

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**4 FEBRUARY 2016**

### **ANNUAL PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH 2014/15**

Report from: Dr Alison Barnett, Director of Public Health

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#### **Summary**

This report presents the Annual Public Health Report of the Director of Public Health for 2014/15. The report focuses on the health of Medway's infants and young children and makes recommendations for Medway Council and partners.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 gives a statutory duty for Directors of Public Health to produce an Annual Public Health Report and Local Authorities to publish the report.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1. Substantial improvements have been seen in child health over the past 100 years nationally and locally. Particularly striking is the reduction in the numbers of deaths which occur in infancy and early childhood compared to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.2. Much of the improvement in the death rate amongst very young children has been achieved through local action on sanitation and living conditions as well as the focused actions of midwives and health visitors.
- 2.3. Significant challenges to the health of young children remain, however, and, as well as old problems persisting- for example, the impact of socio-economic disadvantage on health- we now face new challenges, for example, smoking in pregnancy and maternal obesity.
- 2.4. This report explores the key factors relating to the health of Medway's young children and makes recommendations for how these factors can be improved.
- 2.5. The theme of young children links directly to Theme 1 of Medway's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy: Give every child a good start.

### **3. The Annual Public Health Report (APHR)**

- 3.1. The purpose of the APHR is to inform local stakeholders and the public about the health of Medway's young children, outline current provision of support and services and make recommendations for the future to reduce health inequalities, promote health and wellbeing of young children and inform service provision
- 3.2. The projected benefits of producing the report include the following:
- Contribute to improving the health and well-being of Medway's youngest children across their entire life course
  - Giving all children the best start in life and thereby reducing health inequalities
  - To inform the planning and monitoring of local programmes and services that impact on the health of young children in Medway
- 3.3. The report focuses on the following six topics:
1. The early home environment
  2. Smoking in pregnancy
  3. Breastfeeding
  4. Maternal nutrition
  5. Control of infectious diseases
  6. Teenage pregnancy

### **4. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Annual Public Health report on 19 January 2016.
- 4.2 During the discussion Members raised a number of points and questions, which included: -
- Breastfeeding – in response to a question about how Public Health was working with local businesses to become 'breastfeeding friendly' the Director of Public Health confirmed that this was an important factor and confirmed the service did work with local businesses on how they can make public places more accessible for breastfeeding and added that this was an issue that needed to be promoted on a universal basis.
  - E-cigarettes – in response to a question about whether children could be prevented from entering a store selling e-cigarettes, the Director of Public Health confirmed that there was no legislation to enable this but added that, following European legislation, strict restrictions on advertising e-cigarettes would be implemented in the coming months.
  - Immunisations – in response to a question relating to how the reporting of immunisation uptake could be improved, the Director of Public Health explained that she had raised this issue formally with NHS England who were procuring software that would enable accurate reporting of immunisation uptake in general practices and it was hoped this software would soon be in place.

- Smoking in pregnancy – in response to a question about how smoking in pregnancy was recorded, the Director of Public Health confirmed that mothers were asked if they are smoking when in labour by their midwife, which was not always the most convenient moment to source the information and therefore the possibility of moving the measure to recording at the standard 36 week check was being explored. She also confirmed when asked that Medway's Public Health Team had not run a voucher incentive scheme used in other areas. There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate how effective this had been long term and it was felt more important to concentrate on all health care staff being equipped to encourage and motivate women to quit and understand the health risks of continuing to smoke.
- Teenage pregnancy and education in schools – in response to a question about how effective sexual education in schools was to prevent teenage pregnancies, the Director of Public Health confirmed that the service's work on developing accredited relationship and sex education resources and training for schools was innovative and had been identified as good practice. She added that a quality assurance process is in place which includes observation of initial lessons on sexual education.
- Smoking cessation shop in Chatham town centre – in response to a question about how effective this had been, the Director of Public Health explained that it was too early to provide any analysis but the footfall into the store had been good and the perception was that it was attracting passers by who Public Health would otherwise have had no engagement with about support for quitting smoking.

4.3 The Committee noted the report.

## 5. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Lack of progress in improving health outcomes	Effective action not taken by partners to act on the report's findings	Commissioning plans reviewed by HWB. Review of outcome indicators

## 6. Legal and financial implications

- 6.1. There are no financial or legal implications arising directly from the contents of this report. The Annual Public Health Report should, however, influence future prioritisation and allocation of resources

## 7. Recommendation

- 7.1. Board members are asked to consider and note the Annual Public Health Report and the priorities identified for improving the health and wellbeing of children.

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**Appendices:**

Annual Public Health Report 2014/15 has been circulated separately to the Board members and will be made available as a supplementary agenda published to the website.

**Background papers:**

Medway Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Commissioning Board and Medway Council, 2012. *Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway 2012-2017*.