

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Janette Williamson
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Public Health
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Fiona Johnstone, Strategic Commissioner – Health and Wellbeing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to her portfolio.

1. WIRRAL RESIDENTS LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES PLEDGE

Helping people to stop smoking

I attended the launch event for the new provider of Stop Smoking Services in Wirral ' - ABL Wirral' – on the 5th October 2016. Between April and June this year, ABL Wirral has supported 440 smokers to set a quit date, 224 of whom were still not smoking 4 weeks later. We will know the activity data for quarter 2 in January 2017.

ABL also works with pregnant women to help them stop smoking. Between April and June this year, 42 pregnant women set a quit date with the service, 30% of whom reported quitting successfully.

Action to tackle drug and alcohol misuse

With regard to the concerns raised about the number of deaths of clients in contact with drug and alcohol services, a report was presented to the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 28th November detailing the findings of the review we undertook with Wirral Ways Recovery to understand the trends being reported and outlining our proposed next steps to ensure we support people with drug and alcohol addiction to maintain their general health and wellbeing.

It is evident from both national and local data, that there is an increase in deaths of people in contact with drug and alcohol services. The report comments that the number of deaths seen locally has been predominantly due to causes of death which are typically associated with an ageing client group.

From the evidence reviewed we do not believe that Wirral Ways to Recovery are operating an unsafe service. However nationally and locally there is a growing recognition of the need for a greater focus on the general health and wellbeing of service users, so we will therefore take action to:

- ensure that the complex needs of people who use drugs and alcohol are met through a co-ordinated, whole-system approach that address health inequalities and provides better access to physical healthcare and psychiatric care, along with other support which could include housing and employment
- ensure a balanced approach in the treatment service to ensure those that need treatment receive it and those who wish to embrace the recovery model get the help and support they need.

Blood Pressure

Members will recall that 5 local GP practices were selected to take part in the 'Beacon Practice for Blood Pressure' scheme. Each practice has enrolled in this scheme for a period of 18 months, during which time they will test out a variety of approaches to identifying and treating high blood pressure. The scheme was also featured in the Liverpool Echo on October 5th (<http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/in-your-area/wirral-gps-launch-blood-pressure-11983101>). Each practice has now submitted an initial action plan and proposals within them have included vouchers for newly-diagnosed patients to purchase home blood pressure monitoring machines at slightly reduced rates, staff 'crib sheets' for blood pressure coding and dedicated social media activity to promote blood pressure messages to practice patients.

NHS Health Checks

I would also advise that two sessions of update training for practice nurses (who carry out the majority of NHS Health Checks) took place during November (4th and 9th). The sessions were led by the Public Health Practice Nurses and around 30 practices were represented. Another session aimed primarily at Practice Managers is planned for December.

Antimicrobial Resistance

As we all know antibiotics are essential medicines used to treat infections by killing bacteria. The effectiveness of antibiotics is however being threatened as bacteria is becoming increasingly resistant due, in part, to excessive and inappropriate use and the limited production of new antibiotics. This poses a serious threat to health now and in the future. Public Health consultants have been working with Wirral CCG to develop a plan for Wirral to tackle antibiotic resistance including working with prescribers and the public; raising awareness and encouraging behaviour change.

Each year, European Antibiotic Awareness Day is held on November 18th with the aim of encouraging the responsible use of antibiotics. Work is also ongoing with health and social care colleagues to convey the message to professionals and the public. Support is also being provided with regard to the development and production of an updated antibiotic guideline booklet and poster for GPs and these will be have been distributed to practices to coincide with Antibiotic Awareness Day. This will be followed up in the New Year by a pilot TV advertising campaign in the Granada region, led by Public Health England and supported locally, to alert the public to the issue of antibiotic resistance and will be targeted at women aged 20-45 who have the responsibility of family health, and those aged over 50.

Seasonal Flu

Since the spring, Public Health consultants have been working with partners across Wirral to prepare for the impending flu season. Flu vaccination is one of the most effective and simple ways to protect people and alleviate pressure at a time when health and social care services are experiencing additional demand. Efforts will be focused on increasing the uptake of the vaccine. To achieve this we have developed a localised campaign to promote uptake of the flu vaccination targeting key groups most vulnerable to the impact of flu, including people aged over 65, pregnant women, people with a pre-existing condition and young children, following a successful bid for additional funding from NHS England. This campaign is focused in areas, and amongst groups, with lowest uptake of the vaccine.

Supporting Care Homes

I would also like to bring members' attention to the fact that care home residents can be particularly vulnerable to infectious disease due to older age, communal living and or the presence of health conditions which increase susceptibility to infections. Our commissioned Community Infection Prevention and Control Service provided by Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust, works with care homes, both nursing and residential, to ensure infection prevention and control practices are promoted and adhered to. Since April we have worked with the Service to develop an innovative and bespoke approach to support individual homes, targeting a selected number of care homes. Early feedback suggests that the duration of diarrhoea and vomiting outbreaks in those in care homes has reduced and we are continuing to monitor the impact of this approach which contributes to protecting the health of residents and reducing the associated pressure on health and social care services.

High Streets in Our Communities

A workshop with ward members from each of the first four High Streets in Our Communities areas (Laird Street, Liscard, Upton and New Ferry) was recently held with the purpose being to develop a picture of the assets, opportunities and challenges for each area. Following this, a series of interviews and workshops will be conducted with local residents, businesses and stakeholders through December to inform our work with partners to reinvent the high street as part of the Healthier Lives Strategy. To support this work we are currently recruiting and training 15 – 20 community researchers from across the first four areas to develop the insight from a resident perspective; to provide opportunities for local people to develop new skills and to expand the insight skill base within our local communities.

Promoting Healthy Eating

Can members also note that a partnership has been set up with six local community organisations who will be delivering initiatives to support our ambition to create a better food culture in Wirral. Examples of the initiatives include the provision of healthy food for young people during school holidays, 'recycling' fresh (including fruit and vegetables) and chilled food for consumption and a locally developed multi-generational recipe book. This builds on the work we have been doing with other local community organisations as part of our work to tackle obesity and food related illness.