lose that a little bit on Teams when it’s virtual. So, if I had to pick a preference it probably would be in person because I think it’s easier for people to switch off virtually over something like Teams when you’re doing a session, a big session, especially if there’s quite a few numbers of people there as well.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: And it’s harder to be interactive as well. Like it’s easier for people to sit back and hide. Maybe hide’s not the right way to describe it but sit back and not engage as much when it’s virtual.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So, I think face to face would probably be the best option.

BN: Yeah. And can you remember, was it OK actually accessing it, so like the venue, the time of day, getting time off work, all of that kind of stuff?

AP1: yeah, so everything was kind of set up to make it as easy as possible really, so the training was held at one of our local facilities so in terms of access it was fine because it was our building, everyone knew where it was. We weren’t expected to do it outside of works time, it was done during our working day so yeah, everything like that was fine.

BN: Yeah. That’s good. So, was everyone who went to that session, that Train the Trainer, your kind of colleagues?

AP1: Yeah.

BN: Were they all from (name of location)?

AP1: Yeah.

BN: Right. And do you think that sort of influenced things in any way?

AP1: Well, it made it an experience where obviously most people knew each other and were comfortable around each other, but I’ve done training in the past where there’s been people from multiple organisations come and done the training and to be honest, every time I’ve done that everyone’s just been quite open and engaging and nice to meet you, where are you from, what do you do for work, so.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: It works both ways, I think.

BN: Yeah. No, that makes sense. And so, now if we go to the actual training itself, the Train the Trainer training. So, can you describe a little bit about your experience with that training.

AP1: Yeah, so for me personally, because I’d done quite a bit of MECC before, it was fine. But I did pick up on this quite early in the training session and it was fed back from some of the other members of the team who’ve never had any experience with MECC before, the training really felt like it started, the core training, really felt like it started with the expectation that everybody in the room had a good level of understanding of what MECC was.

BN: Right. OK.

AP1: And there was points early on in the training where I could just tell by looking around at colleagues that they felt a bit lost.

BN: Really?

AP1: And I think that was a bit of the feedback afterwards. And I was able to pick it up straight away and sort of gauge what was being discussed and stuff, but for me there was a bit right at the very start of the training where there could have been a little bit more time spent on this is what MECC is, and this is what it’s not. And I think that bit didn’t come into the training till a bit later on.

BN: Right.

AP1: By which point I think there were a few people just a little bit confused.

BN: OK.

AP1: And that’s what was fed back to me afterwards, that maybe there was an expectation that everybody in the room was fully up to speed with what MECC was and I know it was the core training, which should ideally tell you what MECC is, but maybe it’s just me but I just think that when you start discussing what MECC is and what the training is that you’ve come to today, for me naturally very early in that it would be this is what MECC is, this is what it’s not, and this is what we’re not expecting you to do. We’re not expecting you to be experts in this that and the other and be counsellors and but that didn’t come till a little bit later in the training.

BN: Right. So, did they ever say kind of what they expected from you? Can you remember what the expectations were?

AP1: If I try and remember back, it was very much sort of these are the learning outcomes of today. These are the learning objectives, which were sound, they were spot on. And then if I remember it went very much into a lot of context and policy of where MECC had derived from and how it had been put in place and then eventually we got to this is the definition of MECC, this is what it is, and this is what it’s not. But again, I think because of all that contextual stuff and policy and stuff like that, it just bamboozled a few people, I think, and it lost a few people quite early on.

BN: Right. Yeah.

AP1: Whereas, if I think, if it had have been the other way around then people might have understood it a bit better.

BN: Yeah. So, when you’ve been to core MECC training and before, before that Train the Trainer, was it differently set out in any way, and do you think it was more effective in explaining MECC?

AP1: Yeah. So, if I remember correctly, previously training that I’ve done there wasn’t a great deal of emphasis on the context and the policies and all that stuff about where it’s sort of derived from and how it’s been set up and it very early just went in with this is what MECC is.

BN: Right.

AP1: This is what it is, this is what it’s not, this is how you implement it and the pyramid of interventions, if you like. So, yeah, I think I have done it before where it’s been delivered a little bit differently so yeah, I think that’s probably the only thing that I would comment on in terms of changes going forward in terms of the way it was delivered.

BN: Right. Yeah, that’s interesting. And it does make sense, definitely. And so, can you remember what you expected from the Train the Trainer?

AP1: I was a little bit unsure what to expect when I went in to be honest. In terms of Train the Trainer, I thought it was going to be just a case of this is the way that you deliver the session.

BN: Right.

AP1: I was kind of expecting a little bit of you need to be able to go away from today feeling comfortable training other people in MECC, so let’s practice delivering the training of MECC. But it wasn’t. I mean, there was some good work around some good support and like sort of advice around how to be an effective trainer, how to deliver in an effective way. And things you could utilise in terms of resources and things like that. But I don’t know, I guess I just thought I’m being trained to do something so will I get the opportunity to practice doing what I’m being trained to do. So yeah, I think just for me, I just thought there might have been an element of let’s practice some delivery. Yeah, and that would be practicing training delivery.

BN: Yeah, so that would have been something you would want to see.

AP1: Yeah, I mean don’t get us wrong, I went away from it still feeling comfortable enough to deliver the training, I just thought if you’re being trained to do something you need to practice doing it, so I thought that might have been involved in the session.

BN: Yeah. Definitely. And so do you think the training met your expectations, or was that, I suppose that didn’t, that aspect about the being able to practice.

AP1: So, that aspect, yeah, that aspect not necessarily. I think it’s a difficult one isn’t it, because not everybody would maybe enjoy having that as part of the training, especially if they’re quite new to delivering and they haven’t had a lot of experience of delivering in front of people before, that probably would have probably been a very daunting experience for them. If they had have said OK so you’re going to get up and pair us in a second and you’re going to run through four or five slides each and try and deliver, I guess that will be really, really daunting for a lot of people if they’ve never experienced MECC before or any kind of training delivery before. Maybe that’s just a personal point of view of I would have been quite happy to practice it in the session.

BN: Yeah. But I suppose if they felt nervous to even practice, what are they going to feel like then delivering it on their own. So yeah. Makes sense that it would be good to have some time to practice. So, was there anything you more found particularly useful in the Train the Trainer?

AP1: I think just getting, for me, getting sight of some of the resources that we can use and some of the things that we can use in the session to make it more interactive and engaging. I think it’s really good that pretty much everything’s been done for you, so the slides are there, the PowerPoint slides are there. The resources are there, the handouts are there, everything’s there for you. And we got sight of a few of those things in the training, so it was good to have that, and as I say, just some good advice on how to improve your delivery style if you like. And some good tips on what to do and maybe what not to do.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: But yeah, I think that worked quite well.

BN: Yeah. And what do you think in terms of how suitable the Train the Trainer was for local authority and specifically like what your role is, and the kind of the other audience members that were there?

AP1: I think for us it’s really, really suitable. I think because of the lot of or most of what we do is customer facing, and engaging with people within the community, and it’s ideal scenarios where you’re potentially going to have a MECC conversation or whether that’s a receptionist in one of the leisure centres or probably more likely the gym instructors across the centres. And especially in those sport centres where they’ll have regular customers and they’ve probably built up a little bit of rapport with them and probably got some good relationships with them, so it gives them an even better chance to have a meaningful MECC conversation because a lot of that foundation has already been built. So, I think for us it’s massively appropriate and important, and especially with the wider team who might not be as much as customer facing. One of the things that…because we’ll probably come on to this a little bit later, but one of the things that we’ve been doing in terms of getting ready for delivery is having a lot of team meetings about how we’re going to implement it and stuff like that, and trying to combat any resistance that we might have from staff within the centres as in do I really have to do this.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: Why do I have to do this, so that we have been trying to sell it as well as it’s one thing thinking about your customers and the members of the public you come into contact with, but also remember it’s you could have a MECC conversation with your colleague. You could have a MECC conversation with a friend or a family member, and if you’re upskilled in doing that, then it’s a benefit all round. It’s not just about the working environment as well, so I think it’s massively important for all of us, to be honest.

BN: Yeah. And it’s just communicating that relevance, isn’t it?

AP1: Yeah.

BN: Yeah. And so, can you remember then how motivated you felt after that Train the Trainer session to go on and deliver MECC training?

AP1: Yeah, quite motivated to be honest. I think it was quite, for me, it was quite exciting instead of sitting doing yet another MECC training session, the prospect of actually OK well now I’m on the other side of it, now I get the chance to go and actually deliver it. So yeah, I think I was quite motivated to go ahead and do it.

BN: Oh, that’s good. And was there any sort of particular aspect of that training that made you feel more motivated?

AP1: Well, I won’t lie to you, but I think one of the key motivators to actually go out and do it is much like what we’ve talked about as in what MECC isn’t. It’s not about giving you extra work to do and giving you more things to do in your daily routine. I think it’s more motivating for people when they know that actually the work’s been done. We’ve provided everything for you, all we’re asking you to do is go out and deliver it. So, you don’t have to do any of the PowerPoints, you don’t have to source any of the resources, you don’t have to think of your own scenarios for your role plays because everything’s there. So, that really helps, and I think that will motivate a lot of people knowing that actually you’ve done a bulk of this for us.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: We’ve just got to go out and deliver it.

BN: Yeah, you haven’t got to do a load of work to be able to go and deliver it. Yeah, and so I can imagine your sort of understanding of MECC was already quite high, was there anything new you learnt in that Train the Trainer, both about MECC but also in how to deliver the training?

AP1: I wouldn’t say there was anything new that I learnt with regards to MECC. I mean rightly so, it shouldn’t really deviate greatly from session to session probably other than trainer styles and delivery styles, but the core content was the same as what I’d seen previously, just maybe arranged in a slightly different way and so on. So, yeah, I don’t particularly think I took anything extra away from it.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: That’s not to say others wouldn’t of and especially those who haven’t, when you get to the Train the Trainer section, if people haven’t had as much experience of delivering training, they probably took a lot more from it than what I did.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: But I wouldn’t say I took anything new away from it.

BN: Yeah. And I suppose similarly was there any aspects that affected your capability to go and deliver MECC training or again was it already quite high?

AP1: I’d say it was a decent level. It was already probably high enough to go away and start and deliver, yeah I don’t think there’s any real change there.

BN: Yeah. You’re already pretty confidence with it. So, I suppose do you feel like you could have gone and done, delivered training, without having have gone to that Train the Trainer session then?

AP1: I think if it was the scenario of somebody had said here’s the slides, here’s the PowerPoint, can you go next week and deliver this MECC training session I think I would have still felt quite comfortable and confident about doing that.

BN: Yes. Yeah.

AP1: I think that’s largely down to the experiences I’ve had in the past. That’s not to knock the training and say that it wasn’t worthwhile, I just think I would have been in a position to go ahead and do that.

BN: Yeah. I’m just trying to think, like if you were to sort of rewind would you attend that session again or do you think you’d rather just have all the resources and things given to you and just set off away yourself?

AP1: I mean, obviously it was a necessity in terms of being able to then go out and deliver, but if you didn’t need to attend that Train the Trainer to go and deliver, having attended it, I probably wouldn’t attend it again, no.

BN: Yeah. I’m thinking it just seems like you didn’t really need that session to go and do it yourself.

AP1: Yeah. No, I probably didn’t, to be honest, but then I suppose on the flipside going forward if you don’t offer that session, you could potentially be letting people loose who think they’re capable of going and delivering it then they’re not actually delivering to a good enough standard.

BN: You don’t know. Yeah. Fair enough. And obviously you mentioned your learning style before. What did you kind of think about the approach of the Train the Trainer in terms of how well it fit with your learning style?

AP1: No, I think it was quite good. They tried to use as many different approaches as possible as in it wasn’t all just somebody stood at the front talking to the group. You know, there was some things in there, group activities, resources put out on the table for smaller groups to work in. Larger group flip chart brainstorming sessions, if you like, so there was a good variety in the thing that they used in the training and the styles that they used, so I think that worked quite well. And obviously face to face delivery, got to try and utilise as many of those as possible just to keep the group engaged and yeah, just keep it going really.

BN: Yeah. But obviously then additionally it would be helpful to have that kind of role play element of delivering the training as well.

AP1: Yeah. I guess, like I say, it’s a difficult one. It’s one that some people are really open to and feel comfortable with, and others don’t. I know there would have been people in that room when we did the training that would have cringed at the thought of having to do any kind of role play, and then others that would have maybe thrived on it. So, it’s finding the right balance, isn’t it?

BN: Yeah.

AP1: Which is what we’ve discussed a lot with our training going forward is how we’re going to have to find that balance and figure out who’s comfortable with those scenarios and who’s not. So, it’s tough to do.

BN: Yeah. I know what you mean. Everyone’s different. Everyone has different learning styles, don’t they? Yeah. And so now if we kind of move on to the you now cascading the training, delivering the training, how has that been for you? Like have you delivered many MECC training sessions?

AP1: We haven’t. The problem we’ve got is we’ve got such a wide net to cast over our sites and also, it’s getting the people at the same time.

BN: Right.

AP1: Because a lot of the staff that we’ll be cascading this out to work shifts, a lot of them are part time or casual staff, and that they’re based across like five different centres. So, it’s logistically it’s been a bit of a challenge to get it all together so we’ve done it, we’ve asked all of the team leads in all the centres to give us the best times and we actually have, across the centres, we actually have some site closures in December, so we’re putting on sessions at every centre during those closures where the staff are free, all of the staff are free to come along to the session. So, we’re going to be doing it in December, so in December we’re running five sessions. So, we’ll have two people delivering each session. We’ve tried to spread them out amongst the team, so we’ll get a few sessions logged and in the bank, if you like, come the end of December.

BN: Right.

AP1: And then we’ve scheduled in for early next year some more sessions for anybody that for whatever reason couldn’t attend. And then we’re looking further ahead to do refresher, annual refresher training.

BN: OK.

AP1: So, it’s been a bit of a challenge logistically to try and find the space and the time to get everybody together. So, that’s probably been the biggest challenge but it’s then the smaller things as well after that as in the time being put in behind the scenes for us, our team, who did the Train the Trainer. We probably are at different stages and different levels in terms of understanding of MECC, experience of MECC and experience of delivery.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So, we’ve had quite a few sessions together already to go through the presentations, the core training and we’ve got time booked in to practice the delivery.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: Just amongst ourselves, and then we’ve got more dates booked in before December where we’ve invited members of the wider team to come along and be our guinea pigs while we deliver to them before we actually get to the actual delivery.

BN: Yeah, that’s well trained. That’s very organised. So, is that kind of everyone spreading the load, like you say some people are more knowledgeable about delivering the training but is everybody going to be delivering it?

AP1: So, all of us who attended the Train the Trainer will be.

BN: Right.

AP1: As I say, I’ve kind of found myself taking a bit more of a lead role on it because I probably do have the most experience with it. And it’s just making sure that everybody’s on the same page and up to the same sort of standard or good enough standard to be able to go out in December and deliver it. Because it’s one thing learning a presentation and remembering the slides and all the rest of it, but as somebody throws you a curve ball question that you should really know about, but you haven’t got an answer you’re going to end up looking really silly so it’s just about fine tuning everything.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: Fine tuning it before December when we actually start the first delivery.

BN: Yeah. And so, was it ever sort of considered that say for example you and the more experienced, confident people would just do the training or has it always been that you would all deliver it?

AP1: It’s always been that everyone who did the Train the Trainer was always going to have an involvement in the delivery. And I guess there’s a need to be as well because you’ve got to do so many sessions, as you know, to fit that in within a 12-month period, I think that is. You’ve got to do so many sessions, so I think from an organisational point of view there would be no value in just letting people sit back and not deliver.

BN: Right. Yeah.

AP1: If the fact that they’ve been put on the training. So, I think if somebody had stepped up and said I don’t feel comfortable doing this and I don’t want to do this, I think that would be fine. I don’t think anybody would be scolded for saying that, so but everybody’s stayed on board so.

BN: Everyone’s been happy with doing it.

AP1: Everyone’s…yeah.

BN: Yeah. That’s good. Yeah. So, sorry I’ve just lost my trail of thought. I suppose you might not know this, if you haven’t actually delivered it, but you might have already done the prep, is there anything you’ve sort of changed to the slides or the approach that was different to the way you’ve received it?

AP1: There is, yeah.

BN: Yeah. Do you want to describe how and what, like what those are and why you changed, made those changes?

AP1: Yeah. Well, I kind of I did run it past (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) first to say look, is it going to be OK if I tweak this and tweak that and do this and but the core training is still going to be there. So, what we’ve had to do is I wanted to make sure that it was going to be appropriate for the participants who are going to be attending, and I’d said to (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) by keeping some of those slides in there that talked about policies and context, and I think we’ll just lose them. We’ll lose their engagement because they’ll not one little bit be interested in any of that or possibly understand what it is. So, we removed a few of those slides and I was quite keen very early on, like after the introduction and the housekeeping and the learning outcomes, to get those slides that I spoke about earlier moved from slide 17 and 18 or whatever it was, up to slide 4 and 5, this is what MECC is, and this is what it’s not about.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So, we’ve kind of reshuffled some of the slides, if you like, and moved some things further up the presentation and moved some things further down and took a couple of the legal bits, if you like, out of it in terms of policy and so on.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So, we have rejigged it a little bit just to make it a little bit more appropriate for the participants and do it in a format that we felt more comfortable delivering it in, in terms of the order of the slides, if you like.

BN: Yeah. Right. So, and you have deleted some of the more policy kind of stuff as well.

AP1: Yeah. Just took some of that stuff out about policies and that kind of thing because I just think we would lose people, that the people that we’ll be delivering to I already know they’ll be thinking well why, what is this, why do I need to know this, whereas if we just keep it as core MECC as possible, then all those things we said earlier, this is what it is, this is what it’s not and you don’t have to do this, that and the other. I think that’s quite reassuring at the start as well because there will be people that are probably sitting there thinking what has this got to do with my job role, why do I have to do this. I think just getting that in early saying we’re not expecting you to do this, we’re not expecting you to add this to your job. I think that might just be a bit more reassuring from the start.

BN: Yeah. And get the engagement from the start. Yeah.

AP1: Yeah.

BN: And so, are there any sort of recommendations that you’d make to people like you in how they can cascade the training down?

AP1: It’s quite tough really because if you’re doing it to a small number of people then it’s probably relatively easy to organise and facilitate, but when you’re doing it to potentially a large number of people, I mean initially there was discussions about sort of up to 50 people coming to one of our sessions which—

BN: Oh wow.

AP1: I kind of had to put a dampener on a little bit because it’s too many. It’s too big a group and you’d lose a lot of the engagement in a group like that, and you’d lose a lot of the cohesion so it’s challenging trying to do it to a lot of people, I think. Yeah, it’s tough trying to cascade it out, just trying to organise it.

BN: Yeah. That’s what it sounds like. It sounds like you’ve got the skills, you’ve got the motivation, the confidence, but it’s more the sort of organisational factors and time and things like that.

AP1: Yeah. It’s pulling it together and I mean this was obviously not something that I foreseeing being part of my job role and I’m quite happy and motivated to do it but obviously it does add, when you say what is MECC, no, it’s not adding things to the rest of your workload, but in this sense it has added a massive amount to workload.

BN: Right.

AP1: In terms of sitting down with team leads and trying to sell it to them and sitting down with managers and trying to organise which staff are doing what, than sitting down with the team that’s delivering and getting them confident and comfortable to be able to deliver. So, it’s been massively time consuming.

BN: Right. Yeah.

AP1: And added quite a chunk in terms of workload. But yeah, I think it’s all trial and error because it’s the first time we’ll be delivering this and cascading it out. So, once we hopefully get it going, and things are in place, then the workload’s been done, and it should be hopefully quite an easy thing to carry forward.

BN: Right. Yeah. And it does sound like a lot of the workload is your sort of lead role in coordinating all of the cascade as well.

AP1: Yeah.

BN: So, would you say there’s been any particular resources that have been helpful for you to sort of arrange and I know you haven’t yet delivered, like cascaded the training, but I know like you mentioned the MECC Gateway before, things like that.

AP1: Yeah. Definitely the pre-populated PowerPoints. As much as we might have tweaked them a little bit it’s just it was a massive relief to then come away knowing that actually I don’t have to go away and do all of this myself.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: It’s already there. There are some good resources on there as well which we will use, like the scenarios for role plays and stuff. Some of the promotional stuff or marketing stuff, I should say, like the concertina cards, the little prompt cards we’re going to get printed out to give to everybody on the training and stuff like that. So, all of that stuff’s really, really useful. But MECC Gateway is, and we’ve had a few conversations with (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) and other people about the MECC Gateway, MECC Gateway is brilliant in some respects but needs a bit of work in others. So, one of the first things that I picked up when I came to this authority was I went onto the MECC Gateway and I typed in our local postcode for where we’re based, and I typed in, I was in the physical activity section, and I think I put a 20 mile radius on which was more than enough and Active (name of location)f was not one of the first things that even popped up.

BN: Right.

AP1: Yeah. We were very low down, down the pecking order in terms of the list and for me it should have been one of the first things, if not the first because I’m putting in our postcode. So, we’ve had some discussions about that but who manages that, who updates that and how do I know, because that then made me think if I’m giving somebody signposting information on something that’s a little bit out of my comfort zone, such as domestic violence or whatever it may be, substance abuse, how do I know or how confident am I that the signpost information I’m giving them is up to date. So, there’s been some conversations about who is responsible for that and how we can manage that going forward, and there has been some changes, we are now on there when you go on to physical activity and healthy weight and diet and stuff like that.

BN: Right.

AP1: But yeah, there’s some stuff on there which I think is outdated as well. I said to (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) there’s some stuff on there which I know personally is not operating any more.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So yeah, I think there’s still some conversations to be had about how that’s going to be managed going forward, because the Gateway is an absolutely brilliant tool to have, but only if it’s up to date and being managed and controlled, if you like.

BN: Yeah. Absolutely. You don’t want to be giving anyone like the wrong out of date information. Yeah.

AP1: Yeah.

BN: No, that makes sense. And obviously, so you’ve sort of modified the slides, have you made any modifications to the resources?

AP1: No. No.

BN: To suit sort of your target audience?

AP1: Nothing to the resources.

BN: Right.

AP1: Nothing to the resources. There’s some that we probably won’t use.

BN: Right.

AP1: But there’s definitely things that we will use. But we’ve not modified anything in terms of resources.

BN: Yeah. That’s all good. Apart from the needing to update it. Yeah. And so, what about the more sort of support side, so how have you found the support to have been around you being able to go and deliver the MECC training?

AP1: Do you mean from an organisational point of view or from a MECC point of view, [46.58 unclear] (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) as well?

BN: Both, but you can kind of split it up, I suppose. Yeah, if you want to sort of answer organisational and then (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator), MECC side.

AP1: Yeah. On an organisational point of view, it’s been pretty good I would say. We have had regular meetings about progress and updates and there’s things I’ve gone back to management with and said that we’re not really comfortable with this and we’d like to think of a different approach to do with this, and they’ve kind of just said OK whatever works for you. So, we’ve had a good level of support in that sense. MECC side of things, (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator)’s been brilliant to be honest. He’s always been on hand quite quickly if there’s been any questions that I’ve had or any concerns. I went to him recently about a concern over how we’re going to populate the pre and post evaluation surveys because a lot of the people we’re going to be delivering to don’t have work emails.

BN: Right.

AP1: And we don’t really feel it that appropriate to be asking people to provide their personal email. So, it was then how do we get that information to manage and record impact of the training if we can’t get the surveys to them through a work email. So, we’ve had a lot of discussions about the use of paper copies and how we would manage that and so there’s been a bit more of a workload involved in that because we’re going to have to manage potentially 200 paper copies on the first day of training.

BN: Oh God.

AP1: So yeah, that’s probably been a difficult thing as well just not having the email addresses for people. But as I say, (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator)’s been great in terms of support. He’s helped as much as he can where he can and tried to be on hand all the time, so that’s good.

BN: That’s good. And what about sort of the networks, the forum on NHS futures, the strategy group, is there sort of any support you’ve had from peers, I suppose?

AP1: Not massively.

BN: Right.

AP1: I did go along to the most recent regional forum. It wasn’t what I was expecting, to be honest.

BN: Right.

AP1: I think there was only four or five of us on that call. I was expecting something a little bit bigger. I know it’s hard to get everyone together at any one time, but I just thought it would be on a bit of a larger scale.

BN: Right.

AP1: Than what it was. And there were a few updates that (name of regional MECC at scale coordinator) ran through, which were great but yeah, it just wasn’t quite what I was expecting, and we do get the updates via email on a regular basis, but I’ll be quite honest with you, a lot of the time I don’t have a great deal of time to go through them in any great detail.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: In one sense I’ll scroll through and if I see anything that looks massively relevant to what I’m doing then I’ll take a look at it, but in all honesty other than that I’ve got a MECC folder in the inbox and it gets popped in there to go back to when I get the chance.

BN: Yeah. No, that makes sense. Just to quickly check, because it’s kind of coming up to two, do you need to be away at two on the dot? I’ve only got a couple of questions left.

AP1: Ideally. Yeah, ideally. I’ve got another meeting at two so.

BN: No worries. I thought I’d just ask you so I can just prioritise questions. So, what do you think about that Train the Trainer model and how do you think it fits with MECC?

AP1: I think personally it would be good. I think what didn’t work on that day for some of the team was the Train the Trainer directly following, like immediately following the core training. I don’t think that really worked because as I say there were a number of people in that core MECC training who had no experience with MECC, never heard of MECC, didn’t know what it was, who went through the core training and came out the other side a little bit sort of confused and bamboozled and then within 30 minutes later they’re then going into Train the Trainer.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: And I just think that was too much for them on that day. I think they probably could have done with a little bit of time to reflect and digest and come away from the core MECC, have some conversations with other members of staff who’ve done it before, get a little bit more of a better understanding of MECC before going back to do the Train the Trainer.

BN: Yeah. Definitely. And do you think it is a good model to have for the delivery of MECC training and ultimately MECC conversations?

AP1: Yeah. I do. I think it’s definitely a good thing to do because the more you can cascade this out to as many people as possible then hopefully the bigger the impact it’s going to make. It’s one thing putting it all on the guys who do the delivery as it stands now. But they’ll only reach so many people in a certain period of time whereas if they can get it out to other people and have more…the more trainers the more delivery, basically, isn’t it?

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So, yeah, it’s definitely a model worth keeping, I think, the Train the Trainer.

BN: OK. That’s good. That’s positive. And so, I sent you, did you get the appease criteria that I sent you earlier, sorry it was a bit last minute.

AP1: It’s all right. I did.

BN: So just for this last bit I should only be like three, four minutes longer.

AP1: It’s all right.

BN: So, if you could download that so you can sort of modify it, and I thought we could kind of, so we’re kind of using like a think aloud sort of exercise where if you don’t mind you sort of look through that document. I’ve only got two strategies that these come from, the literature, the existing literature on MECC and Train the Trainer more broadly, about what might help with cascading training, and then these criteria are just sort of like I think you’ve rated out of five, I think is it, in terms of affordability, practicality, things like that. And I thought while you do it, just to kind of think aloud and tell me what you think as you’re rating each one. So, the first one is to provide refresher training, so that’s for trainers rather than the people you’re delivering it to.

AP1: Right. OK.

BN: So, yeah if you just want to go through the each criteria and what you kind of think for that one.

AP1: Right, so I’ve got here it just says recommend below yes, no, unsure.

BN: So, in terms of affordability, do you think that’s feasible to have refresher training?

AP1: Unsure. Unsure. I think I don’t know if refresher Train the Trainer would really work because I just feel like you’d be going over the same stuff over and over again. I think it’s good that you’ll get updates or anything that changes within MECC, or anything new or I think that’s really good, but I personally wouldn’t like to go back to a refresher for Train the Trainer. And I don’t think there would be many people that would.

BN: Right.

AP1: Because you’d like to think that let’s just say you did that annually, you’d like to think that after delivering for a year that you wouldn’t really need a refresher.

BN: Right. Yeah, I know what you mean. That’s interesting, yeah. And even if you’ve got time sort of later on today to actually rate those that will be great. Because I know we’re running out of time. But if we just go onto the next one, so the provision of peer support networks like the forum and the strategy group where you kind of share resources, experiences, knowledge, what about that as a sort of strategy?

AP1: Sorry, I’m just trying to look at it now.

BN: Sorry, I’ve given you so much information. Audio and the document.

AP1: It’s all right. It’s fine. [55.30 unclear] recommendation [55.31 unclear] peer support groups.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: I think they’ve got more of a place and a role than the refresher Train the Trainer training.

BN: Right.

AP1: I think networking is quite important because if I know what benefit you’re going to get from it you might go to a regional update meeting at some point and you might come away having gained nothing from it but at the same time you could potentially come away from gaining quite a lot. I’m never one to turn down a bit of networking because you never know what benefits you’re going to get from it and how it’s going to potentially improve and benefit your own role.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: So yeah, I would say yes, that is definitely something worth doing.

BN: Oh excellent. Do you think it’s sort of a feasible thing to do in those kind of criteria?

AP1: Sorry, something else has popped up on my screen.

BN: That’s all right.

AP1: I’m not really sure to be honest (interviewer). I kind of look at it from a personal point of view whether it’s something for example that’s acceptable to stakeholders and practical to implement I’m not really sure. Cost effective? It doesn’t really cost much other than your time, does it?

BN: Yeah.

AP1: It’s jump on a Teams meeting. Yeah, I’m a little but unsure on that one or how to really answer that to be honest.

BN: Yeah.

AP1: Or like I say, what I know from a personal point of view is I think it would be worthwhile and it would be something that I would engage in. But yeah, unsure.

BN: Right. Yeah. No worries, that’s fine. Well thank you so much for doing this, I really appreciate it.

AP1: It’s not a problem.

BN: And if you do have time to complete those appease that would be amazing but yeah, no pressure.

AP1: Will do.

BN: And I’ll try and get the voucher to you as soon as possible but it’s a bit of an admin nightmare so just bear with us.

AP1: No problem. I can imagine. Don’t worry about it.

BN: Thank you so much (AP1), I really appreciate it.

AP1: Not a problem at all (interviewer).

BN: And lovely to meet you.

AP1: Yes, you too.

BN: Thank you very much.

AP1: Thanks now.

BN: Bye.

AP1: Bye-bye.

[End of recording]