

Health and Wellbeing Board

5 September 2024

Women's Health Update

Report from: David Whiting, Acting Director of Public Health

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Summary

At the last meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on 27 June 2024, it considered the Women's Health Strategy, Women's Hubs, health data, women's community health matters and menopause care in Primary Care and looked at how these are implemented locally.

This report provides an update on some issues relating to the topic.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to consider the updates provided in relation to the women's health strategy.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. In August 2022 the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care published the Women's Health Strategy for England. This is a 10-year strategy that sets out a range of commitments to improve the health of women everywhere.
- 2.2. The Department of Health and Social Care, other government departments and agencies, commissioners and providers of health and care services, professional bodies, research institutions, employers, industry, the voluntary sector all have a role to play in helping to improve the health of women and girls in England.

3. Background

- 3.1. Insufficient focus is placed on women-specific issues like miscarriage or menopause, and women are under-represented when it comes to important clinical trials. This has meant that not enough is known about conditions that only affect women, or about how conditions that affect both men and women impact them in different ways.

- 3.2. The Women's Health Strategy for England sets out how the government intends to improve the way in which the health and care system listens to women's voices, and boost health outcomes for women and girls. It takes a life course approach, focused on understanding the changing health and care needs of women and girls across their lives, from adolescents and young adults to later life.
- 3.3. A full report and presentation were considered on this issue at the last meeting of the Board on 27 June 2024. At that meeting the Board agreed the following:
 - 3.3.1. Match the NHS England 10 steps to local delivery capacity by supporting the Medway hub application by working with Health Care Professionals/Medway Community Healthcare, and to obtain sight of Kent Hub Memorandum of Understanding for guidance and accountability.
 - 3.3.2. Ensure our Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy captures the high level NHS England objectives.
 - 3.3.3. Identify the areas of greatest need in terms of missing out on checks, screening, vaccination etc and perhaps set up a task and finish group with the Voluntary Community Sector to reach those in need or harder to reach using the Medway Diversity Forum Representative's feedback as a starting point?
 - 3.3.4. Arrange a meeting at Clover Street to tackle the identified organisational barriers to access specialist menopause services and co-produce a strategy for action by the Integrated Care Board that would prevent delay and duplication, such as prescribing rights for HRT and related products.
 - 3.3.5. Explore more inclusive further engagement with Medway women who were underrepresented in the original engagement. Would Healthwatch be able to help?
 - 3.3.6. Work with Director of Primary and Community (Out of Hospital) Care NHS Kent and Medway and the GP team to improve access to GP training on long acting contraception and implant technology.
 - 3.3.7. Review our impact on Personal Social Health Economic Education (PHSE) in terms of HPV take up by young people.
 - 3.3.8. Check antenatal take up in our deprived areas and consider better communications.
 - 3.3.9. Over the longer term explore a less medicalised more "Eastern" model for the life course of women's health.
 - 3.3.10. Revisit conception/IVF services in the light of data which points to excluded groups.

4. Update

- 4.1. The following provides an update on some of the issues above.
- 4.2. Public Health have supported the development of the Medway Women's Hub proposal, working with Medway South Primary Care Network. There has been wide partner engagement in developing the proposal, which is now awaiting agreement from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for funding.
- 4.3. Public Health have reviewed the 10 NHS England objectives and these are addressed across either the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy or the Integrated Care Strategy.
- 4.4. The Board Chairperson is undertaking a visit to Clover Street on Monday 2 September in relation to menopause support services and will provide some feedback at the meeting, following the visit.
- 4.5. Public Health commission Long-acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) training for contraceptive purposes via Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT). KCHFT have trained 47 clinicians to fit and remove LARC and implant technology across Medway primary care. Where this is fitted for non-contraception purposes, the responsibility sits with the ICB. This will be further addressed through the Women's Health Hub project.
- 4.6. In relation to raising awareness of the HPV vaccine, there are multiple ways in which this is done, with Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) being one avenue. It would be very difficult to be able to identify how much take up could be attributed to PSHE alone.
- 4.7. The Family Hub Start4Life programme can and is being used to improve promotion of uptake of all vital healthy child checks.
- 4.8. The Public Health Intelligence Team are analysing data in relation to some of the other actions to better understand and identify at risk and harder to reach groups and communities and possible barriers for some women in accessing services. This work will feed in to the existing Medway Sexual Health Partnership who have a priority strand around the Women's Health Hub.

5. Risk management

- 5.1. There are no direct risks arising from this report.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

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Appendices

None

Background documents

[Women's Health Strategy for England](#)