



Health Improvement Plan 2010-2013

Foreword

Foreword – Anna Lynch

The Durham County Council Health Improvement Plan is an excellent example of all service areas working together and in partnership with other agencies to tackle the health challenges faced by our local communities. Local authority services including housing, culture, learning, employment and transport can have a major impact on the wider socio-economic issues that contribute to reducing health inequalities and improving health.

This approach is in line with the recent Marmot Review of Health Inequalities, 2010 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives'. This report clearly demonstrates that health inequalities result from social inequalities, and that policy decisions of the local authority and relevant agencies working together can make a huge difference to the local health picture.

This plan shows how health improvement is being embedded across the authority and becoming every body's business. It also reflects how joint working with NHS County Durham is providing targeted interventions to make a real difference to improving individual lifestyles in communities and groups of greatest need.

The themes in this plan echo the regional health strategy 'Better Health, Fairer Health' and priorities include reducing smoking levels, improving mental health and emotional wellbeing and increasing physical activity levels. All of these are risk factors for our major causes of death - cardiovascular disease and cancers.

As the Director of Public Health for County Durham I fully support the Durham County Council Health Improvement Plan and I anticipate it will help to reduce health inequalities in the county and improve the health of our residents.

I look forward to working with local authority colleagues as the Health Improvement Plan is delivered and to reviewing progress over the coming years.

Foreword – Councillor Eunice Huntington

We in Durham County Council recognise the importance of addressing health inequalities and improving the health and wellbeing of people living in County Durham. We know that having good health and positive emotional wellbeing is central to leading a happy, fulfilling life and underpins an individual's ability to reach their full potential.

It is important that we in DCC understand the impact that our services have on the health of the population we serve and we recognize the role we play in improving health. We are determined and committed to tackling health inequalities across County Durham, in order to achieve our ambition of being a County where the health and wellbeing of our residents are amongst the best in the Country.

Over recent years, a lot of good work has been delivered, aimed at improving the health of our local communities. Free school meals are now available for all children in County Durham, children, young people and those aged 60 or over can access free swimming, the smoking ban has had a huge impact, successful social marketing campaigns have taken place addressing issues surrounding alcohol consumption and smoking and various health improvement activities have been commissioned all strengthened and supported by excellent partnership working. This has all resulted in a move in the right direction, however within County Durham we still face a number of challenges and our health still falls behind that of England as a whole. Premature deaths from heart disease, strokes and cancers remain high, which is a result of our high smoking rates, excessive rates of alcohol misuse, poor diet and low levels of physical activity experienced by a proportion of our residents.

This health improvement plan demonstrates how Durham County Council will harness its resources and skills to work in partnership and improve the health and wellbeing of people in our local communities. The plan is divided into 10 themes detailing the different areas of work delivered by DCC that impact on health and wellbeing. These themes incorporate our top five priorities in which we will focus targeted action on in the coming years. Together, with our partners, we will make County Durham an altogether healthier place to live.

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Introduction

This Health Improvement Plan sets out Durham County Councils (DCC) strategic framework for improving health. It has been developed by DCC in consultation with partner agencies and members of the public. This plan demonstrates our commitment and contribution to improving health and addressing health inequalities within County Durham.

The plan is based on the regional health strategy, ‘Better Health, Fairer Health’ and the high level priorities for the County, which form our Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy, led by the County Durham Partnership. In addition, the plan has been developed to complement and support partner agency activities and the priorities detailed here, reflect the 10 PCT health outcomes set out in NHS County Durham’s Five Year Strategic Plan. The plan also complements the recently published Marmot Review into Health inequalities, stressing the importance of a preventative approach, addressing the wider, social determinants of health.

What is this plan about and why have we put it together?

Many of the factors that impact on health including wider determinants of health, such as education, environment, transport and housing are the concern of local government. So it is important that the Council recognises the crucial role we play in improving health and how the services we deliver impact on the health of the population we serve.

This plan has been developed to demonstrate not only our awareness of our role to play in improving health but also our ambition to use our resources and skills to work in partnership and improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities. It is also intended to be a reference document for other colleagues to support future work around health and wellbeing.

Following Local Government Review (2009), this plan updates the former DCC Health Improvement Plan (2008) and also encompasses the work of the former District Councils, detailing local health initiatives that we will continue to develop and deliver.

No one organisation can achieve better health and wellbeing in County Durham, and the County Council is committed to working with all relevant agencies to improve health. The County Durham Partnership is the county-wide Local Strategic Partnership bringing together key organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors, all aiming to make life altogether better for people in County Durham. The work of the Partnership is explained in the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Within the Partnership there are five thematic groups and the Health and Wellbeing Partnership has responsibility for the health and wellbeing agenda and overseeing the agreed local targets set out in the Local Area Agreement. These targets focus upon improving life expectancy, reducing health inequalities and improving mental health and wellbeing, recognising the particular problems we have in the county. We describe the work we are undertaking to address these in the ten themes of this Health Improvement Plan.

Why it's important to improve the health of County Durham

We know that health is an outcome of our everyday life, it changes over time, and can improve or worsen depending upon the conditions in which we live, our experiences and responses to them. Some factors are fixed such as gender, age and genetic inheritance. Others are variable such as housing, education, employment, where people live and the lifestyle choices they make. It is the inter-action between these which can lead to health inequalities and it is these factors that the County Council, Health and Wellbeing Partnership and the wider County Durham Partnership can influence.

The World Health Organisation defines health as:
“A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity”

Physical and mental health and wellbeing are essential foundations for a prosperous and successful County Durham, laying at the heart of higher levels of motivation, aspiration and ambition. Good physical and mental health increases efficiency and productivity of workforces and is critical to the economic needs of our County. It follows poor health costs County Durham through medical and social care needs, reduced productivity, higher levels of incapacity claimants and many other demands placed upon our services. These costs are felt acutely in our most deprived areas and in some population groups and the County Council together with other partners will target those in greatest need to reduce inequalities. (*Enabling Effective Health and Wellbeing – An Independent Report*)

Health inequalities in County Durham

In County Durham the health of our population falls behind that of England as a whole. We tend to have unhealthier lifestyles which lead to poor health outcomes and lower life expectancy than people living in other parts of the country. For example:

Life expectancy at birth is 76.5 years for men and 80.2 years for women in County Durham, compared with England which is 77.7 and 81.8 respectively. We also have significant health inequalities across our county with life expectancy differing between some areas by as much as 16.7 years for women and 12.2 years for men. Some of the reasons for these poor health outcomes are that early deaths from heart disease and stroke and early deaths from cancer are significantly worse for County Durham, compared to the England average. The contributory factors for these include smoking, lack of exercise, alcohol misuse and poor mental health. There is strong evidence linking poor health and deprivation. In County Durham 13% of the population live in areas ranked nationally as in the top 10% for deprivation and 31.6% in the top 20%. This equates to almost a third of the population. Areas of high deprivation are found predominantly in East, North West Durham and the Bishop Auckland, Crook and Willington areas, with Easington having the highest levels of deprivation, where 41.4% of the population falling within the national top 10% (*JSNA 2009, Co Durham Health Profile 2009*).

SOME HEADLINE FACTS ABOUT HEALTH IN COUNTY DURHAM

- It is estimated 24.5% of local adults smoke compared with 24.1% for England.
- The highest smoking rates are in Wear Valley (27.9%) and Sedgefield (27.3%)
- In 2007/08 21% of year 6 children in County Durham were obese, the rate for England was 18%
- Adult obesity rates are worse in County Durham (25.3%) than the England average (23.6%).
- An estimated 23% of adults in County Durham drink hazardous amounts of alcohol every week, the England average was 20%
- 24% of pupils in year 8 (12/13 years old) drink alcohol, with the figure rising to almost 53% by year 10 (14/15 years old).
- The under 18 conception rate for County Durham (2008) was 48.6 per 1000 girls compared to the England average of 40.4.

(JSNA 2009, Co. Durham health profile 2009, Teenage Pregnancy Unit)

(If you would like more details about the demand for services which improve health, together with other information we have used to write this plan, please see our Supplementary Information document)

Vision – Beyond 2010

Resolving health inequalities in our county presents major challenges. In the long term, our vision is to see an altogether healthier County Durham with improved life expectancy, reduced health inequalities and better mental health and wellbeing for our local residents. This vision supports and is shared by the Sustainable Communities Strategy, whose vision for 2030 of an altogether healthier County Durham is one with a strong focus on healthy lifestyles, which has significantly reduced deaths from cancers and

circulatory diseases, and almost eliminated health inequalities within the county. The overarching objectives of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, along with actions to achieve this vision can be seen below

1. Improve life expectancy
 - Reduce mortality from circulatory diseases
 - Reduce mortality from cancers
 - Reduce harm caused by alcohol
 - Reduce harm caused by drugs
2. Reduce health inequalities
 - Reduce obesity levels
 - Increase physical activities
3. Improve mental health and wellbeing of the population
 - Reduce suicides
 - Increase Social Inclusion
 - Maximise independence

Joint Delivery plans will be agreed to take forward the objectives set out in the Sustainable Communities Strategy. This plan will concentrate upon the work that the County Council will undertake over the next three years to contribute towards achieving this shared vision of an altogether healthier County Durham.

Setting priorities for the next three years

We know from local and national research and information that four specific lifestyle factors (tobacco, physical inactivity, excess alcohol consumption and poor diet) are among the biggest contributors to most preventable disease. As well as these lifestyle factors there is evidence that improving mental health and emotional wellbeing significantly improves physical health. These Lifestyle factors are seen

- Reducing Smoking and Tobacco Control
- Reducing the Harm Caused by Alcohol
- Physical Activity, Food and Nutrition
- Mental Health and Positive Emotional Wellbeing
- Tackling Poverty

as responsible for 42% of deaths of leading causes and around 31% of all disability-adjusted life years (World Health Organization, The European Health Report, 2009). For this reason we have selected these priorities

adding tackling poverty in recognition of the causal link between deprivation and health.

Scaling things up

We recognise that other factors are also vitally important to reducing health inequalities. There are some age specific issues for people aged over 50 which can enhance and improve life expectancy, similarly proactively working with children and their families and supporting young people approaching adult hood are times for which specialised work is needed. Actions for addressing our health priorities involve a combination of short, medium and longer term tasks based upon our analysis of population need and local feedback. We will seek to focus our efforts particularly on those geographical communities and communities of interest which experience the greatest levels of inequalities in health. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will assist with identifying these areas, together with tools such as Health Needs Assessment, Health Equity Assessments and GIS/'Mosaic' analysis systems. The County Council's "Think Family" strategy will also assist with working with specific communities to ensure a holistic approach to service delivery.

Scaling up interventions and focusing upon top priorities will be essential to achieving value for money and focusing upon things that matter. One example of this is the NHS County Durham Cardio Vascular Disease and Cancer screening programmes (to be implemented in 2010-11). We will work in partnership to support these important programmes in a number of ways, including aligning our social marketing activities, providing venues and opportunities to use our front line services to optimise coverage of the population as well as seeking the 'seldom seen, seldom heard' by working systematically with local communities, particularly through the evidence based model of health trainers, giving 'advice from next door, not on high'. These medium term activities can be enhanced by building our capacity for front line staff to improve health and wellbeing so that we maximise existing resources. The multi-agency strategies which underpin much activity within this Health Improvement Plan all recognise the value of using and sharing resources to target specific issues. Additionally our short and medium term health programmes will be at their most effective when they are complemented by wider policies such as supportive procurement and employment practices.

Delivering upon health inequalities requires processes we implement now to consider the longer term implications and health benefits for County Durham. Integral to this will be our Health Impact Assessments used to assess the health benefits and risks of key strategies such as our Housing Strategy. Similarly the education and support we provide for our children and young people today builds an investment for County Durham tomorrow, just as ways in which we plan for green and clean communities now will impact upon the longer term health for future years, and building our economy in 2010 creates a more sustainable and healthy environment for people beyond 2015.

The way in which the council plans, arranges and delivers services as well as how it works both as a local authority and as an employer directly influences the experience and circumstances of local people. For this reason our Health Improvement Plan has ten themes incorporating our five priorities. The themes reflect those in the regional strategy Better Health, Fairer Health and capture the broad

extent to which the council can and does improve health and wellbeing.

Each of the ten health improvement themes has an accompanying action plan which details existing work and new developments that DCC will undertake to meet the health needs of the local community. These action plans reflect

Theme 1	Smoking and Tobacco Control
Theme 2	Alcohol and Substance Misuse
Theme 3	Physical Activity, Food and Nutrition
Theme 4	Mental Health and Positive Emotional Wellbeing
Theme 5	Tackling Poverty, the Economy and Wider Determinants of Health
Theme 6	Children and Young People (inc. teenage pregnancy and sexual health)
Theme 7	People Aged 50 and over
Theme 8	Addressing inequalities in our communities
Theme 9	Healthy Working Lives
Theme 10	Becoming a Stronger Health Improving Organisation

comments and suggestions made to us whilst developing our work around health improvement. They incorporate a combination of different approaches to improving health and wellbeing such as focusing upon geographic areas, or population groups or specifically tackling causes of ill health such as heart disease. This is to ensure that we use the best way of working where we can, for instance sometimes it will be more appropriate to introduce initiatives at whole population level (free school meals for example), or targeting particular communities or groups of people (free swimming for children, young people and adults aged 60 and over) and in other instances we have introduced activities which work with individuals to help them improve aspects of their health such as increasing physical activity or healthy eating (health trainer programme for example). The action plans are informed by local best practice as well as national evidence such as NICE guidance.

Actions and key measures will be incorporated into Performance Plus TM, the performance management system used by DCC, to monitor the progress of the Service Improvement Plans across the Council. Where these actions contribute to the National Indicators around health and wellbeing then this information is also shared with the Health and Wellbeing Partnership allowing us to monitor progress, report back on developments and detail achievements in improving health. The work undertaken to support the Health Improvement Plan will also be reported to Cabinet/Council and our Adults, Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee each year.

Insert images

Theme 1 – Smoking and Tobacco Control



Why is smoking a problem in County Durham?

Addressing smoking and tobacco control is known to be an effective way to reduce health inequalities (*Beyond Smoking Kills – ASH 2008*) and the County Council has a major role to play in achieving this, both within our own workforce and within the wider community. Tobacco remains the number one cause of preventable death and ill health, with smoking being the biggest contributor to the shorter life expectancy experienced locally (*North East Public Health Observatory, 2004*). Within County Durham, we have greater numbers of smoking related deaths than elsewhere in the Country (274.6 per 100,000 compared to the national average of 210.2). Smoking is the major contributing factor to the high cancer and CVD rates experienced in the County. Of particular concern is the number of mothers who smoke during pregnancy, 22.5% of pregnant women in County Durham smoke, compared with the National average of 14.7%. Presenting risks including miscarriage, premature birth and low birth weight and longer term health problems. Smoking amongst young people is alarming, an estimated 1 in 6 year 10 pupils (14/15 years) smoke, with twice as many girls smoking than boys (*JSNA 2009*). Youth smoking causes both short and long term health problems with research showing that “the earlier a child becomes a regular smoker, the greater the risk of developing lung cancer or heart disease” (*BMA Board of Science. Breaking the cycle of children’s exposure to tobacco smoke. British Medical Association, London, 2007*).

Who do we work with? Partnership working is essential to address tobacco control and smoking. The County Council are key partners in the local Tobacco Alliance, along with NHS County Durham and Fresh Smoke Free North East. The Tobacco Alliance Action Plan is currently being updated in light of the recent visit from the National Support Team for Inequalities and the National Tobacco Strategy

(DH February 2010). This action plan will detail areas of work that partners will concentrate their efforts on and will guide the work of the County Council around smoking and tobacco control.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference?

Our aim is to reduce smoking prevalence and smoking related preventable deaths and illness. To achieve this we will:

- Work with partners to deliver the County Durham Tobacco Control Action Plan
- Reduce exposure to second hand smoke by using intelligence and enforcement to maintain smoke free places.
- Reduce the availability of tobacco working locally and regionally to tackle illicit supplies and underage sales
- Support stop smoking services by providing community based venues to target specific groups and geographic areas
- Use media and communications to implement social marketing strategy based upon local market segments
- Enhance consistent health messages by working with direct front line services such as libraries and sports and leisure
- Educate children and young people to understand the risks of smoking and use schools to provide stop smoking advice
- Use local knowledge and information to deliver work around the different strands of tobacco control
- Develop training plans for front line staff to help them give brief advice and signposting to stop smoking services
- Support our staff to stop smoking particularly our routine and manual occupations
- Monitor and evaluate our progress using local and national targets including:
 - NI 123 – Stopping Smoking
 - Completed programmes of intelligence led test purchases
 - Delivery of targeted enforcement initiatives
 - Tobacco action plan in place and being monitored

Theme 2 –Alcohol and Substance Misuse

Why is Alcohol a problem in County Durham?

Evidence shows excessive alcohol use, both binge and chronic drinking, is a major cause of health and social harm in the County. Binge drinking rates are high with County Durham ranking 11th in the 20 most problematic binge drinking locations in the UK (BALANCE). Hospital admissions for alcohol related harm are also higher than UK averages as is treatment for alcohol related conditions (alcohol harm reduction strategy 2009-2012). Alcohol misuse amongst children and young people is of particular concern in County Durham with 39% of children in Year 8 and 10 reporting that they always or sometimes drink alcohol (*2009 Children and Young People's survey*). Young people are potentially putting themselves at risk of long term health problems through early and excessive alcohol misuse and rates of alcohol related hospital admissions for young people under 18 are particularly high, with Durham ranking 138 out of 152 Primary Care Trusts in the U.K (Joint Strategic Intelligence Threat Assessment Crime and Disorder, Nov 2009).

There is a strong link between alcohol and crime and disorder with almost 1 million incidents of alcohol related violence occurring nationally each year (2008/09 British Crime Survey). Alcohol abuse can lead to (or be caused by) family breakdown, domestic violence and compromised parenting; in 2006-7, 50% of the children subject to care proceedings in County Durham referred to problematic alcohol use by parents or carers (Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB, Hidden Harm Strategy).

Who do we work with? Partner agencies recognise the harm caused by excessive use of alcohol, the Safe Durham Partnership involving the County Council, NHS County Durham, the Police, Probation and Fire Services are working together to reduce the difficulties experienced in County Durham arising from the harmful use of alcohol. The agencies have agreed a County Durham Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy and the County Council's work regarding alcohol is now co-ordinated through the implementation of this multi-agency strategy in conjunction with BALANCE, the Regional Alcohol Office.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference?

Together with partner agencies our aim is to reduce the harm caused by alcohol including the amount of hazardous drinking and alcohol related illness, and the negative impact this has upon all our communities. To achieve this we will:

- Implement the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for County Durham
- Deliver multi-agency communication and targeted social marketing campaigns based upon local and national segmentation
- Build the capacity of our workforce by raising knowledge and awareness of the problems caused by alcohol
- Provide brief interventions training to front line workers to offer advice and signposting to where people can get help
- Provide alcohol free venues and events for young people using sports, leisure and cultural opportunities
- Utilise statutory PHSE (in 2011) to strengthen messages about alcohol and risk taking behaviours
- Provide children and young people with education, tools and activities to help them make sensible decisions around alcohol
- Control harm by tackling alcohol related incidents, disorder and irresponsible promotions.
- Improve the management, planning and control of liquor licensing and supply
- Work to ensure a safe night time economy with measures to limit crime and anti-social behaviour
- Treat the harm caused by alcohol with social work support in the Community Alcohol Service
- Undertake joint commissioning to co-ordinate and develop services for people who misuse alcohol
- Provide support from Family Pathfinder Teams and Family Intervention Projects to limit homelessness or child care proceedings
- Monitor and evaluate our progress using local and national targets including:
 - NI 20 Assault with less serious injuries
 - NI 39 Rate of hospital admissions per 10,000 for alcohol related harm
 - Local indicator – Number of alcohol users in effective treatment

Why is substance misuse a problem in County Durham?

Most problematic drug users in treatment across County Durham are heroin and opiate users, with stimulants (crack cocaine and amphetamines) and cannabis the second most prevalent drug types. However, this is largely skewed towards treatment services and is likely to be an underestimate of problematic drug use across the County, especially the use of cocaine and stimulants which is thought to be widespread across the night time economy (Joint Strategic Intelligence Threat Assessment Crime and Disorder, Nov 2009).

Who do we work with? - The Council works in partnership to address the preventative, treatment and control elements of substance misuse. This work is overseen by the Drugs and Alcohol Action Team who commission drug Treatment Centres across the county.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference?

With partner agencies we are working to reduce the numbers of people misusing substances and the associated harm. We will:

- Provide specialist curriculum resources and support in all schools, ensuring they know how to deal with the problem as it arises
- Build the capacity of our workforces with drugs awareness training
- Respond to local audits of Hidden Harm and shape practice accordingly
- Control the supply of substances by undertaking programmes to prohibit underage sales of substances
- Support arrest referral programmes
- Treat the harm caused by substance misuse by providing social work support to all Treatment Centres
- Undertake joint commissioning activity to co-ordinate and develop support services for individuals
- Monitor and evaluate our progress through local and national indicators including:
 - NI 40 -Numbers of drug users in effective treatment

Theme 3 – Physical Activity, Food and Nutrition

Why is the uptake of physical exercise and diet a problem in County Durham?

“After smoking, the second most important threat to the population’s future health is probably the rise of obesity. Tackling this is far more complicated than combating tobacco. The problem arises from a combination of behaviours rather than one specific action, few foods are unequivocally ‘bad’ for you, and much can be attributed to lack of exercise and general physical activity rather than any deliberate act.” (*Better Health, Fairer Health 2009*).

Obesity is a risk factor for cancer, results in an increase in diabetes, impacts on life expectancy and poses a significant risk to the future health of our population. Estimated adult obesity rates indicate that 25.3% of the adult population living in County Durham are obese, compared with the England average of 23.6%. It is a similar picture for children and young people, with reports showing 21% of Year 6 children are obese, compared to the England average of 18.3% (*2007/08 National Childhood Measurement Programme*). In addition, we know that breastfeeding contributes towards tackling childhood obesity and in County Durham we have much lower rates of breastfeeding initiation than elsewhere in England.

The most effective way to achieve a healthy weight is through a combination of eating a healthy balanced diet and increasing physical activity, therefore, if we are to tackle obesity we need to address food and nutrition as well as exercise. In a recent Sport England, Active People Survey (July 2008-July 2009), only 15% of adult respondents living in County Durham, take part in at least 3 activity sessions per week of moderate intensity for at least 30 mins. This compares to 16.5% of adults nationally. Estimates of the proportion of adults who eat 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day (based on the characteristics of the local population), show that rates are significantly lower in County Durham than the England average. This not only contributes towards difficulties in maintaining a

healthy weight, but also reduces the wider health benefits associated with a diet rich in fruit and vegetables, such as protection against heart disease and certain cancers.

Who do we work with? The County Council works with a wide range of public and private agencies to plan and deliver healthy activities. For the immediate future our physical activity programmes will be developed through the multi-agency Physical Activity Strategy for County Durham which is due for publication shortly. An important element of this will be supporting the PCT funded 'Changing the Physical Activity Landscape' programme which targets adults aged 40-74 and their families, to encourage increased physical activity particularly walking, cycling, swimming and dance. The underlying rationale of this programme is to reduce the incidence and risk of coronary heart disease for people in the county, therefore helping to reduce health inequalities.

In relation to food and nutrition, Durham County Council can encourage and support local residents to address their diet and eat a balance of good foods. There are many activities that we deliver to assist with this, ranging from curriculum materials and activities within schools, youth clubs, nurseries and Sure Start centres, to providing allotments and adult learning. Specialist therapy and independence services all have a part to play as does exercising regulatory powers to monitor food nutritional values and food safety through Trading Standards and Environmental Health responsibilities. The County Council works with a number of partners to help promote healthy food and nutrition across the county in a wide range of settings. This includes environmental health agencies, NHS County Durham as well as local suppliers, voluntary agencies and food co-operatives.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference?

Physical Activity: Together with partner agencies we want to see more people of all ages taking up physical activity and enjoying exercise as part of their day to day life, particularly to minimise the risk factors associated with Coronary Heart Disease, Cancers and Long Term Conditions. To achieve this we will:

- Implement the County Durham Physical Activity Strategy
- Establish a robust delivery system for sport in the County which engages all stakeholders
- In partnership with NGBs Clubs ensure effective pathways are in place to make it easier to participate in sport
- Provide advice and information about the importance of healthy activity, and where and how to find activities
- Deliver free swimming for young people under 18 and those over 60
- Deliver Exercise on Prescription, helping people to stay well for longer
- Commission services for people aged 50 and over to help them to maintain physical wellbeing and prevent falls
- Take national planning regulations into account to make it easier for people to enjoy outside spaces
- Maximise our cycling and foot paths to encourage people to take exercise outdoors
- Deliver a programme of events that promote greater use of our parks and countryside
- Provide National Standard Cycle Training (Bikeability) for 9-11 years
- Implement our Cycling and Rights of Way Strategies to develop our foot paths and cycling infrastructure further
- Maintain our Healthy Schools awards
- Use walking buses to increase the numbers of children walking to school
- Use local school sports co-ordinators to help children and young people find and use sport activities.
- Support and monitor schools to increase the amount of school sport and after school activities

- Implement local play strategies which keep young children active
- Monitor and evaluate our progress using local and national targets including:
 - LTP2 12 - The average number of cycling trips
 - NI 8 - The numbers of adults participating in sport
 - NI 57 - Children and young people's participation in high-quality PE and sport
 - Number of children and young people aged 7 to 14 taking up sporting opportunities
 - Increased participation in healthy activities
 - the percentage of young people engaged in 2 hours of school PE/sport per week
 - the percentage of young people engaged in an additional hour of PE and school

insert image Co Durham Physical Activity Strategy – when finalised

insert images children and young people, older people, babies

Food and Nutrition: It is important that greater numbers of people eat a healthy and nutritional diet. Wherever possible, local and sustainable supplies will help to ensure the freshest and most nutritious food available. To achieve this we will:

- Work with partner agencies to implement the Food Action Plan devised by NHS County Durham
- Provide advice and information to local communities about nutrition and diet
- Use our procurement arrangements to support local and healthy food supplies
- Monitor school food provision to ensure it meets minimum food based and nutritional standards
- Provide free school meals for two years to primary schools in collaboration with NHS County Durham

- Support schools with strategies to support the uptake of school meals
- Upgrade/refurbish all school kitchens allowing staff to cook healthy food from fresh ingredients on site
- Implement our Healthy Schools Awards in all our schools
- Work with partners to promote healthy eating and food safety including Café Lite
- Introduce healthier foods pilot into in-house residential care provision to include homes who are caring for older people
- Review meals and internet shopping provision to adults eligible for social care
- Ensure specific standards of nutrition in our residential homes for older and vulnerable people
- Provide adult learning classes to encourage cooking and healthy eating
- Use regulatory powers to monitor the safety of foods
- Implement Scores on the Doors programme so that people have good information about where to eat out
- Continue to make allotments available for people who want to grow their own food
- Work with local food co-operatives to ensure local supplies of fresh food
- Deliver targeted social marketing activities to promote the uptake of healthy diets
- Monitor and evaluate our progress using national and local measures including:
 - NI 52 – Take up of school lunches
 - NI 55 - Obesity in primary school age children in Reception
 - NI 56 - Obesity in primary school age children in Year 6

Theme 4 – Mental Health and Positive Emotional Wellbeing

"Good mental health is more than the absence or management of mental health problems; it is the foundation for well-being and effective functioning both for individuals and their communities. Mental well-being is about our ability to cope with life's problems and make the most of life's opportunities; it is about feeling good and functioning well, as individuals and collectively." (*New Horizons, Dept of Health mental health strategy consultation*)

Why should we tackle mental health and positive emotional wellbeing in County Durham?

Mental health impacts on all aspects of our lives including physical health, educational achievement, relationships and employment. Good mental health underpins our ability to live healthy, happy, fully functioning lives. In addition to the 'top four', there is strong evidence to suggest that improving mental health and wellbeing significantly reduces physical (as well as psychological) ill health.

County Durham has high rates of mental ill health and high rates of worklessness due to poor mental health, with 42.6 per 1000 working age population claiming incapacity benefit for mental health, compared to the England average of 27.7 per 1000 (*2009 County Durham health profile*). Suicide rates are also higher in County Durham compared to national figures, although they are lower than regional rates. Between 2005 – 07 80% of deaths from suicide were male, and 20% female, with rates peaking in the 35 – 44 age group for men (*Refreshed five year strategic plan 2008 – 12*)

In addition, we are experiencing a financial recession which exacerbates risk factors. County Durham has seen the greatest percentage increase in unemployment across the North East region, an increase of 104% between July 2008 and July 2009. Similarly, the numbers

claiming Job Seekers Allowance in County Durham is up by 112% on the year, indicating that an increased number of people living within the County may be at risk of poor mental health.

Who do we work with? Improving mental health and emotional wellbeing involves a broad approach to encompass the links between positive mental health and employment and training, the benefits of cultural and arts opportunities upon emotional wellbeing as well direct service provision for young people and adults eligible for social care support. This means the Council works closely with employment and training agencies, the Citizens Advice Bureaux, Learning and Skills Council, and independent sector and voluntary agencies including cultural and arts providers. The Council are key partners on the NHS led Mental Health Improvement Groups and will work in partnership to plan, arrange and deliver local services.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference?

We want to reduce the high levels of mental ill-health in our county, particularly mental health related worklessness, self harm and suicide, and the numbers of people who experience depression, stress and anxiety. To achieve this we will:

- Deliver advice and information about mental health to local communities
- Undertake a social marketing and awareness campaign which supports Time to Change
- Work with local partners to ensure a wider supply of counselling and support services including bereavement services.
- Work with partners to commission services which address risk factors including relationship counselling, debt advice and support
- Deliver our Joint Commissioning Strategy for mental health services in County Durham
- Provide Welfare Rights advice and support to increase benefit uptake for people on reduced incomes
- Offer people with mental health needs are offered co-ordinated support and advice in respect of gaining and maintaining a tenancy
- Encourage and support volunteering, including implementing a Staff Volunteering Scheme

- Co-ordinate with partners approaches to employment, volunteering and training for people with mental ill health
- Encourage physical activity as an effective way to tackle stress, anxiety and depression and help to raise self esteem
- Make available a range of arts programmes and events to promote wellbeing
- Provide a range of adult learning opportunities for people to develop emotional wellbeing
- Deliver Mental Health First Aid training to our front line staff to build their understanding of mental ill health and how to help people they come into contact with
- Support the people who work for the council by being a 'Mindful Employer'
- Monitor and evaluate our progress using local and national indicators including:
 - NI 119 – Self reported measure of overall people's health and wellbeing
 - PSA 16 N149 – Adults receiving secondary mental health services in settled accommodation
 - PSA 16 N150 – Adults receiving secondary mental health services in employment
 - LI - Number of people with a mental health problem progressing from employment support into education, training, volunteering and employment
 - Number of people with mental health difficulties enrolling onto adult learning courses
 - Adults with mental health problems helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 18-64
 - Evaluation of programme of events in LLC venues to promote wellbeing

Theme 5 – Tackling Poverty, the Economy and the Wider Determinants of Health

Why are poverty, the economy and wider determinants of health a problem for County Durham?

Financial stability, education, safe, secure housing and other wider determinants of health all impact on an individual's ability to live happy, healthy lives and reach their full potential. This section references the challenge of tackling poverty, which underpins an individual's ability to maintain good health and other wider determinants which the County Council can influence and direct to ensure positive health and wellbeing.

There are strong connections between levels of income and resources and an individual's health, wellbeing and fulfilling their potential. There are more than 60,000 residents claiming out-of work benefits in the County of which more than 30,000 are on Incapacity Benefit or the new Employment Support Allowance. This suggests that there are significant levels of people within County Durham facing financial exclusion. The recent Director of Public Health report for County Durham noted that 26% of children and young people are living in poverty (DPH Report 2009).

Wider determinants of health include the type of home people live in and whether they can afford to maintain it and keep it warm, how easily people can get out and about, whether there are opportunities for employment locally and if people are supported to train to improve their skills and life chances. The environment in which people live and work, directly impacts upon health and wellbeing.

Who do we work with? Working to improve the wider determinants of health means the Council collaborating with a wide range of partner agencies in their specialist fields. To support this, there are detailed working plans available which explain how particular issues are going to be tackled.

For example creating and maintaining and 'Altogether, Wealthier' County Durham is a corporate priority and the County Council and the County Durham Partnership has committed to raising median earnings. This encompasses: A Thriving Durham City, Vibrant and Successful Towns, Competitive and Successful People, Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities and A top Location for Business. The council is also working to deliver a Think Family way of working which will include ways to tackle poverty within families.

The new Local Development Framework (LDF) is currently out to consultation on the issues facing the County. The LDF is the spatial plan of the Sustainable Community Strategy and has a key role in ensuring that we support and promote healthy, green, clean and safe spaces – planning for exercise, cycling and walking to deliver sustainable communities.

A new Housing Strategy for County Durham is currently in development which will detail all aspects of strategic housing, housing solutions (inc homelessness), housing renewal and improvements and supported housing. The strategy is due for completion by July 2010 and will be overseen by the Durham Housing Forum. Within the strategy, health and wellbeing has been identified as a priority.

The Safe Durham Plan explains the work the Council is undertaking to reduce levels of crime across the county and how it will improve levels of reassurance and help people to feel safer at home and when out and about in County Durham

A Cultural strategy – 'Inspire and Transform', is being developed. The strategy details future cultural developments and aspirations across County Durham, including the bid for first British City of Culture prize in 2013. The strategy covers a 3 year period from 2010 – 2013 to align with the City of Culture programme which, regardless of the competition outcome, will provide a firm basis for the longer term cultural successes across County Durham.

LTP3 is the new transport plan which will be commencing in 2011, this plan specifically makes the links between two national goals:

- Contribute to better safety, security and health.
- Improve Quality of Life and a healthy natural environment.

What we want to achieve and what we are going to do to make a difference

Tackling Poverty: We want to reduce the levels of poverty experienced across County Durham. As well as the strategic plans to improve our economy locally other specific actions include:

- Develop new corporate approach to tackling disadvantage and deprivation and finalise the Financial Inclusion strategy
- Develop the Child poverty needs assessment and strategy in line with the Child Poverty Bill 2009
- Making available financial inclusion services: Home Insurance; Affordable Credit; Appropriate Bank Accounting; Savings:
- Making financial services easier to access for people living in financial exclusion
- Developing Credit unions/co-ops
- Maximising the income of residents through Welfare Rights campaigns
- Delivering Family-First, a Job Centre Plus pilot looking at the family unit as the focus.
- Deliver Fuel Poverty and Home insulation measures
- Future Jobs Fund- support to help local residents back into employment and helping local businesses
- Increasing the number of young people in full time learning;
- Delivering the 'January and September Guarantee' of a learning place for all 16 and 17 year olds
- Encouraging public sector organisations to recruit young people
- Work with local people to support their employment related information, advice and guidance needs through libraries and other community venues

Wider Determinants: With local, regional and national partners we are working to achieve an ‘Altogether Better Durham’ with each of the wider determinants of health playing their part to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in County Durham. Actions to deliver upon other wider determinants of health will be monitored and evaluated through the specialist plans being put in place including the Children’s and Young People’s Plan, Housing Strategy, Cultural Strategy, and Regeneration Statement. We will monitor and evaluate our progress using local and national indicators through the County Durham Partnership and our Local Area Agreement. Those detailed below capture the range of activities involved: For example:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NI 151 – Overall employment rate ▪ NI 152 – Working age people on out of work benefits ▪ NI 166 – Median earnings of employees in the area ▪ NI 171 – New business registration rate ▪ NI 117 The number of 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training - LAA C&YP 10a ▪ NI 164 Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 3 or higher ▪ NI 47 - People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents ▪ NI 48 - Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents ▪ NI175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NI 195 - Improved levels of street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting) ▪ NI 196 - Improved levels of street and environmental cleanliness (fly tipping) ▪ NI 58 - Percentage non-decent council homes ▪ NI 141 - Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living ▪ NI 154 - Net additional homes provided ▪ NI 155 - Affordable homes delivered (gross) ▪ NI 156 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation ▪ NI 187 - Tackling fuel poverty – Percentage of people receiving income based benefits living in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> homes with a low energy efficiency rating ▪ NI 9 – Use of public libraries ▪ NI 10 - Visits to museums or galleries ▪ NI 11 - Engagement in the arts ▪ NI 110: Young peoples participation in positive activities |
|--|--|---|

If you would like more information about the specific actions that will be undertaken for each of the wider determinants of health, please see our supplementary information

Theme 6- Children and Young People

Why Children and Young People's health is important

We want all children to have the best possible start to life and ensure that their holistic needs are met at every stage of their development. In order for children and young people to be the best that they can be, we know that they need to have good all round health and active lifestyles. We know that poor health is cross cutting and can lead to disadvantages across many other areas of a child or young person's life. Poor health can result in higher rates of obesity, reduced opportunities in later life, low self-esteem and poor educational attainment. By tackling poor health, we can help children and young people to lead more fulfilling lives and believe, achieve and succeed in whatever they do.

Durham County Council has a key part to play in ensuring that all children and young people are healthy which include:

- Reducing childhood obesity
- Reducing teenage conceptions
- Reducing children and young people's misuse of alcohol and drugs
- Improving children and young people's emotional wellbeing
- Improving places to go and things to do

Obesity amongst children has increasingly become a national and local problem which impacts on health, wellbeing and life expectancy. We know that childhood obesity in County Durham is reducing and we have been successful in achieving our obesity targets for children in reception year and year 6 in 2009/10. However, rates are still above the national average for year 6 children and we recognise that further work is required.

Having children at a young age and without access to support networks can be harmful to the young parents health and wellbeing and can severely limit their own education and career prospects, as well as those of their children. County Durham has high rates of teenage conceptions compared with the rest of England. In 2008 the rate of conceptions for County Durham was 48.6 per 1000 population of 15 to 17 year olds, compared to the national rate of 40.4 (*Teenage Pregnancy Unit*).

Alcohol and drug misuse impacts upon the health and quality of life of young people and can lead to anti-social behaviour within communities. It has clear links to liver damage, cancer, heart disease, digestive and mental health problems. We know that the number of young people drinking alcohol and using substances in County Durham continues to cause concern. Results from the National Tellus 4 survey (2009) shows that substance misuse in County Durham has increased by 1.1% over the last year and is higher than the national average.

We fully recognise that positive emotional wellbeing, including self esteem and confidence, underpins successful outcomes across all of our priorities. It creates the basis for stable families and communities and for securing improved outcomes for young people throughout their lives. An analysis of common assessment has highlighted emotional wellbeing as a particular concern and one which we must address.

Improving health outcomes requires a multi-faceted approach. One of the key areas where we can improve health outcomes by promoting emotional wellbeing and reducing the trend of increasing obesity rates is by encouraging children and young people to take part in positive activities by providing a range of, and access to, quality provision – both things to do and places to go. One of the most significant issues that children and young people have told us about is the need to increase the availability of places to go and things to do. The ‘places to go, things to do’ strategy will promote a wider range of leisure activities as well as addressing barriers such as affordability.

There have been a number of positive projects and initiatives undertaken in the last 12 months that have a positive impact on the health of children and young people.

Free School Meals - Success in a bid to be one of 2 Local Authorities in the country to participate in the universal Free Primary School Meals Pilot. The pilot provides free school meals to all primary school pupils in County Durham for the 2 academic years commencing September 2009. Early success of the implementation of this pilot has seen the take up of primary school meals rise from 49.5% in November 08 to 84.7% in November 09.

National Healthy Schools Status (NHSS) In Dec 2009, 99.6 % (227) of primary schools had achieved National Healthy School Status. This surpasses the LAA stretch target of 95 % of primary schools achieving the status by December 2009. In total 262/276 (92.8%) of all County Durham schools have achieved NHSS.

Free Swimming -The national offer of free swimming sessions for children and young people has been extended by the Local Authority to include young people aged 17 and 18.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference?

The vision of Children and Young People's Services (CYPS), in line with the Children's Trust is to:

'Improve the quality of life by helping County Durham's children and young people believe, achieve and succeed'.

Achieving our vision will require the coordinated effort of all agencies working with and for children and their families, including Durham County Council. Through our Children's Trust, we will work together to develop and deliver the best possible services and opportunities for all children and young people. The strategic, multi-agency plan that drives the work of the Children's Trust is the

Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which sets out what all agencies for children and young people are committed to working towards over the period 2009-2012. The CYPP has 11 Key Improvement Priorities (KIPs) – developed as a result of a thorough review of performance information, views of children, young people and their families and taking into account local and national trends, patterns and drivers for change. The CYPP and the KIPs are owned at the highest level, through the strategic Children's Executive Board and through the plans of partner organisations. The priorities within the CYPP are also reflected within the '*Altogether Better for Children and Young People*' priority within the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Council Plan and within the CYPS Service Improvement Plan. This strategic linkage of plans enables us to ensure actions and measures are complimentary and add value to one another whilst making sure that we maximise our potential as a partnership to make outcomes for children and young people within County Durham better.

In meeting this vision, we know that we require an integrated and co-operative approach to both commissioning and service delivery. In recent months, there has been a move towards more integrated working, through the establishment of integrated teams and joint commissioning arrangements. DCC and our partners work together to commission and deliver services that impact upon the health of children and young people. To improve the health and wellbeing of children in County Durham, our work will focus upon all 11 priorities identified within the CYPP with particular focus on the 5 health- related priorities shown above:

- Support schools with information and advice via individual school contracts to assist in achieving the healthy eating criteria of the enhanced National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP) – Building on the current 97.5% of schools that have the basic healthy schools standard
- Deliver National Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE) / Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme to increase the number of teaching staff achieving national accreditation
- Deliver CPD for Parent Support Advisors

- Deliver Sex and Relationships education (SRE)
- Establish effective commissioning arrangements and a performance management framework for the new Integrated Substance Misuse Service
- Support schools to develop SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- Provide targeted support programmes which contribute towards improving the emotional wellbeing of children
- Contribute to the Targeted Mental Health in Schools Project (TaMHS) as appropriate, which includes the delivery of Webster Stratton and Listening Matters programmes
- Fully implement the 'places to go, things to do' strategy to increase the range and quality of opportunities
- Complete the participation report
- Complete the annual review
- Develop the youth offer to support positive activities and youth work for young people locally, in partnership with Local Children's Boards via commissioning and utilisation of funding
- Monitor and evaluate our progress through local and national indicators including:
 - NI 50 - Emotional Health of Children
 - NI 55 - Percentage of children in reception with height and weight recorded who are obese
 - NI 56 - Percentage of children in Year 6 with height and weight recorded who are obese
 - NI 110 – Young People's participation in positive activities
 - NI 112 - Under 18 conception rate (% change from 1998 baseline)
 - NI 115 - Substance misuse by young people

Theme 7 –People Aged 50 and Over

Why is it important to work with Older People?

Almost all of the themes in this Health Improvement Plan will include and involve people aged 50 and over. However there are some specific needs associated with ageing which we are covering here, which local people have told us are important to them and in recognition that our older population is rising. Between 2007 and 2026 the number of older people over 65, 75 and 85 years old will increase by 49.89%, 71.4 and 115.2%. This is significant as in 2008/09 older people (those over 65) accounted for 79.9% of service users receiving a social care service, with 29.8% of over 65s in County Durham self reporting their general health as 'not good' compared to 21.5% across England (Co Durham Health Profile- 2001 self assessed).

Who do we work with? Almost all the partnerships and joint working described elsewhere will capture and include the needs of older people. In addition there is the Partnership Board for Older Adults, a multi-agency partnership that has a specialist focus on older people's health and social care issues, and engages and involves older people to influence and shape future services. Following consultation the Partnership Board for Older Adults has agreed four areas they want to take forward. These are:

- Having enough income and managing the costs of fuel
- Reducing Social Isolation
- Dignity in Care
- Information and Communication to effectively develop and share the work of the Partnership Board to partners including older people

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference

With our partners we want older people to enjoy healthier lives. To achieve this and priorities set by older people we will:

- Provide information and advice about staying well and where and how to find services
- Providing leisure, community, and arts to promote health and reduce social isolation
- Deliver a programme of adult learning opportunities to help people become active citizens and reduce social isolation
- Commission services that work in communities to put older people in touch with one another and ensure their voice is heard
- Maximise income through welfare rights campaigns
- Support fuel poverty and winter health initiatives eg: the Rights to Warmth Campaign,
- Direct targeted activity to ensure older adults are safe eg registered traders schemes, and doorstep crime initiatives
- Support NHS County Durham's health checks programme with a team of Health Trainers
- Invest in services to maintain independence, including falls prevention, Age Concern Message in a Bottle
- Work with partners to Implement the Intermediate Care Strategy and Action Plan
- Use resources effectively to provide care and support to help growing numbers of older people to remain at home
- Review existing mechanisms for engaging and consulting about health and social care services with people aged 50
- Develop a Commissioning Strategy for older people with NHS County Durham and the Partnership Board for Older Adults
- Develop a strategy for the use of cultural activities for older people
- Monitor and evaluate our progress through local and national indicators including:
 - NI 125 - Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care
 - NI 139 - The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home
 - Older people helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 65 and over
 - People aged 65+ per 10,000 population admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care
 - Number of people over 50 involved in consultation on older persons issues

Theme 8 – Addressing Inequalities in our Communities

Why is it important to address inequalities in our communities?

We know that there are some particular groups in our communities who experience difficulties or disadvantage that limits their health and wellbeing. There are some specific communities of interest that we focus our work upon which include:

- Carers
- People with physical and learning disabilities
- People who require sensory support.
- People who are at risk of domestic abuse.
- People from the Gypsy and Travelling community
- People from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community. (LGBT)
- Ethnic communities and people who have migrated to the area perhaps for personal or socio economic reasons.

More details of the inequalities faced by specific groups can be found in the supplementary information

Who do we work with? The broad nature of these different communities takes the Council into different partnership arrangements. Specifically these include the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, the Safe Durham Partnership, as well as the working arrangements for Gypsies and Travellers and our equalities and diversity initiatives with different groups and communities. To reflect the specialist nature of work taking place there are detailed multi-agency plans which provide more including the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers, the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disabilities, and the County Durham Domestic Abuse Strategy.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference

We want to ensure all groups and communities experience equal opportunity to improve their wellbeing. To achieve this we will:

- implement our joint commissioning strategy for carers

- implement our joint commissioning strategy for learning disabilities
- Provide support to carers who wish to take up employment opportunities
- Work with the Learning Disability Partnership Board and Parliament to implement the Valuing People Now programme
- Work with Police on the development of the Hate Crime Action Plan.
- Review the Transitions service for children and young people with disabilities when moving into services for adults
- Provide safe and accessible support services to victims and children of domestic abuse
- Support the co-ordination of MARAC and implement across the remaining areas of County Durham
- Progress the refurbishment of the Council owned Gypsy and Traveller sites
- Provide adult learning, family learning opportunities to improve basic skills
- Commission a health needs assessment for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Communities in County Durham
- Develop a strong framework for Equalities and Community Cohesion for the new authority
- Develop a consistent approach to engaging with, supporting and funding communities of interest and identity
- Improve status against Equality Framework for Local Government
- Monitor and evaluate our progress through local and national indicators including:
 - NI 34 - Number domestic homicides per 1,000 population
 - Adults with physical disabilities helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 18-64
 - PSA16 NI 145 Adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation
 - PSA16 NI 146 Adults with learning disabilities in employment
 - NI 135 - Number of carers (all service user types) receiving a specific carers service as a percentage of service users receiving community based services.
 - NI 23 – Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and dignity

Theme 9 – Healthy Working Lives

Why are healthy working lives important?

The benefits of creating healthy working lives are two-fold; that local people enjoy the protection of legislation to protect them from environmental and work related hazards and secondly to optimise the work place as a health promoting setting. By protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of people at work, and effectively managing any health issues which arise at work, individuals, their families and ultimately whole organisations and communities can all benefit.

Who do we work with? To fulfil its role to protect people's health and improve health and safety standards of businesses within County Durham, the Council works widely with independent and voluntary sector businesses and suppliers, as well as with the Health and Safety Executive and Health Protection Agency.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference

We want to work proactively and support local businesses to fulfil legislative requirements as well as to explore their role as places where people can easily improve their health and well being. To achieve this we will:

- Deliver In partnership with the Health and Safety Executive the FIT3 strategic programme “Fit for work, Fit for life, Fit for tomorrow” involving a range of interventions aimed at reducing work related ill health, injury and days lost.
- Undertake a programme of inspection of businesses using risk based interventions
- Investigate service requests relating to health and safety standards
- Investigate work related incidents

- Provide advice and information on health and safety issues to businesses and members of the public
- Ensure compliance with the law using proportionate enforcement methods in accordance with DCC Enforcement Policy

Healthy Working Lives – Durham County Council

The broader health improvement priorities that we have described in this plan, apply to people working for the County Council just as much as they do to the population across County Durham, and this is reflected in our future work plans for improving the wellbeing of the people working for the Council.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference

The creation of the new unitary authority in 2009 with around 25,500 employees gave an unprecedented opportunity to forge a new vision and culture for Durham County Council as an 'Altogether Better Durham'. To achieve improved health of the workforce we will:

- Develop a People Strategy that clearly expresses the people management interventions that impact on the achievement of corporate objectives.
- Review our HR policies and procedures to incorporate promoting a healthy workforce and continuing to be a Mindful Employer.
- Provide a suite of HR policies that is fit for purpose and accessible to managers and employees
- Reduce absence levels across the organisation and create a positive attendance culture.
- Develop a health and safety management system which encourages strong leadership in championing the importance of and a common sense approach to, Health and Safety in the workplace.

- Ensure systems and formal, recognised mechanisms for the management of health and safety that demonstrates the council's commitment to health and safety in the workplace.
- Establish an infrastructure which engages the workforce in adopting a healthier lifestyle
- Provide a range of support services accessible to the workforce in addressing health problems including targeted smoking cessation for people in routine and manual occupations
- Provide Mental Health First Aid Training to appropriate groups
- Provide support and opportunities to help people to take more exercise
- Work to achieve healthy workplace award following the advent of unitary status

Theme 10 – Becoming a Stronger, Health Improving Organisation

The role of the County Council

Leading the way in partnership with other agencies to address health inequalities means the Council using its resources as effectively as possible. This section of the plan describes what we will be doing to build our organisational capacity to improve health and reduce health inequalities for the people of County Durham some of the mechanisms we will use are given below:

Health Scrutiny – Scrutiny which includes our local councillors, works to bring the views of local communities into planning and delivering health services, to work in partnership with the NHS to discuss plans for “substantial” changes at an early stage. Additionally the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Adults, Wellbeing and Health has the power to scrutinise both local authority and local NHS services, ensuring those bodies are publicly accountable for the decisions made.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill places a duty to co-operate between Durham County Council and the Primary Care Trust in preparing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This describes the future health, care and well-being needs of residents of County Durham to ensure that the health and social care response more closely meets the needs of local people.

Health Impacts Assessments - Health Impact Assessments can ensure new ways of working and policies have considered their impact upon the health of the local community.

Responsible Procurement - The Council can play a significant role in improving health through responsible procurement. Corporate Procurement take a sustainable view of all commissioning and procurement activity focussing on a balance between social, economic and environmental factors including well-being. Future procurement will consider requirements of stakeholders,

strategic partners and internal customers. Procurement includes ensuring a strong and vibrant voluntary sector to ensure that people have a choice of locally sensitive and appropriate services and support.

Understanding Local Health Priorities: Community Engagement - We know that an engaged, active and empowered community is a healthy one. To ensure the council engages with all communities and understands local priorities, we are working with fourteen Area Action Partnerships (AAP) to identify and agree priorities for each area. To date the AAPs have focused upon priorities that touch upon either improving health directly or the wider determinants of health. Local action plans will be put in place by the AAPs to enhance the relevant multi-agency plans.

The County Durham LINK supports community involvement in decisions about health and wellbeing, strengthening public scrutiny and consultation. The LINK is also expected to be able to influence decisions about commissioning and priorities by supporting communities to comment and advise on needs.

The Third Sector (voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises) has a central role to play in supporting communities providing them with support and delivering services directly. There are thousands of small groups providing advice and personal support to individuals and for these to be developed and thrive they in turn need support. DCC currently supports ten 'local infrastructure organisations' – including the six Councils for Voluntary Service and the Rural Community Council. These develop and support voluntary and community activity at local level or with 'communities of interest and identity'

Building our Capacity: - We believe that Health is Everybody's business and this means we will be working towards developing health champion and advisor roles throughout the organisation, with access to training and support to make this a reality in conjunction with NHS County Durham

- This includes County Councillors taking part in a leadership programme with health partners and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).
- Brief intervention training on aspects of health and wellbeing for front line staff, to provide the necessary knowledge and awareness for them to raise, discuss and offer brief interventions where this is appropriate.

We now have a dedicated Healthy Lifestyles team to work towards improving health and reducing health inequalities across the County. Communities for Health (C4H) monies (a grant from the Department of Health) also provide the council with resources to tackle health inequalities. Previous C4H money (managed by the former District Councils) has been used to develop and support leisure activities, counselling services and training programmes. The County Council are currently working in partnership with NHS County Durham to develop a new County wide health trainer programme to support the NHS Health Check programme. Health Trainers will engage individuals into the health checks programme but will also engage in preventative work with individuals at risk of Cardio vascular disease and support those that need help in addressing behaviour change.

What we want to achieve and what are we going to do to make a difference

The creation of the new unitary authority in 2009 with around 25,500 employees gave an unprecedented opportunity to forge a new vision and culture for Durham County Council as an 'Altogether Better Durham' with a number of priorities including, becoming 'Altogether Healthier' and Altogether Safer'. To improve the capacity of our organisation to improve health and wellbeing we will:

- Improve consultation and engagement by the Council and key public partners
- To continue to work with the County Durham Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Partnership to deliver Local Area Agreement Targets

- Report to Scrutiny each year upon progress with the Health Improvement Plan
- Continue to develop and build our understanding of local need reflected in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- To work with all partner agencies to explore ways of developing and delivering new health initiatives based upon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment findings
- Implement our People Strategy to build capacity of people working for the council
- Explore how we will build capacity in our staff to understand and effectively play their part in improving health including targeting Health is Everybody's Business towards front line staff
- Health Impact Assess initiatives in conjunction with NHS County Durham
- To work with partner agencies to establish local health networks
- Develop a Third Sector Strategy
- To work with AAPs and for each AAP to develop a strategy to engage with hard to reach groups linked to an overarching corporate approach

Looking Ahead

The creation of a unitary authority for County Durham presents immense potential for a whole range of front line services to add value to the work of one another in order to resolve and address issues presenting as health inequalities. Some of these may take a long time to resolve, whilst in many instances there are some immediate ways in which we can help people to make the lifestyle choices that will help to improve their longer term wellbeing. This Health Improvement Plan together with the action plans which underpin it, captures the Council's key contribution to both the short and longer term work that we need to do to reduce health inequalities across our County.

We have also produced a Supplementary Information document to support the plan, which is available on request. The Supplementary Information details more about the wider determinants of health and how services are working to address these, as well as the sources and types of information we have used to put this plan together.

If you would like more information about this plan please contact Emma Golightly on 0191 3872099 or via email: emma.golightly@durham.gov.uk

This plan is also available in other formats on request