

Health and Wellbeing Board

25 January 2018



Working Towards a Healthy Weight in County Durham

Report of Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health, Durham County Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present 'Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham' 2018.
- 2 To provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on the work of The Healthy Weight Alliance which is accountable to County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board and to seek support for this document to be publicly available in hard copy format and electronically via Durham County Council website.

Background

Obesity – the national and local context

- 3 The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gave statutory duties for local authorities to take appropriate steps to improve the health of the population. This included developing interventions focused on healthy weight.
- 4 Obesity impacts upon people's lives. Across generations it affects our physical and mental health, our quality of life and our risk of developing chronic diseases. Obesity levels are rising nationally and locally, without action, the health of individuals will continue to suffer, health inequalities will remain and economic and social costs will increase to unsustainable levels. This will have profound long term consequences for the health and wellbeing of communities in County Durham.
- 5 The World Health Organisation regard childhood obesity as one of the most serious global health challenges of the 21st century. Whilst rates of excess weight and obesity in children in County Durham largely follow national trends our starting point was higher and our rates remain significantly worse than those of England. There is concern about the level of childhood obesity and the implications of such persisting into adulthood. Levels of overweight and obesity within child and adult populations across County Durham remain unacceptably high - doing nothing is not an option.
- 6 Every year, as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), schoolchildren in reception (4-5 years) and year 6 (10-11 years) are weighed and measured to inform the planning and delivery of local services for children. Each year around 11,000 County Durham children are included in the programme.

Figure 1: Excess weight in children, age 4-5 and 10-11, County Durham, 2016/17. Source: NHS Digital, NCMP.

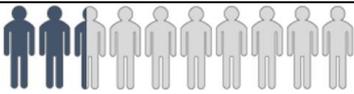
	24%	4-5 year olds in County Durham have excess weight (around 1,400 children or 46 classrooms across the county).
	38%	10-11 year olds in County Durham have excess weight (around 2,000 children or 67 classrooms across the county).

Figure 2: Prevalence of excess weight and obesity in children aged 4-5 years and 10-11 years, County Durham and England, 2016/17. Source: NHS Digital, NCMP.

	Number excess weight	% excess weight	Number obese	% obese	Number excess weight	% excess weight	Number obese	% obese
England		22.6%		9.6%		34.2%		20.0%
County Durham	1,381	24.1%	590	10.3%	2,024	37.7%	1,214	22.6%
	4-5 years				10-11 years			

	Significantly worse than England
	Not significantly different to England

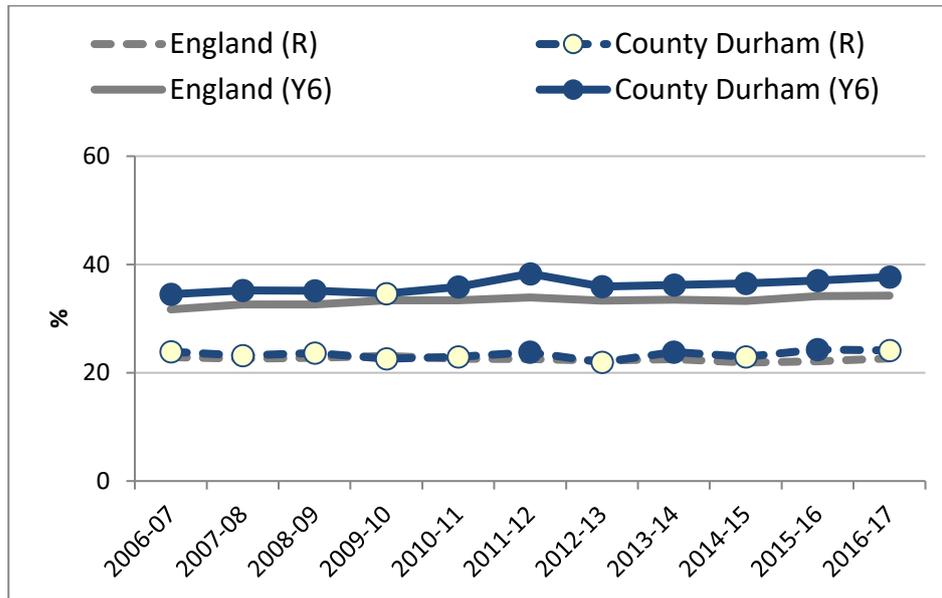
Children aged 4-5

- Almost a quarter of children in County Durham aged 4-5 (24.1%) were measured as having excess weight in 2016/17 (figure 1 and 2). That is almost 1,400 children or 46 classrooms. Over 10% were measured as obese. That is almost 600 children or 20 classrooms (figure 2).
- Excess weight in children of reception age in County Durham is statistically significantly higher than England (figure 2).
- There has been little change in excess weight for 4-5 year olds over time locally (0.8%) compared to a slight decline nationally (-1.2%) (figure 3).

Children aged 10-11

- Over a third of children in County Durham aged 10-11 (37.7%) were measured as having excess weight (figure 1 and 2). That is over 2,000 children or 67 classrooms. Over 22% were measured as obese (figure 2). That is over 1,200 children, or 40 classrooms.
- Excess weight in children aged 10-11 in County Durham is statistically significantly worse than the England (figure 2).
- There has been a gradual increase in excess weight over time in County Durham (8.0%) and England (9.3%) (figure 3).

Figure 3: Prevalence of excess weight in children at reception and year 6, County Durham and England, 2006-07 to 2016-17. Source: NHS Digital, NCMP.



- Significantly worse than England
- Similar to England

As we know, there are many factors that contribute towards overweight and obesity. Other key indicators highlight the challenge of preventing this issue within County Durham.

Figure 4: Selected indicators related to excess weight in children. Source: Child Health Profiles, Fingertips, PHE.

		County Durham	North East	England
Low birth weight of term babies	2015	2.8	2.8	2.8
Breastfeeding initiation	2014/15	57.6	60.1	74.3
Breastfeeding prevalence 6/8 weeks	2015/16	28.1	31.4	43.2
Children in poverty (under 16s)	2014	23.9	24.9	20.1
Children with one or more decayed, missing or filled teeth	2014/15	35.1	28.0	24.8

Significantly worse than England
Not significantly different to England

7 Obesity is a strategic priority for County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board. The County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board Healthy Weight Framework 2014 – 2020 aims to develop and promote evidence based multiagency working and strengthen local capacity and capability to achieve a sustained upward trend in healthy weight for children, young people and for adults in County Durham.

- 8 The Healthy Weight Alliance is accountable to the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board, and is County Durham's main partnership that is tackling the healthy weight agenda and taking forward the objectives of the Healthy Weight Framework. The overarching purpose of the Healthy Weight Alliance is to develop and improve strategic system wide partnerships that are committed to reducing the prevalence of obesity in County Durham.

A whole system approach to addressing obesity nationally and locally

- 9 The Government has stated its commitment to tackle obesity and is introducing a range of levers including a soft drinks industry levy and reducing the sugar content in foods. Locally the challenge is how we build upon national guidance, best practice and national developments to bring about real change within our local communities. In County Durham, the Healthy Weight Alliance is using national plans and guidance to influence from community and public sector levels to ensure we address this challenge together.
- 10 Obesity is not just a public health or health service challenge; it is underpinned by a large number of very different but often interlinked causes. Our work so far makes it clear that unhealthy weight impacts on every aspect of the work of the council and our stakeholders – on the environment, on local business, on how people use our public spaces, on individuals, their families and their communities.
- 11 The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence suggest that obesity needs to be tackled as a whole system - this is the overall strategic focus for County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance. Durham County Council was selected as one of only four pilot local authorities in England to take part in a major national programme, funded by Public Health England and delivered by Leeds Beckett University, which aims to create a whole system approach to obesity.
- 12 In County Durham work on this programme began at the end of 2015 and is continuing until autumn 2018. This programme focusses on working with the 4 Local Authorities within the pilot programme to explore their experiences and create a route map that is meaningful and feasible for Local Authorities, and which is workable for the specific circumstances of obesity. To maximise the use of good practice and share this learning more widely Leeds Beckett University are now beginning work with a further 6 Local Authorities to share the draft route map to gain more feedback and test out feasibility nationally.
- 13 In County Durham, work with Leeds Beckett University has identified a need for strategic actions that require multiple partners in order to encourage a system wide response. As a mechanism to progress this work, four strategic themes have been developed around; leading by example, give every child the best start in life, improving play and engaging the system.

The vision for County Durham

- 14 Our long term vision is that: *'In implementing and embedding this work we will halt the rise in obesity in County Durham by 2022 and, by focussing resources upon addressing inequalities, see a sustained decline in obesity rates locally to below England national average by 2025.'*

Achieving our County Durham vision

- 15 To achieve our long term vision ***to halt the rise in obesity in County Durham by 2022 and, by focussing resources upon addressing inequalities, see a sustained decline in obesity rates locally to below England national average by 2025*** our whole systems ambitions require multi agency drive and commitment and we have identified key ***long term goals*** within the system where further and sustained engagement is essential. Actions include:
- Address environments that promote the development of obesity.
 - Promote, support and sustain active travel opportunities.
 - Encourage and enable people to use the local environment to be more active.
 - Explore and challenge social perceptions and social norms.
 - Give children the best start in life by addressing excess weight in early years, setting children on the path to healthier habits for their future.
 - Influence the local food environment to enable people to make healthier choices.
- 16 From 2017, going forward, our ***short and medium term*** goals include:
- 1) Work with planning and licensing colleagues to develop public health driven policies specifically around hot food takeaways and street trading.
 - 2) Development of training and support materials to enable licensing and environmental health staff to raise awareness of Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering within routine discussions with clients.
 - 3) Support Health & Wellbeing Board and Healthy Weight Alliance partners to develop and action pledges made to support the Durham Sugar Smart campaign.
 - 4) Implement and embed the Early Years Food Scheme.
 - 5) Further embed healthy eating and physical activity within individual school improvement plans to support Active 30 campaign, Durham Sugar Smart and link into County Durham Oral Health Strategy.
 - 6) Undertake a review of the Childhood Obesity Pathway.
 - 7) Support Durham County Council, around the healthy eating and physical activity components, to progress within the Better Health at Work Award.
 - 8) Work with Business Durham to engage the business sector across County Durham to inform the development of approaches to tackle obesity.
 - 9) Work with County Durham Community Foundation to further develop community grants to promote healthy eating, physical activity and access to green spaces.

'Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham 2017'

- 17 *'Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham 2017'* builds upon the 2015 annual Director of Public Health Report *'Obesity. An issue too big to ignore ... or too big to mention?'* This report:
- Presents an overview of work developed to address obesity at a national level and locally by County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance at a system wide level since 2015.
 - Outlines the continuing challenges faced in relation to obesity in County Durham and identifies whole systems ambitions and short and medium term goals going forward from 2017.
 - Sets out the current national and local context and the evidence base underpinning the need for continued action to address obesity.
- 18 The issues County Durham faces in relation to obesity have not occurred suddenly, they have developed out of a gradual combination of processes underpinned by a large number of very different but often interlinked causes. Drawing upon learning from our work to address teenage pregnancy we can see that over time the very clear downward trajectory in rates of teenage pregnancy has been achieved by addressing multiple components over a substantial period of time. As with teenage pregnancy, no single approach or focus, in isolation, will be effective in tackling obesity.

Proposed outcomes

- 19 It is proposed that.
- (a) Hard copies of this document are made available for Health and Wellbeing Board members, key stakeholders and the wider audience.
 - (b) The document is available electronically and a link to the document published on Durham County Council website.

Recommendations

- 20 HWB Board are requested to:
- (a) Note the content of *'Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham' 2018*.
 - (b) Continue to provide commitment to and support for the ongoing work to address obesity across County Durham.
 - (c) Endorse the publication and wider circulation of *'Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham' 2018*.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – design and print costs for publication of *‘Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham’* are within existing resource.

Staffing – N/A.

Risk – N/A.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – *‘Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham’* outlines work to date and work currently planned to address obesity within County Durham, undertaken by Durham County Council Public Health team and partners within County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance. This work aims to promote equality and diversity and seeks to reduce inequality and target resources in accordance with need.

Accommodation – N/A.

Crime and Disorder – N/A.

Human Rights – N/A.

Consultation – N/A.

Procurement – N/A.

Disability Issues – N/A.

Legal Implications – Legal advice will be sought if required.