

Appendix 1

Executive summary

Foreword

James Williams: Director of Public Health, Medway

The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to produce an independent report on the health of the local population. This year I have decided to focus my first annual public health report as Director of Public Health for Medway on health protection.

Health protection involves a range of actions to protect individuals and populations from threats to their health. Such threats can include infectious diseases and foodborne illnesses. Health protection also aims to minimise the impact of environmental threats to the public's health, for example from air pollution or severe weather. Preventing illness and disease through effective population screening and vaccination programmes is another key component of health protection.

The Director of Public Health, acting on behalf of their local authority, is responsible for ensuring plans are in place to protect the health of the local population from a range of threats including adverse weather or civil emergencies.

Protecting the health of the Medway population cannot be achieved by any individual organisation. Partnership working and strong leadership are essential for health protection. I have been impressed to see many excellent examples of good practice taking place across Medway over the past year. I have highlighted some of these as case studies in my report. Examples include partners joining together to tackle the 'Beast from the East', supporting vulnerable local residents during severe winter weather conditions. Another example is steps taken by partners to increase seasonal influenza (flu) vaccination uptake in Medway, thus reducing the number of people who may otherwise have become extremely unwell through contracting flu. The action taken to improve Medway breast cancer screening and sexual health services are also of note and these services are now more responsive and accessible to local people. I would encourage you to read the case studies in the full report. They demonstrate the commitment of all partners to improve health outcomes for Medway residents and visitors.

2018 is the 20th anniversary of the founding of Medway Unitary Authority. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to protecting the health of Medway residents over the previous 20 years. To continue to ensure our population is protected in the future, there are number of challenges we must address. For example, there has been national and local decline in the uptake of vaccinations, which are provided as part of national programmes to prevent outbreaks of certain diseases, such as measles and mumps. Medway is a thriving area with exciting plans to create jobs and wealth for our future. We need to continue the good work we have started with partners and local communities to maintain and improve air quality as Medway grows in future years. We must also ensure effective arrangements are in place to prepare for and respond to, civil emergencies and related threats to the public's health.

I recognise that these actions are challenging. Individuals and local Medway communities have a key role to play to protect their health and that of others. We will therefore continue to support people in Medway to make informed choices about things that may harm their health, and about actions that can be taken to reduce the risk of these harms. In each chapter of this report, I have highlighted actions that individuals in Medway can take to protect their own health.

I am confident that by continuing to forge and maintain strong partnerships between all the organisations with health protection responsibilities, empowering individuals and communities to take action to protect their own health and implementing the recommendations set out in this report, we will continue to successfully protect the health of people in Medway both now and in the future.

Acknowledgments

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Councillor David Brake, Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services:

I am pleased that the Director of Public Health has chosen the important topic of health protection for his annual report. I am delighted to see so many examples of good partnership working to protect the health of our local residents. As Medway continues into its 20th year and beyond, we will continue working hard with our communities and partners to ensure that residents of Medway continue to enjoy living in a place where partners are committed to protecting the health of their local population. This will include continuing work to support local people to make informed choices to protect their own health.

Executive summary

This executive summary provides an overview of the key points for each health protection topic discussed in this report. It describes ‘the current situation in Medway’, ‘what partners are doing to protect the health of people in Medway’ and an indication of the action that residents can take to protect their own health.

There is a summary of the recommendations for future work and specific actions for partners at the end of each section. The full report provides more comprehensive information for each health protection topic including case studies, data sources and references.

The health protection issues covered in this report are seasonal influenza, population vaccination and screening, sexual health and blood-borne viruses, infectious diseases and foodborne illness, air quality, healthcare-associated infections, tuberculosis and emergency preparedness.

1) Infectious diseases and foodborne illness

- Some diseases are of particular public health importance as they can spread easily to others and cause illness or serious harm to any individual infected. Partners in Medway have an important role to prevent and reduce the spread of such diseases and provide advice and support to prevent the likelihood of re-occurrence.
- There is a legal requirement for some infectious diseases that may have public health implications to be reported to Public Health England. Locally the Kent Health Protection Team receive these notifications for Medway and work with partners to address public health actions required.
- Food poisoning caused by campylobacter and salmonella bacteria (often found on raw or undercooked meat) are among the most common reasons for illness in Medway reported to the Kent Health Protection Team.
- There were a very small number of suspected diseases (not laboratory confirmed) reported to the Kent Health Protection Team over the last year that may have been preventable by vaccination. Mumps was the most common of these (21 suspected cases in Medway in 2017, a rate of 7.4 per 100,000 people), followed by measles (less than 5 suspected cases in Medway in 2017, a rate of 1.1 per 100,000 people). This is similar to the trends in England overall.

Outbreaks of infectious diseases in Medway

- An outbreak is when two or more people experience a similar illness and are linked by place or time or when there is a greater than expected amount of illness compared with what is usual.
- There were 140 outbreaks in Medway over the last 5 years.
- The most common type of outbreaks in Medway are gastrointestinal diseases. The majority of these outbreaks (93%) were suspected norovirus.
- The second most common type of outbreaks in Medway are diseases which cause rashes. There were 62 of these types of outbreaks in Medway over the last 5 years. The most common reason for these type of outbreaks were scarlet fever, hand foot and mouth disease, and chicken pox.
- When looking at settings in Medway where outbreaks take place, the places that most often notified the Kent Health Protection Team of outbreaks over the last 5 years were:

- Care homes (34% of the total outbreaks in Medway),
 - Schools (31% of the total outbreaks in Medway),
 - Nurseries (27% of the total outbreaks in Medway).
- There were very few notifications of outbreaks of disease from other settings in Medway, e.g. hospitals, other community settings and visitor attractions.
 - Care homes in Medway are most likely to report outbreaks of gastroenteritis, particularly norovirus. Schools and nurseries in Medway are most likely to report outbreaks of diseases causing rashes (e.g. scarlet fever, hand foot and mouth, and chicken pox), followed by norovirus (winter vomiting and diarrhoea bug).
 - Partners in Medway undertake a wide range of actions to protect people in Medway from infectious diseases. Examples include:
 - Medway Council's Environmental Health team ensure Medway's 1847 food businesses are safe places to eat. Action includes undertaking food hygiene inspections, rating and training and investigating food safety complaints or incidents. A key achievement in 2017 was increasing the proportion of Medway food businesses with a "very good" or "good" food hygiene rating from 90% to 93%. The team also have responsibilities around port health and health and safety.
 - Kent Health Protection Team's role includes providing advice and support to stop outbreaks spreading and prevent them happening again, including supporting care homes, schools and childcare settings. They also support individuals with an infectious disease and their families to prevent spread of infection and monitor trends in infectious diseases.
 - For significant outbreaks, the Kent Health Protection Team will establish an 'Outbreak Control Team' to investigate and resolve an outbreak. This can involve actions such as taking samples to confirm what is causing an illness, issuing information to the public or organising medication to treat the disease, for example antiviral medication for manage seasonal flu outbreaks.
 - Areas for further focus in future include continuing to increase the proportion of food businesses in Medway with good food hygiene rating, and exploring opportunities for training local organisations with regard to notification of infectious diseases and infection control in childcare, education and care home settings.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that Medway Council continue to work with local food businesses to increase the proportion of businesses with a "good or "very good" food hygiene rating.
- It is recommended that the Kent Health Protection Team investigate opportunities to deliver infection control training to schools and childcare settings in Medway.
- Public Health are piloting work in 2018, working with care homes around a "healthy settings" charter. It is recommended that infection control or awareness about notification of infectious diseases be included in this charter.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- Check the "score on the door" before eating out. Stay safe from food related illness by eating at restaurants with the highest food hygiene ratings. Search for restaurants in Medway on the Food Standards Agency Website.
- When preparing food, follow these simple tips to reduce your risk of becoming unwell:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before preparing food and after handling raw foods.
 - Keep raw meat separate from other food. Bacteria from raw meats can contaminate other foods and make you unwell. Keep raw meat on the bottom shelf of the fridge, covered to avoid it dripping onto other foods.
 - Make sure that poultry, pork, burgers, sausages and kebabs are cooked thoroughly, with no pink meat inside.
 - Don't wash raw meat before cooking it, as this can spread bacteria around your kitchen.
- Find other tips on how to protect yourself from illness from food on the NHS food safety webpage.

Protect yourself and others if you think you have an infectious disease

- If you think you or your child has an infectious disease, speak to your healthcare professional who can advise on any actions that may be needed to avoid the illness spreading to others. This could include things such as staying away from work or school until you are no longer infectious, extra hygiene at home or medicines.
- If you think you or your child has measles, it's best to phone your GP and make them aware you will be visiting, as they may need to make arrangements to stop others becoming unwell, for example organising a separate room.

How schools, care homes and other settings can protect themselves from outbreaks of infectious diseases

- Care homes, residential homes, schools and childcare settings can protect the health of staff, residents and students by following Public Health England guidance about good infection control arrangements.
- If a care home, school or other setting in Medway suspects they may have an outbreak of infectious disease (e.g. scarlet fever, measles, diarrhoea and vomiting), contact the Kent Health Protection Team as soon as possible on 0344 225 3861. The team will be able to give advice and support to reduce the risk of the outbreak spreading further.

2) Seasonal influenza (flu)

- Prevention of seasonal flu is important as it can cause serious illness or death among vulnerable people, including older people, pregnant women and people with long term health conditions. For example, people with long term health conditions are around eleven times more likely to die from flu than the general population. Flu also has a significant impact on health and social care services and their workforces.
- The NHS seasonal flu vaccination programme delivers free flu vaccinations annually to people at risk of serious illness from flu, including older people, people of any age with long term health conditions, pregnant women, carers and people in residential care. Children aged 2 to 8 years also receive vaccination to protect themselves and reduce the spread of flu in the community.
- NHS England have overall responsibility for commissioning vaccination programmes, which are delivered by a range of providers including GPs, pharmacists and school vaccination teams.

- Wider partners including Medway Council, Medway Clinical Commissioning Group, childcare settings and education also have an important role in supporting work to achieve good uptake of vaccinations in Medway.
- In 2017-18, partners in Medway have undertaken focused joint working to prevent seasonal flu and increase flu vaccination uptake. This included implementing a partnership action plan around seasonal flu and public “Stay Well This Winter” communications campaigns. Provisional 2017-18 data suggests there has been a positive impact on uptake of flu vaccinations (see case study in the seasonal influenza chapter).
- There were also very few outbreaks of seasonal flu reported in Medway in 2017-18
- Overall, flu vaccination uptake for children in Medway has increased and Medway is meeting national targets.
- Despite improvements in flu vaccination uptake in Medway in 2017-18 (e.g. among pregnant women and children), meeting targets for flu vaccination remains challenging, both nationally and in Medway. Both Medway and England overall fall below national targets for uptake of flu vaccination among older people, pregnant women and people younger than 65 with a long term health condition.
- Pregnant woman and at risk groups (younger than 65 years with long term health conditions) are particular areas for focus as uptake of flu vaccinations in Medway is lower in these groups than is average in England overall.

Recommendations

- Best practice from GPs achieving high rates of flu vaccination must be shared with local care teams, as part of the Medway Model approach.
- Planned work to pilot supporting care homes to achieve “Healthy Settings” charters to include seasonal influenza.
- Medway council and partners should continue to deliver the “Stay Well This Winter” communications campaign. This campaign highlights the benefits of seasonal flu vaccination to Medway residents, specifically those groups with the lowest uptake of vaccination and, vulnerable people with long term health conditions.
- All health and social care organisations in Medway to ensure they have plans in place to increase staff influenza vaccination rates to meet the national targets.
- A partnership workshop should be held to plan for the 2018/19 flu season and review lessons learned from the previous 2017/18 flu season. Action plans for 2018/19 should include specific actions targeting groups with lower uptake of flu vaccination, including people with long term health conditions.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- If you fall within one of the eligible groups, the best way to protect yourself from seasonal flu is by having a flu vaccination every year.
- Older people (aged 65 years or older), people with long term health conditions, pregnant women, carers, people living in residential care homes, and children aged 2 to 8 years are eligible for a free vaccination. Your health professional will send you a reminder when this is due - ask your pharmacist or GP for details in the autumn.
- Protect yourself from flu by making sure you “catch it, bin it, kill it”. Catch any coughs or sneezes in a tissue and dispose of them straight away.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and hot water to help protect yourself and others against viruses

- Schools, nurseries, care homes and other residential care settings can protect themselves by informing Public Health England if they have an outbreak of flu (two or more people with flu who have been in contact with each other in a similar time period). Public Health England will provide advice and support to stop flu spreading further.
- Protect your health over winter by eating a balanced diet, getting regular exercise, and keeping your home heated to at least 18°C. This can help you to stay well in the colder weather.

3) Screening

- Screening is offered to healthy people who may be at higher risk of disease, so they can be offered information or early treatment to reduce the risk of illness. In England, national screening programmes are agreed by the UK National Screening Committee. Each programme conforms to a strict criteria and is underpinned by robust evidence. In Medway, screening programmes are commissioned by the NHS England Kent, Surrey and Sussex team.

Breast cancer screening

- Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK. In Medway, breast screening is provided by a mobile screening unit that travels to different locations across Medway. There is also a static clinic sited at Medway Maritime Hospital.
- Women aged 50 to 70 years are invited for screening every three years, and those aged over 70 can continue to be screened every three years by self-referring into the programme. In Medway, a proportion of women aged 47 to 49 years and 71 to 73 years are also invited for breast screening as part of a national age extension breast screening trial.
- 76.7% of eligible women (22,392 women) were screened for breast cancer in Medway between 2014 and 2017. This is significantly higher than the England average of 75.4%.
- The proportion of eligible women screened for breast cancer in Medway has remained similar over recent years.

Cervical cancer screening

- Cervical cancer is the 14th most common cancer among females in the UK and new cases are most common among 25 to 29 year old women.
- Women between the ages of 25 and 64 years are invited to attend cervical screening every 3 or 5 years (younger women are invited more frequently due to increased risk).
- In Medway, cervical screening is usually carried out at a woman's registered GP practice. Alternatively, a number of cervical screening appointments are available through Medway Councils integrated sexual health service .
- Data from 2017 shows that 73.9% of eligible women in Medway were screened (in the last three to five years), which is significantly higher than the England average of 72%.
- Recent trends suggest the proportion of eligible women who have been screened for cervical cancer in Medway has decreased. This has also been the case nationally.

Bowel screening

- In England, bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in men and women, and the second biggest cancer killer (after lung cancer).

- In England, half of all bowel cancers are diagnosed at a late stage. Screening is an important way of identifying and treating bowel cancer early, increasing the chances of successful treatment.
- The NHS offers two different types of bowel screening. The first is a home testing kit which is completed at home and posted to a laboratory for testing. Men and women aged 60 to 74 years are offered a kit every two years, and subsequently referred for further testing and treatment if required. An additional test, called bowel scope, is being introduced in England. This is a one-off screening for men and women aged 55. The screening looks for and removes growths called polyps which could turn into cancer if they're not removed.
- As of July 2017, 75% of GP practices in Medway had begun offering bowel scope screening and work is ongoing to roll this new technique out to the remaining 25% of Medway GP practices
- Data from 2017 shows that 57.3% of eligible people in Medway were screened for bowel cancer. This is significantly lower than the England average of 58.8%.
- The low uptake of bowel cancer screening across England is a national concern. The uptake of bowel screening is not as high as other cancer screening programmes nationally.
- One reason for lower uptake of bowel screening could be embarrassment about the test itself. Nationally, men are less likely to take up bowel screening than women.
- Bowel cancer screening coverage in Medway has stayed at a similar level over recent years (since 2015), compared to the England coverage which has shown a small increase during this period.

Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening

- An abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is a bulge or swelling in the aorta (the main blood vessel running from the heart downwards). It is caused by the aorta weakening. It may be present without symptoms and can be dangerous, and even life threatening, if it isn't spotted early on as it could burst.
- Men aged 65 years and older are most at risk of AAA's, with around one man in 70 aged 65 having an AAA. 85 out of 100 people who experience a ruptured (burst) AAA are likely to die.
- The screening programme reduces early deaths from ruptured AAA's by up to 50% among men aged 65 years and over. Men are invited to attend screening (an ultrasound) when they reach the age of 65. If an AAA is found lifestyle changes, further ultrasounds or surgery may be recommended (treatment depends on the size of the AAA).
- In Medway, AAA screening takes place in five locations across Medway (Walderslade, Gillingham, Rochester, Rainham and the Hoo Peninsula).
- In 2016/17, screening coverage (proportion of eligible men who were screened) in Medway was 80.2% (1067 men screened). This is similar to the England average of 80.9%.
- Specific work by partners in Medway during 2017-18 to improve screening has included:
 - Focused quality improvement work by Medway NHS Foundation Trust Breast Screening Unit. This has resulted in improved service performance, patient feedback, and the team being shortlisted for a British Medical Journal Award 2018 (see case study in the screening chapter),

- Work by the Medway Cancer Steering Group with GPs and staff at GP practices to raise awareness of screening with patients,
 - Health equity audits of screening programmes have been carried out, which analyse information such as which groups of people are most and least likely to access services,
 - The Breast Screening Unit at Medway Maritime Hospital teamed up with the Medway Messenger to run a “Get It Checked, It’s For The Breast” campaign in 2017.
- For breast, bowel and cervical screening, uptake (coverage) is lower among some population groups. Both nationally, and in Medway, populations in more deprived areas have lower uptake of screening. National trends also have found people with learning disabilities and those from some ethnic minority groups, are less likely to attend screening. Focusing on improving screening uptake among these groups is an important area for future work.
 - Other priority actions for future include work to increase bowel cancer uptake, rolling out changes to the bowel screening programme which will introduce a new type of testing (FIT test) during 2018, continuing to work with the screening provider to roll out of bowel scope in Medway, identifying opportunities for cervical screening social marketing campaigns, and partnership working to improve screening uptake among prison populations.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that partners identify opportunities to work together to increase uptake of screening among groups that are less likely to attend specifically people from lower socioeconomic groups and ethnic minorities.
- It is recommended that opportunities to include information about screening within A Better Medway Champion training or the Making Every Contact Count programme be investigated.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

Be informed about screening

- If you receive a screening invitation, it's worth finding out about the test itself and what would happen next if you found out you have a higher risk of a particular condition. This can help you make an informed decision about attending screening. You can find out more information by reading the information leaflet that arrives with the invitation. Discuss the issue with a healthcare professional if you wish, or read the screening section of the NHS Choices website.

Look out for signs and symptoms of cancers

- If you have symptoms that you are worried could be cancer or another illness, don't wait to be offered screening. See your GP, who will advise if you need to be referred for further investigations or treatment. Further information about signs and symptoms of cancer can be found on the NHS Choices website.

Reduce your risk of cancers with healthy lifestyle changes

- You can help reduce your risk of cancers by eating a healthy, balanced diet, maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active, drinking less alcohol and not smoking.

- A Better Medway's health improvement services can support you to stop smoking, lose weight, learn how to cook healthy meals and more. Find out more on Medway Council's A Better Medway website.

Consider requesting a screening test

For most screening programmes, if you are eligible for screening, and are registered with a GP, you will automatically receive an invitation when your screening is due. However you can request a screening test if the below applies:

- If you're a man who is older than 65 and you haven't been screened for abdominal aortic aneurism (AAA) before, you are eligible to request screening. You can contact the Kent and Medway AAA screening service to ask for a test, by calling 01227 868775.
- Women who are aged over 70 can request a breast screening appointment every three years by contacting their GP or Medway Breast Screening Unit on 01634 825036.
- Women and men who are aged 75 or over, can request a bowel cancer home testing kit every 2 years by calling the free bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 60 60.

4) Emergency preparedness

- The Council and its statutory partners have a duty to plan, prepare and respond to emergencies and incidents that could have a negative impact on the health of the population. This includes being prepared to deal with a wide range of scenarios. These include extreme weather events, flooding, or outbreaks of infectious diseases. The council must also be able to inform and advise the public about emergencies and action the public can do to risk their risk.
- There are a number of partnerships in Medway who work together to prepare for emergencies. These include:
 - Kent Resilience Forum (KRF): Consists of over 100 wide ranging partners including Medway Council and other local authorities, emergency services, NHS, ambulance services, infrastructure companies and the voluntary sector. The KRF ensures that partners across Kent and Medway plan for and respond to emergencies as effectively as possible. This includes sharing information, assessing risks, planning for business continuity (ensuring services continue to operate during disruption), and providing guidance to the public before, during and after emergencies.
 - Kent Local Health Resilience Partnership: Brings together health related organisations to ensure the NHS and health partners have in place appropriate arrangements to respond to health related emergencies.
- Medway Council and partners took action in response to freezing weather and snow in early 2018 to ensure that residents and vulnerable people continued to receive support and services (see case study in the emergency preparedness chapter). This included home visits and food deliveries to vulnerable residents. Spreading more than 1,600 tonnes of salt on Medway's roads. Working with farmers to clear rural snow drifts and keep Medway moving and using 4x4 vehicles to ensure key professionals, such as healthcare staff, could get to work.
- Partners in the KRF are required to produce a community risk register, which is regularly updated. The purpose of the risk register is to assure people in Medway (and Kent) that an assessment of potential risks has taken place and these risks have been identified in

the emergency plans of local partners. Risks which have been identified as particularly salient in Medway and Kent include:

- Pandemic influenza (this is also the most significant risk nationally);
 - Tidal flooding in relation to the Medway Council area;
 - Severe inland flooding;
 - Local/urban flooding.
- Partners also maintain and test a range of plans for emergencies. In 2017-18, specific work included refreshing the KRF pandemic influenza plan, holding emergency planning exercises around mass fatalities and recovery following an emergency, and annual refreshes of Medway Council's heatwave and cold weather plans.
 - Medway Council also have statutory responsibility for writing, reviewing and testing emergency plans for businesses that use large amounts of dangerous substances e.g. chemicals. These plans are called Control of Major Accident Hazards Emergency Plans (COMAH). In Medway, there are two sites which the Council is required to develop these plans for:
 - BP Oil import terminal, Isle of Grain,
 - National Grid LNG (liquefied natural gas) storage terminal, Isle of Grain.
 - Areas for future focus include working with KRF to ensure "lessons identified" from previous emergency preparedness events and exercises are included in plans and in staff training, and Medway Council will be refreshing and testing partnership plans for response and recovery if there was to be a major incident at the National Grid LNG storage terminal in Grain (as part of its programme of COMAH plans).

Recommendations

- It is recommended an annual assurance audit of the Council's cold weather and heatwave plans be undertaken. This audit to specifically review the roles and responsibilities of partners during extreme weather and identify any areas for improvement.
- It is recommended that Medway Council review the emergency planning governance arrangements between the Council and the emerging strategic leadership function of the Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.
- Medway Council review its relationships with Public Health England specialist teams, e.g. the Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE), to ensure processes are in place for quick and coordinated responses to exceptional events, such as chemical incidents.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- Familiarise yourselves with the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) advice booklet "What should I do in an emergency?" and take the "How ready are you?" test. While we all hope that emergencies won't happen to us, it's easy to be prepared just in case.
- Make your own household emergency plan. It'll only take a few minutes but it could be a lifesaver. Find hints about how to prepare one in the KRF "What should I do in an emergency?" advice booklet
- Pack an emergency grab bag and keep it in a safe place. Having medicines, important documents and other essentials handy will save time if an emergency should occur.

- Find out if your home is in a flood warning area and sign up for flood alerts, if relevant, with the environment agency.
- Consider taking a first aid course. Simple skills could help save a life. For local courses see the St John Ambulance or British Red Cross websites.

5) Sexual health and blood-borne viruses

- Medway residents enjoy relatively good sexual health, with lower rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) than the England average in 2016. However, sexual ill health is not equally distributed among the population. Higher levels are seen in gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM), teenagers, young adults and some black and minority ethnic groups. There is also strong positive relationship between deprivation and STI rates, with central Chatham having highest concentration of STI diagnoses and higher HIV prevalence than more affluent or rural areas.
- In 2016, there were 1,979 new STIs diagnosed in Medway; a rate of 716 per 100,000 population compared to the England average of 750 per 100,000 population. Chlamydia was the most commonly diagnosed STI.
- 58% of all new STI diagnoses in Medway were among 15 to 24 year olds.
- Rates of gonorrhoea, syphilis and HIV in Medway were lower than the England average, however prevalence of herpes was higher (66.6 per 100,000 population in Medway compared to the England average at 57.2 per 100,000).
- There was a 81.4% uptake of HIV screening when offered in sexual health services, with screens offered 79.7% of the time. Medway also had similar rates of late diagnosis of HIV (39.5%) to England (40.1%), with 288 people living with HIV in Medway.
- Medway had comparable acute hepatitis B and hepatitis C detection rates to the national average, however a lower percentage of eligible people entering substance misuse services completed a course of hepatitis B vaccination (5.1%) than the England average (8.7%).
- Vaccination programmes delivered across Medway are likely to have contributed to a reduction in genital warts (through human papillomavirus vaccination) and prevented a significant increase in hepatitis
- A range of support is available to support Medway residents improve their sexual health and prevent the transmission of blood-borne viruses. Medway Council commission integrated sexual health services where people can access advice, contraception, STI testing and treatment all in one place. The service are working to increase the percentage of people who accept the offer of a HIV test. The service has introduced self-sampling kits for STIs that can be ordered online and used at home. There are also two targeted free condom schemes (for young people and men who have sex with men).
- Although the vast majority of new cases of HIV in England are transmitted sexually and relatively few cases are transmitted as a result of injecting drug use, a needle exchange scheme is available in Medway through the substance misuse service to make clean injecting equipment available to users and reduce the risk of transmission of blood-borne viruses.
- Future areas of focus in Medway include increasing the percentage uptake of HIV screening in sexual health clinics, continuing to promote the role of Antibiotic Guardians (aimed at reducing unnecessary use of antibiotics), increasing the use of partner

notification in sexual health services to reduce risk of onward transmission of infections, targeting groups at increased risk of HIV infection, and continuing to support NHS England's trial of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) (whereby people at high risk of acquiring HIV receive medication prior to potential HIV exposure to reduce risk of transmission).

Recommendations

- Commissioned services should prioritise prevention and harm reduction with the majority of interventions delivered through self-managed care.
- Partners in the Quality and Safety Partnership should continue to promote the role of Antibiotic Guardians with healthcare professionals and the public, to counter the risk of newly emerging forms of antimicrobial resistant forms of gonorrhoea.
- Partners should continue work to increase uptake of human papilloma virus vaccinations among eligible populations (both through sexual health services and routine vaccination programmes)
- Undertake work to increase the percentage uptake of HIV screening in sexual health clinics.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- Get tested: Sexually active young people should be tested for chlamydia and other STIs annually or whenever they change partner. Others who face higher risks of acquiring an infection, such as men who have sex with men, sex workers or those who have several concurrent partners, should test more regularly. Sexual health experts based at the 4 Clover Street clinic in Chatham town centre are able to advise people on a testing routine to best suit their lifestyle.
- If you have not had a HIV screen recently and are offered one, take the test. It is better to know your status and then begin treatment as soon as possible as it will reduce the likelihood of you becoming unwell. Not knowing your status may put your health and that of others at risk.
- Reduce the risk: As well as preventing unplanned pregnancy, condoms offer protection against STIs and should be worn on every occasion where there is any doubt about the sexual health of your partner
- Hepatitis vaccinations are available through sexual health and substance misuse services for some groups, for example people who inject drugs or sex workers. Speak to your health care professional for advice if you think you may be at risk.

6) Tuberculosis

- Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by infection with the bacteria mycobacterium tuberculosis. TB is spread via inhaling airborne droplets when a person with infectious respiratory TB coughs or sneezes. TB is curable but can be fatal if left untreated. The disease can affect almost any part of the body, but is most commonly found in the lungs. TB is however, much less infectious than other respiratory infections, such as influenza. Some people may also have TB without any symptoms (latent TB), which can reactivate later in life.
- Nationally, the number of new cases of TB is falling, however rates of TB are higher among certain communities, including the non-UK born population (nationally, 74% of all

TB cases notified in 2016 were born abroad) or communities with social risk factors such as homelessness, drug or alcohol misuse or imprisonment.

- TB is not a common public health issue for Medway or Kent as a whole. Medway is a low incidence area with a rate of 5.1 cases per 100,000 cases recorded in the 3 year period 2014-16
- The challenge for Medway, given the low rates of TB infection, are to ensure early identification and treatment of individuals with active disease. There is also a need to ensure that people who may potentially have latent TB are identified and treated before the disease progresses.
- The Kent and Medway TB Network undertake partnership working around TB, including implementing a TB partnership work plan shared amongst local organisations. The partnership also undertake TB cohort reviews, which scrutinise TB treatment and identify ways of improving treatment. This enables more people to complete treatment successfully, with findings shared with partners.
- Other recent pieces of work have included:
 - Developing a TB needs assessment,
 - Holding an awareness raising event aimed at supporting those who work with people with TB but aren't TB specialists (e.g. housing and social care) to identify the signs and symptoms of TB,
 - Undertaking a pilot of video observed therapy (VOT), whereby individuals are observed taking TB medication via video. People with TB need to take antibiotics, often daily for a long time. VOT helps clinicians monitor and support patients in the community and increases treatment compliance. It reduces the inconvenience that directly observed therapy (DOT) can cause to daily activities, where the patient is observed at a clinic or during a home visit,
 - Partnership working to identify housing solutions for vulnerable homeless people diagnosed with TB and work with sexual health services to promote TB screening for people offered HIV testing.
- Future areas of focus will include continuing to raise awareness of TB among those in contact with vulnerable groups, and further work to support piloting video observed therapy (for TB medication) in vulnerable groups.

Recommendations

- Training should be made available to professionals to raise awareness of TB in vulnerable groups including homeless, drug and alcohol misusers, as well as new migrants from high incidence countries, to ensure prompt referral when TB is suspected.
- The Council should collaborate with the Kent and Medway TB Network to support the piloting of video observed therapy (VOT) in the most disadvantaged or hard to reach groups.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- Although TB is uncommon among Medway residents, it's good to be aware of the signs and symptoms. If you think you may have TB or have symptoms, such as a cough lasting more than three weeks, weight loss, night sweats, tiredness or fever, speak to your health professional. You can find out more on The Truth About TB website.

7) Healthcare associated infections (HCAIs)

- HCAIs are infections that occur in a healthcare setting that were not present before the person entered the care setting (e.g. hospital, a nursing home, outpatient clinic, etc.) and which can lead to significant harm to patients and costs for the NHS.
- Some of the most common micro-organisms that cause HCAIs include methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*), and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*).
- MRSA is a bacterium that usually lives harmlessly on the skin, but can cause life-threatening sepsis if it gets inside the body. Nationally, rates of MRSA have fallen since 2009/10. In Medway, the rate has fallen between 2015/16 and 2016/17 when there were six cases. This is slightly above the national average.
- *C. difficile* is a bacterium that can cause diarrhoea. It often affects people who have recently been treated with antibiotics and can spread easily to others. Rates of *C. difficile* have fallen nationally since 2012/13 and have remained flat in Medway. In Medway in 2016/17 there were 63 cases, with a rate similar to the national position.
- *E. coli* is a bacterium which is the most common cause of blood stream infections in England. Infection rates have been increasing over at least the last four years nationally and in Medway. In 2016/17 there were 232 cases in Medway, a rate of 83.7 per 100,000 population, slightly higher than the national average.
- Partners in Medway are undertaking a range of actions around HCAIs, including:
- The Kent and Medway HCAI group meets quarterly and is currently working on a catheter insertion and management guideline.
- Medway NHS Foundation Trust is taking a number of actions to minimise the risk of transfer of infection from patients, staff and visitors including:
 - Introducing a hand hygiene campaign “Hands Aware, Safe to Care” and improved opportunities for hand hygiene and infection control training,
 - Introducing new protocols around urinary catheters, which reduce catheter usage and urinary tract infections related to these,
 - Improving equipment and infection control procedures to further reduce risk of infections,
- Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are also undertaking specific projects including work to reduce the number of hospital admissions due to urinary tract infections through training to care homes and a targeted project to reduce the rate of E-coli infection.
- Regular monitoring and review of blood stream infections also takes place by Public Health England and Medway CCG.
- Areas of focus for the future include continuing to ensure that both commissioned and directly provided services are compliant with and regularly audit against infection control guidance, policy, regulations and quality standards.

Recommendations

- Commissioning organisations should ensure that all services commissioned or contracted by them, or on their behalf, are compliant with infection control guidance, policy and regulations.
- Medway hospital to ensure that the quality statements in NICE quality standard QS113 are applied

- Service providers to undertake assessments of their compliance with the infection control code of practice at intervals agreed with the commissioning organisation.
- Providers to submit compliance reports to the board for internal assurance and the commissioning organisation for external assurance.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- If you are staying in hospital, there are some simple things you can do to reduce your risk of getting or spreading infections. You should:
 - wash your hands often (hand wipes and alcohol hand gel are also effective), especially before and after eating and after going to the toilet;
 - follow the advice you're given about wound care and looking after devices that could lead to infection;
 - report any unclean facilities to staff. Don't be afraid to talk to staff if you're concerned about hygiene.
- If you're visiting someone in hospital, clean your hands before and after entering the ward and before touching the person. Gel or wipes are often placed by patients' beds and at the entrance to wards.

8) Air quality

- There are many pollutants in the air, some of which are harmful to health, for example particulate matter. This consists of small particles in the air that can be breathed into the lungs. Common sources of this type of pollution include transport, industry or household fires.
- Air pollution is estimated to be an important environmental risk linked to deaths in England. Small particles and other substances polluting the air contribute to deaths from cardiovascular and respiratory disease and can impact negatively on quality of life for people with respiratory conditions.
- While the quality of air across Medway is generally good and meets national air quality objectives, like many urban areas in the UK, Medway has some areas of poor air quality.
- Four areas across Medway have been identified where levels of air pollution do not meet the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (one of the national air quality objectives). These are: Pier Road Gillingham; High Street, Rainham; Central Medway; and Four Elms Hill, Chattenden.
- In Medway in 2016, it is estimated that 6.3% of adult deaths can be attributed to long-term exposure to air pollution, compared to an average of 5.3% in England. It is important to note that long-term exposure to air pollution is not thought to be the sole cause of deaths. Rather, it is considered to be a contributory factor, through its impact on conditions such as cardiovascular disease.
- Active travel can be an effective way of reducing air pollution from transport. In Medway, 59.9% of pupils aged 5 to 10 years walk to school in Medway, which is 13.9% higher than the national average.
- Partners are undertaking a range of actions around air quality in Medway, including through the Medway and Kent Air Quality Partnership. Actions include implementing the Medway Air Quality Action Plan, which focuses on twelve key work areas including promoting increased use of public transport and active travel, improving traffic and freight management, supporting use of eco driving, improving air quality through development planning (including the local plan) and procurement, raising awareness of air quality and

health, and improving taxi emissions. Good progress is being made to implement the plan. Progress is reported annually in the Medway Council Air Quality Annual Status Report.

- The Council has developed air quality guidance for use by developers and planners to support new developments. This includes a requirement to have electric vehicle charging points in new developments. This guidance has been used extensively in the consideration of granting planning applications. Plans are also underway to include Air Quality guidance in the new Medway Local Plan.
- Medway Council has developed an Air Quality Communications Strategy. This strategy has an action plan that sets out the key issues that need to be communicated to specific organisations and individuals at greater risk from poor air quality and how local people can contribute to better air quality in Medway
- Actions are also being taken to increase active travel in Medway, including having 50 walking bus routes, having developed a Cycling Action Plan for Medway, and offering a range of cycle groups and health walks across Medway. These actions will support Medway to ensure that plans going forwards continue to promote good air quality.
- Future areas of focus will include implementing the Air Quality Communications Strategy including holding a “clean air day” with the local community in June, and continued work to support active travel and use of eco vehicles through the Air Quality Action Plan.

Recommendations

- Through the Air Quality Communications Strategy, partners in Medway should continue to raise awareness to all residents of the potential health impacts from air pollutants and what measures they can take to reduce the impact and the level of poor air quality in Medway
- Partners in Medway should increase the number of Medway residents signed up to receive the KentAir air forecast.
- Through the Air Quality Communications Strategy, partners in Medway should work with local employers, service providers, and voluntary and public sector organisations to raise awareness of air pollution, its impact and actions that can be taken to reduce it.
- Health professionals should continue to raise awareness of air pollution, such as ways in which people can reduce air pollution and exposure to it, among people with respiratory conditions and cardiovascular disease.

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

Ways people can reduce their contribution to air pollution

- Don't leave your car engine running when the vehicle is stationary. This pollutes the air, causes unnecessary noise and costs money. Switching off your engine is an easy way to help improve air quality and the health of people in Medway.
- Walking or cycling instead of driving can improve your health as well as reducing air pollution. To get started, why not sign up for a health walk or cycle? Find out details on Medway Council's A Better Medway website.
- Reduce the number of car journeys you make. Car sharing, cycling, walking or using public transport can help reduce the number of vehicles on the road in Medway.
- Keeping your car well maintained can reduce the amount of pollution it produces.

- Consider switching to an electric vehicle. Recharging an electric vehicle is much cheaper than buying fuel.
- Conserve energy. Turn off lights and appliances when not in use and choose energy efficient light bulbs and appliances.

Ways in which people can avoid air pollution

- Sign up to the free air pollution forecast on the KentAir website. You will receive an email when there are likely to be raised levels of air pollution, so you can take measures to reduce your exposure if you are in a vulnerable group.

9) Vaccinations

- Vaccination programmes protect individuals from infectious diseases. When vaccination rates are high the wider community is also protected through herd immunity (when a disease cannot spread as there are few susceptible people left to infect).
- Vaccination programmes are commissioned by NHS England who have overall responsibility for performance and for working with partners to improve vaccination rates.
- Vaccinations are delivered by a range of providers, including GPs, pharmacists and school vaccination teams. A wide range of partners including Medway Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups and education have a role in working with NHS England to support good uptake of vaccinations.

Children's Vaccinations

- Vaccinations against more than twelve diseases are included in the routine NHS vaccination programme for children including measles, mumps, rubella, whooping cough, meningitis B and C, diphtheria, tetanus and polio.
- Nationally, achieving the target of 95% uptake of children's vaccinations is challenging. The England average shows that nationally, 95% uptake is not being reached for the majority of children's vaccinations. This is also the case in Medway. In Medway, uptake of children's vaccinations are lower than the national average for a number of children's vaccinations.
- Trend data suggests that since 2013, there has been a decline in the uptake of childhood vaccinations in Medway across a number of childhood vaccinations. There are many factors that influence uptake of childhood vaccinations. These include parental attitudes to vaccination, accessibility of vaccination services, and having in place systematic arrangements for inviting and reminding parents to vaccinate their children.
- Nationally, some groups of children are also less likely to be fully vaccinated, for example younger children from large families, children from some minority ethnic groups, children in care, and families experiencing deprivation.
- However, when looking at specific groups of children in Medway, vaccination uptake for children in care is significantly higher than the England average and has increased over recent years. 90.7% of children in care in Medway had up to date vaccinations, compared to a national average of 84.6% in 2017.

Adult Vaccinations

- A number of vaccinations are offered to adults as part of the routine NHS vaccination programme. This is because older people are at greater risk of becoming seriously unwell if they catch certain infections or viruses. These include pneumococcal and shingles vaccinations.

- In Medway, 66.8% of over 65s were vaccinated against pneumococcal infections in 2016/17, compared to an England average of 69.8%. Uptake of pneumococcal vaccine has been slowly declining in Medway over a number of years.
- 42.6% of Medway 70 year olds were vaccinated against shingles in 2016/17, compared to an England average of 48.3%. In recent years (since 2014/15), for both England and Medway, the uptake of shingles vaccine has been declining.
- Partners are undertaking a range of actions to improve the uptake of vaccinations in Medway, these include:
 - Medway Vaccination Programme Board: This was established in December 2017 and has wide partnership representation. The Board meet quarterly to identify and implement actions which partners can take to support providers to increase uptake of vaccinations across Medway. The Board is initially focusing on increasing childhood and seasonal flu vaccinations uptake,
 - Improving accessibility of vaccination programmes: NHS England have recently re-procured the school childhood vaccination service for Medway. The new service starting in 2018 and includes additional ways of offering childhood vaccinations to children who have not attended their GP for vaccinations (catch up sessions),
 - Working with vaccination providers to improve uptake of vaccinations: NHS England are continuing to work with providers to improve uptake of childhood vaccinations. Actions underway include regular monitoring and feedback to GP practices about vaccinations uptake, including comparison with other practices, and support to GP practices by sharing information and best practice,
 - Quality improvement work to improve vaccinations uptake: As part of quality improvement work, NHS England are reviewing the quality of local vaccinations data with the help of external expertise from NHS digital and taking action to address any issues identified,
 - Areas for future focus include work to effectively communicate the benefits of shingles vaccination to health professionals and the public, further work to identify additional opportunities for professionals to raise awareness of the benefits of childhood vaccinations with families, and undertaking audits against national guidance to identify further areas for action.

Recommendations

- Partners should continue to work together to increase vaccination uptake in Medway, including through the Medway Immunisation Programme Board.
- Partners should work together to effectively communicate the benefits of shingles vaccination to health professionals and the public.
- Partners should continue to work together to identify additional opportunities for professionals to raise awareness of the benefits of childhood vaccinations with families.
- Partners in Medway should work with quality teams to make further use of audits to identify areas for improvement around vaccination uptake (e.g. audits against NICE guidance on children's vaccinations and audits of invitations to attend vaccinations).

What can people in Medway do to protect their health?

- Off to university for the first time? Stay protected by booking your free meningitis vaccination. Speak to your health professional or find out more on the NHS Choices website.

- Going on holiday abroad? Stay healthy on your vacation by being up to date with vaccinations recommended for that country. Find out more on the NHS Choices website.
- If you or your child are not up to date with your vaccinations, you are at risk of infectious diseases. If you aren't sure if you or your child have had all your routine vaccinations, ask your GP or practice nurse to find out for you. Find out more on the NHS Choices website.
- Measles is circulating in many parts of England. Children and adults who have not had two doses of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) should contact their GP practice to catch up and stay protected. Some countries in Europe such as Romania, Italy and Germany are experiencing measles outbreaks. If you or your family are travelling to these countries, stay protected by checking you have received two doses of MMR vaccine. Contact your GP practice before you travel if you aren't up to date with vaccinations.