



WIRRAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

28th July 2022

REPORT TITLE:	THE ROLE OF HEALTH AND CARE PARTNERS IN REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES
REPORT OF:	PLACE DIRECTOR WIRRAL DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

REPORT SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a stark light on inequalities in health in Wirral. The current national and local context and focus within the NHS on reducing health inequalities provides a strong platform for meaningful local action.

As part of the developing Integrated Care System arrangements, we have an opportunity to ensure Wirral's Place Based Partnership has a clear focus on reducing health inequalities in Wirral. This report updates the Health and Wellbeing Board on progress towards this aim and defines how the Wirral Place Based Partnership will dovetail with and support the work undertaken by the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board. This approach supports delivery of the Wirral Plan and its focus on reducing inequalities across Wirral.

This matter affects all wards within the borough; it is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- (1) Note the strong focus on reducing health inequalities within the NHS both nationally and locally
- (2) Support the proposed approaches to reduce health inequalities being adopted by the Wirral Place Based Partnership

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 As part of the developing Integrated Care System arrangements, we have an opportunity to ensure Wirral's Place Based Partnership has a clear focus on reducing health inequalities in Wirral. This report updates the Health and Wellbeing Board on progress towards this aim and defines how the Wirral Place Based Partnership will dovetail with and support the work undertaken by the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board.

1.2 This approach also supports delivery of the Wirral Plan. The Wirral Plan focuses on reducing inequalities across Wirral as we all work to recover from the pandemic, physically, emotionally, financially.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Other options considered not having a clear framework or agreed approach. However, it is recognised that without co-ordinated efforts we will not be able to reduce avoidable and unfair inequalities in health and care outcomes within the borough.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 While inequalities in health have always been a problem in Wirral, the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on and exacerbated inequalities in healthcare access and health outcomes in Wirral. The local response to the COVID-19 pandemic along with the development of Integrated Care Systems (ICS's) and the Wirral Place Base Partnership has created an opportunity for change. This report sets out how this opportunity can be realised and matched by action. It clarifies the contribution of the Wirral Place Based Partnership to support the delivery of the Wirral Health and Wellbeing priorities and strategy once finalised.

3.2 Reducing Health inequalities is a key national and local priority

Tackling health inequalities is high on the national agenda. The Government has recently published a set of mutually reinforcing reforms:

- the Health and Care Bill and reforms to the health and care system
- Health and social care integration: joining up care for people, places and populations
- the adult social care reform white paper
- reforms to the public health system

The overall aim of these reforms being to make integrated health and social care a reality for everyone and to reduce disparities in access, experience, and outcomes across the country. These reforms place levelling up and reducing health inequalities at their centre and are explicit that accompanying oversight arrangements and regulatory structures must have a clear focus on the delivery of this outcome. The Government is also clear that while strategic, at-scale planning is carried out at the

Integrated Care System (ICS) level places will be the engine for delivery and reform. A white paper on health disparities will be published later this summer, setting out actions to achieve the ambition of reducing the gap in health outcomes.

- 3.3 This national focus is replicated at a local level, with a strong commitment and desire among local leaders to reduce avoidable health inequalities. The Wirral Place based partnership is committed to ensuring reducing health inequalities becomes a golden thread embedded within all actions. This work is already underway with the agreed 2022/23 operational plan outlining how reducing inequalities will be embedded across all priorities. A strategic commitment to tackling health inequalities is also at the heart of the Wirral Plan, with the goal to improve healthy life expectancy and reducing the demand on health and care services.

3.4 **A local framework for action to reduce Health Inequalities**

Local discussions to develop the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy have led to the emergence of a proposed approach for the Wirral Place Base Partnership to take action to reduce health inequalities. This sets out 3 ways healthcare can help tackle inequalities; this includes:

- 1) Tackling inequalities in health and care service access, experience, and outcomes
- 2) Upscaling and accelerating prevention programmes
- 3) Partnership action to address the social determinants of health e.g., through role as local anchor institutions

This framework is summarised in Appendix 1.

- 3.5 The Wirral Place Based Partnership will dovetail with and support the work undertaken by the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board and support the delivery of the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy once finalised. This means:
- Tackling inequalities in health and care service access, experience, and outcomes, delivery of the Core20plus 5 programme and upscaling and accelerating preventative programmes will be healthcare led activities that are embedded as business-as-usual approach for the Wirral Place Based Partnership.
 - Tackling inequalities through partnership action to address the social determinants of health will be the focus of activity co-ordinated via the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Board.

It is recognised that this upstream focus on the causes of the causes will have the greatest impact on reducing Health Inequalities. An example of this activity includes action towards being an Anchor Institution – through employment, commissioning and procurement for social value, use of capital and estates and environmental sustainability. Across each dimension of anchor activity, the NHS can accelerate progress by working with others across Wirral – both within the NHS and with anchors from other sectors – to scale impact and develop shared approaches. The combined assets of anchor institutions (in terms of local jobs, spending and land) is significant; working collaboratively will give anchors more reach into the community than they would have individually, and allows sharing of best practice.

3.6 To support actions against the NHS national framework 'Core 20 Plus 5' a Wirral Place group with representation from across the sectors is meeting on a monthly basis and identifying opportunities to positively address health inequalities.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There may be future resource implications for partners, services, and programmes as a result of the implementation of the proposed framework. For example, in upscaling prevention activity and in adopting different approaches to proactively address health inequalities. These will be addressed at the relevant stage and any resulting financial implications and funding requests will be brought back to the committee at the appropriate time.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report. The Health and Care Bill, published in July 2021, set out how the Government intends to reform the delivery of health services and promote integration between health and care in England. The Bill came into effect from 1st July and led to the establishment of Integrated Care Boards and Place-based Partnerships across England. This was done at the same time as abolishing Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 The work referenced within this report was developed by existing officers and partners. No additional resources are sought.

6.2 There is a need for commitment of officer time from partners to deliver the proposed framework approach and to ensure its ongoing implementation and monitoring of progress. This will be provided from within existing resources

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Without co-ordinated efforts we will not be able to reduce avoidable and unfair inequalities in health and care outcomes within the borough.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 No direct public consultation or engagement has been undertaken in relation to this report. A programme of engagement with local people on the development of a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy is in development and will be delivered in partnership with those organisations and members of the working group.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The proposed framework approach promotes the use of the Health Equity Assessment Tool. The Health Equity Assessment Tool (HEAT) is a practical approach that enables professionals across the healthcare landscape to systematically identify health inequalities and equity issues related to a service and identify what action can be taken help to reduce health inequalities. Further info here:

Health Equity Assessment Tool (HEAT): executive summary - GOV.UK
(www.gov.uk).

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Promoting Environmental Sustainability is a key activity of being an effective local Anchor institution. The Wirral place partnership and local NHS organisations have agreed to support and participate in the delivery of the Cool2 Wirral Climate Strategy and develop appropriate joint working arrangements and action plans to address the environment and climate emergency.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 As part of the proposed approach local organisations will act as Anchor Institutions across the following 5 areas:

- Employment.
- Commissioning and Procurement for Social Value
- Use of Capital and Estates
- Environmental Sustainability
- As a Partner across a Place

This will have a positive impact on local Community Wealth Building and delivery of the Community Wealth Building Strategy

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: A local framework to guide actions to reduce health inequalities

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnerships – Vision and objectives:
<https://www.cheshireandmerseysidepartnership.co.uk/ics-development/shared-vision/>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date