

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024

Cabinet
16 October 2024

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Director of Public Health

The Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024

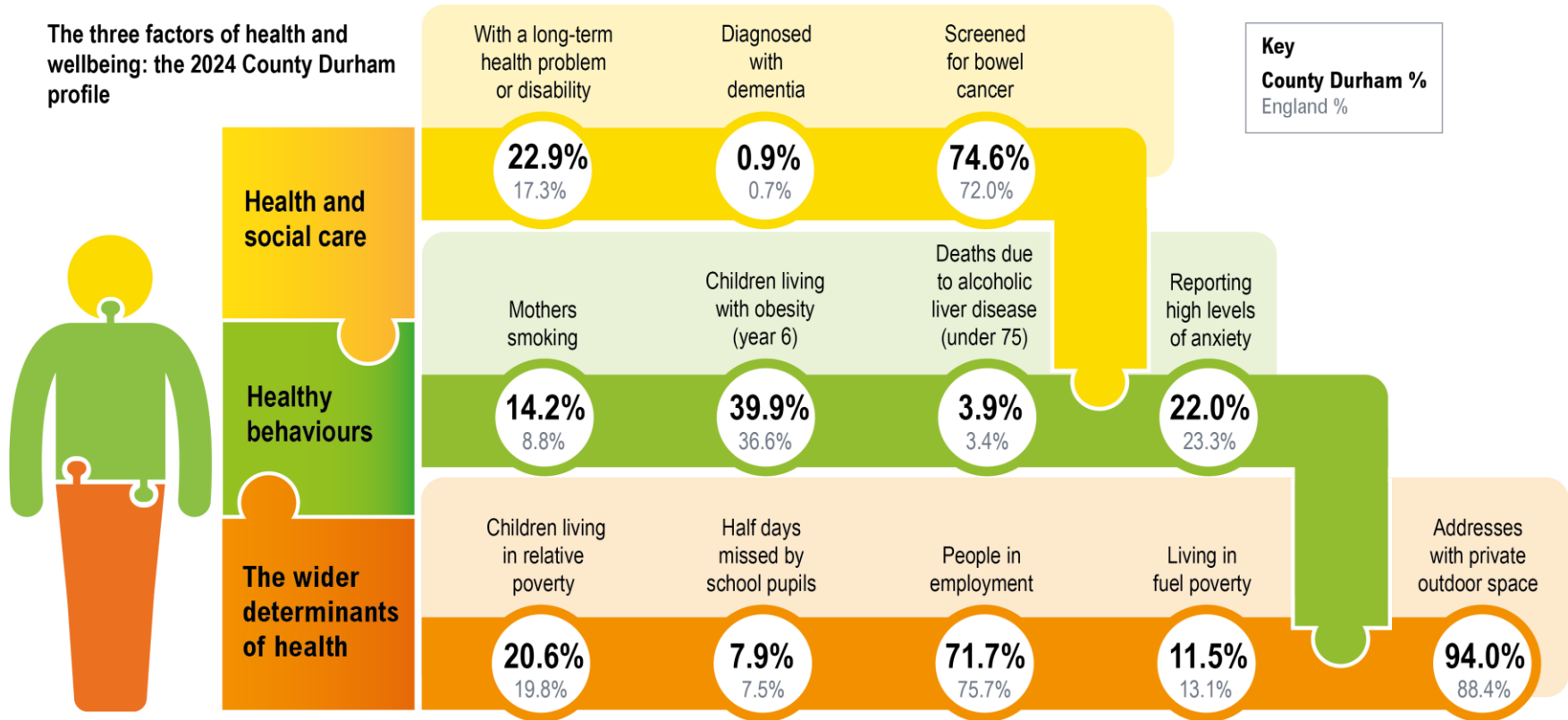
Unfair and avoidable

Looking ahead to health in 2040



Health of our people

- We focus on the three factors which make the biggest contribution to lives being cut short; health and social care, healthy behaviours and the wider determinants of health.
- The infographic below provides some examples of how we are doing in County Durham and the challenges we face.



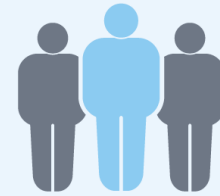
Health of our people

Mothers smoking at time of delivery equity analysis

- Smoking when pregnant is a leading cause of preventable harm and health inequalities in County Durham.
- Currently, around **1 in 7** mothers smoke at the time of giving birth, which is significantly higher than the average for England.
- We conducted an equity analysis to understand more and to identify inequalities across the county.

Our key findings were:

There is a significant difference in smoking rates among mothers across County Durham. In some areas, as many as **1 in 3 mothers smoke**, whereas in other areas, the rate is less than 1 in 20.



- The areas with the highest smoking rates have remained the same since our previous analysis, with only two areas showing a significant reduction in smoking rates.
- Babies born to mothers who smoke are more likely to live in the most deprived areas.
- The inequality in smoking rates has widened, indicating that the risks for mothers and babies are not evenly distributed across the county.

Health of our people



Sharing Decision Making
Designing and developing services and initiatives working with the people who need them.



Empowering Communities
Working with communities to support their development and empowerment.



Using What Works
Everything we do is supported by evidence informed by local conversations.



Being Asset Focused
Acknowledging the different needs of communities and the potential of their assets.

The County Durham Approach to Wellbeing



Working Better Together
Across sectors to reduce duplication and ensure greater impact.



Doing with, not to
Making our interventions empowering and centred around you as an individual.



Building Resilience
Helping the most disadvantaged and vulnerable build up their future resilience.



Better for everyone

Health of our people

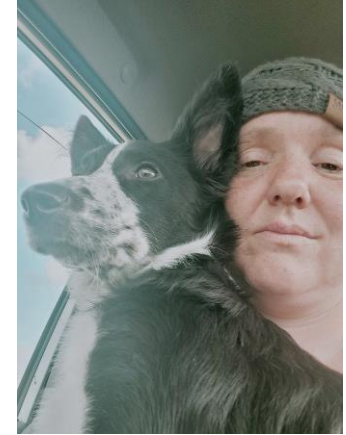
Evidence into practice

Becky Land is a farmer in County Durham and is passionate about the effects of poor mental health on the farming and rural communities.

“We live in some of the most beautiful parts of the country, but we face some of the worst hardships, physically and mentally.”

Becky wanted to play an active role in supporting fellow farmers to access health services and signed up to become a Community Champion. This led to Becky working with Healthwatch County Durham who were developing a survey consultation for the farming community about access to services.

One example of active change from Becky's involvement has seen a local GP surgery providing a successful walk-in clinic for farmers. Of those attending 63% required further treatment or investigations. Health issues discovered included diabetes, hypertension, asthma and cardiovascular disease (CVD) which otherwise would have gone untreated.



Becky and her dog Whisper



Future health of our people

How many people are living with major illness in County Durham now and what may the future look like?

By 2040, over 86,000 people,

around **1 in 5**

of the adult population in County Durham could be living with major illness.

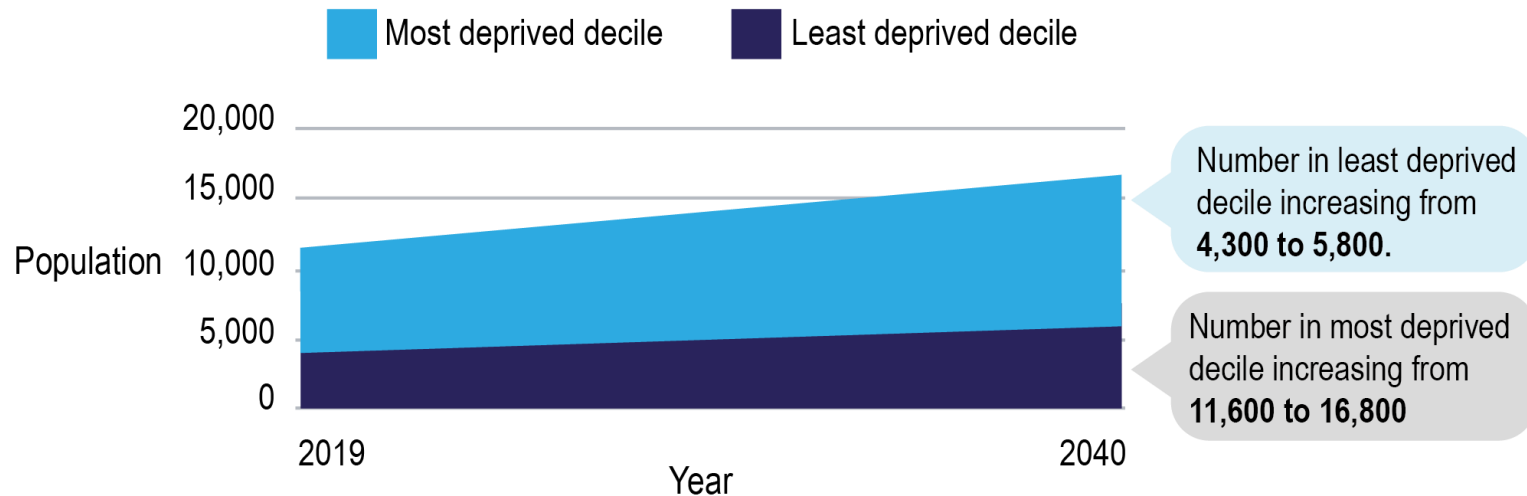


That's an increase of **39%**
24,000 people

Future health of our people

Inequalities

- The projected rise in major illness and specific conditions in County Durham by 2040 will not be spread evenly across the county.
- We predict a **46%** increase in major illness in the most deprived areas versus **35%** in least deprived.
- The number of people with major illness is predicted to increase by **5,200** (11,600 to 16,800 people) in the most deprived communities.
- Whereas in the least deprived communities it is predicted to increase by **1,500** people (4,300 to 5,800 people).

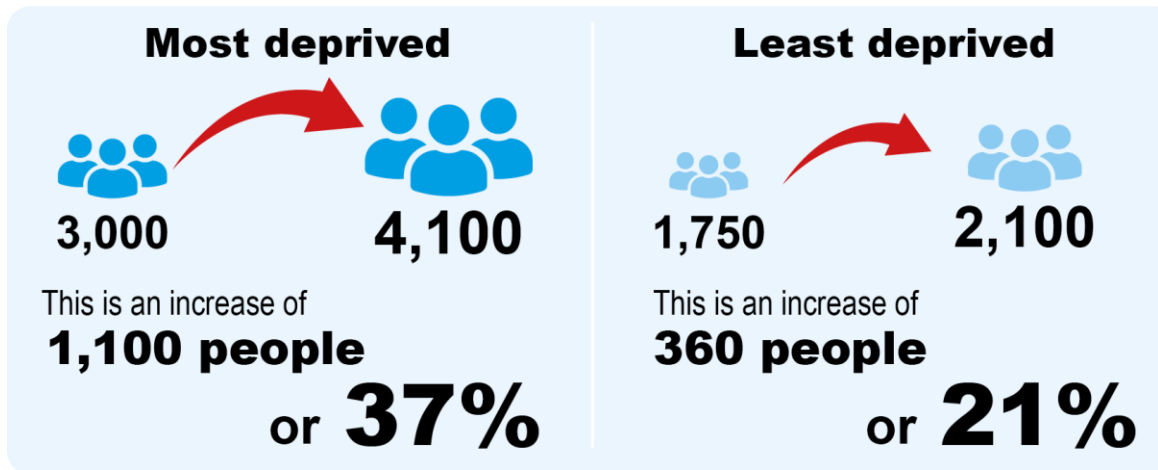


Future health of our people

Cancer projections and inequalities



Projected increase in all Cancer prevalence in the most and least deprived areas in County Durham, to 2040.



Future health of our people

Anxiety and depression projections and inequalities

By 2040, a total of

89,700

people in the county could be living with anxiety/depression.



That's an increase of **17,400 people (24%)**

Projected increase in Anxiety prevalence in the most and least deprived areas in County Durham, to 2040.

Most deprived



6,400

8,300

This is an increase of

1,900 people

or **30%**

Least deprived



1,650

1,800

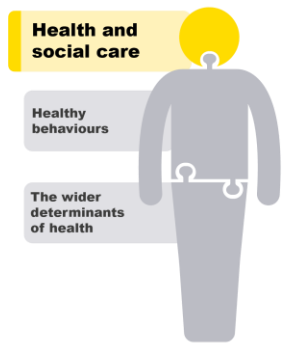
This is an increase of

150 people

or **9%**

Health and social care

It is estimated that around 15% of a person's health status are met by health and social care services.



Integrated maternity services in County Durham

- The first 1,001 days, from conception to age two, are crucial for a child's development and growth.
- During this time, babies' brains and bodies develop rapidly.
- It is essential that during this time families receive adequate antenatal and postnatal care.

Evidence into practice

The Matron for Health Inequalities plays a key role in connecting maternity services with family hubs. These hubs offer a range of support, like breastfeeding help, emotional support for parents, and parenting advice.

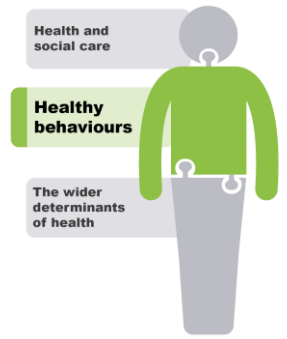
The Matron works with lots of health and social care partners to improve care pathways, ensuring families are supported not just during pregnancy and birth, but also as they navigate broader health issues.



Maternity Support Workers

Healthy behaviours

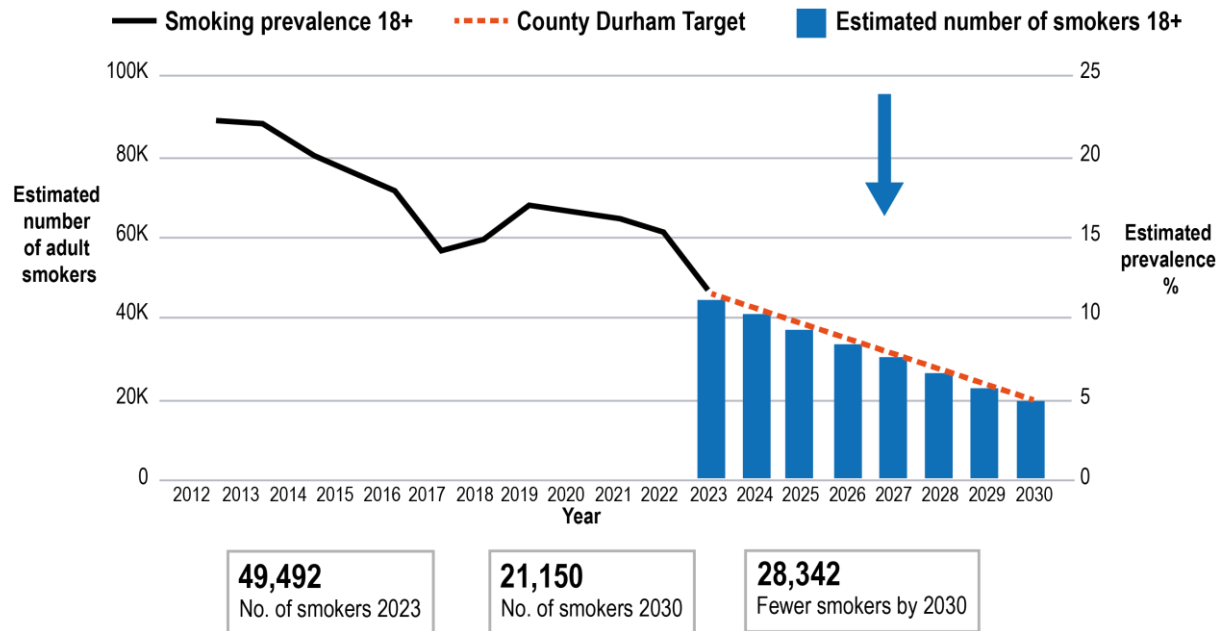
It is estimated that around 40% of a person's health is influenced by our behaviours.



Making smoking history

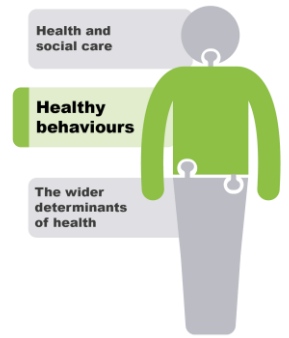
- Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the UK.
- In County Durham, around **894** people die each year from causes linked to smoking which could have been prevented, **1 in 9** (11.7%) adults smoke and around **1 in 7** (14.2%) mothers smoke during pregnancy.

In County Durham we want to reduce the number of people smoking to 5% by 2030...



Healthy behaviours

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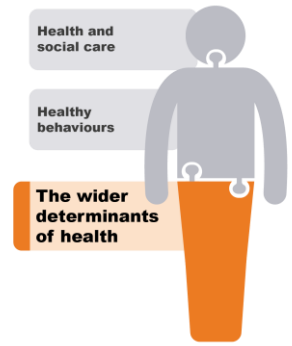
Reducing the rates of alcohol related cancer

- Cancer is one of the leading causes of death in County Durham.
- Our projections show a potential 33% increase in cancer prevalence by 2040.
- A major contributor to a person's likelihood of developing cancer is drinking alcohol.
- Balance delivers alcohol and cancer public awareness campaigns including the widely acclaimed Alcohol is Toxic campaign which details the journey of alcohol through the body, mutating cells and leading to the formation of a tumour.



Wider determinants of health

It is estimated that around 45% of a person's health is determined by the social, economic, and environmental conditions in which they are born, grow up and live.



Education as a protective factor

- In County Durham **1 in 7** pupils are achieving a good level of development at the end of reception, however we know that for children eligible for free school meals this falls to **1 in 5**.

Evidence into practice

We worked with education system partners to identify key issues children and young people are struggling with. School staff and young people told us that mental health and emotional wellbeing was their main concern, particularly anxiety, emotional regulation, and self-esteem.

Dr Peter Mulholland, Strategic Manager for Specialist SEND & Inclusion Support, and Principal Educational Psychologist shared his thoughts about collaborative working:

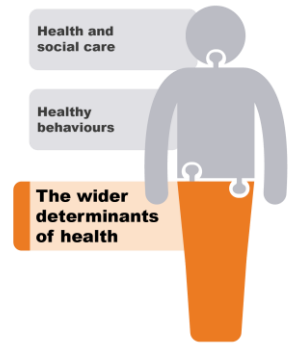
Public Health has helped us focus on how we can support the mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people from the earliest opportunity, promoting prevention and early intervention in our work.”



Dr Peter Mulholland

Wider determinants of health

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Safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse

- It is estimated that around **1 in 4** women and **1 in 6** men experience domestic abuse.
- Domestic abuse is a major contributor to poor physical and mental ill health, for example victims of domestic abuse, including children and young people, are more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression and chronic pain.

Evidence into practice

Children and young people living within refuge in County Durham can access 1-1 therapeutic support.

Feedback from families:

“We have loved being included in activities and loved cooking the food together as well as the 1 on 1 support for us both. “

“Thank you for keeping in touch even when we have left refuge, we needed it during all this change.”



Recommendations

Some examples from the annual report:

Future health of our people

- We will translate the projections into local ambitions, similar to smoking prevalence and focus our attention on the actions which will lead to the greatest reduction in unfair differences in health and wellbeing for our people.

Health and social care

- Ensure that services remain focused on early intervention and support, identifying gaps in care and making sure all families can easily access these essential services.

Healthy behaviours

- To achieve the 5% smoking prevalence rate by 2030, we must continue to use tools like the health equity audit and the collective influence of the County Durham Tobacco Alliance to ensure that we continue to target resources, tackle inequality, and promote equity of access to those at greatest risk.

Wider determinants of health

- Continue to work with partners to deliver a comprehensive and systematic offer of support to victim/survivors of domestic abuse, including children and young people alongside work with perpetrators and those who cause harm.

Conclusion

- Looking forward – focusing this year’s annual report on the future health of County Durham residents.
- Projected increases in major illness.
- Unfairly distributed across the county.
- The inequalities are unfair and avoidable.
- Further work on how we can reduce these inequalities to be set out in future annual reports
- It will require all partners to focus on these inequalities, working with our communities.