

## CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH – COUNCILLOR COLLETT

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### **Healthy Futures Advisor – Drugs and Alcohol and Sexual Health Services**

It is acknowledged that Drug and Alcohol dependency is a significant cause of worklessness. There is a strong evidence base, which confirms that individuals who engage with treatment and ultimately find employment are more likely to maintain sustained recovery. Therefore, employment, training and education are an important aspect of a drug and alcohol client's recovery journey, which brings benefits to the individuals and society. Additionally the service will also support HIV clients.

The Public Health directorate commission Positive Steps to employ an employment advisor, which offers specific intensive, individualised one-to-one support, which includes help with CV writing, job search, completing application forms, interview techniques and signposting to other services and training. The worker will offer intensive support and full access to a menu of interventions, which would include:

- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) from qualified staff
- Supported job search sessions
- Group employment focused workshops
- Support to source and access appropriate training or short courses
- Support to source and access basic skills training and qualifications
- Self-employment support
- Support to access volunteering or sector specific work placements

The service has been operating since November 2013 and positive outcomes are already being realised. To date 67 referrals have been made to the service and of these 22 have already completed the programme and have been successful in obtaining employment. Examples of employment secured are roles with engineering, hotel work, catering and in the care industry.

### **HIV testing week**

National HIV Testing Week took place in November and the campaign was used to encourage actively those most affected by HIV in Blackpool to consider taking an HIV test. These groups include gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM).

The aim of the week was to increase awareness and acceptability of HIV testing among these groups and increase access to HIV testing in both community and statutory settings in order to improve early diagnosis and treatment of HIV (and thus reduce onward transmission).

New and innovative ways of reaching communities outside of traditional clinical settings have long been established in Blackpool. Access to testing was increased by extending the availability of testing times and widening the target groups through additional outreach in locations such as Blackpool and Fylde College, the Mardi Gras and Saunas.

### **HIV self-sampling**

Pilot projects, testing innovative ways for individuals to take their own saliva or blood sample and return it to a laboratory for analysis, have found that the approach is successful at reaching significant numbers of individuals who have not tested before and individuals who are HIV positive.

The pilots have shown that home sampling is feasible and acceptable, especially to gay men and the process is likely to be cheaper than clinic-based testing. Blackpool plans to introduce HIV self-sampling this year, which would potentially be a major contribution to increasing uptake of HIV testing.

### **Winter flu season 2014/ 2015 has begun**

Public Health England has alerted that influenza surveillance data published 11 December 2014 supported the view that influenza was now circulating in England. Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigues. Flu can be mild to life threatening to individuals at risk of severe complications (pregnant women, over 65's, those with serious heart or chest conditions (such as asthma, kidney or liver disease, diabetes, history of stroke, multiple sclerosis or lowered immunity)). Health Care Workers and Social Care Staff working with the elderly and in residential settings have been reminded that early recognition of these symptoms and that early referral to the GP are extremely important. It is important that outbreaks of flu in Care Homes are reported to Public Health England. In Blackpool Council, all employees have been offered a free flu vaccination by the Occupational Health team, uptake this year is excellent with over 600 employees receiving a flu jab.

### **New life expectancy figures released**

Life expectancy at birth is one of the key indicators of health in a population. It is defined as the average number of years a human is expected to live if they experience the current age-specific mortality rates of a particular population throughout their lives. Life expectancy data are updated on an annual basis and this note presents Blackpool's latest figures. Life expectancy at birth for men in Blackpool is 74.3 years (2011/ 2013) and remains the lowest of any local authority in England. Women can expect to live longer than men do, life expectancy at birth for women is 80.1 years (2011/ 2013) and this is the second lowest in England. Residents in the town continue to experience some of the worst health in the country. Over the last decade, there has been a slight improvement in life expectancy. However, the gap between Blackpool and the rest of England and Wales continues to grow and there has been very little change in life expectancy for those in the most deprived areas of the town. Life expectancy for men in the town is 5.0 years below England and Wales and 3.7 years below the North West. For women in Blackpool, life expectancy is 2.9 years below England and Wales and 1.7 years below that for the North West (2011/ 2013).

### **Smoking in Pregnancy – Working with Tommy's**

The Smoking at Time of Delivery (SATOD) rate in Blackpool has been the highest in the country since 2010 with rates over double that of the rest of England as whole. Both England and the North West have shown a decline in the rates from 13.5% in 2010/ 2011 to 12.7% in 2012/ 2013 for England and the North West region a similar trend with the rate falling from 17.7% in 2010/ 2011 to 16.4% in 2012/ 2013. The SATOD rate in Blackpool however, has less of an obvious trend. In 2011/ 2012 the rate fell to 29.7% from 33.2% the previous year. However, in 2012/ 2013 there has been a rise to 30.8%. Most recent figures show that we are currently at 27.5% however more needs to be done in order for us to catch up with national and regional trends.

A detailed SATOD action plan exists at a pan-Lancashire level, which aims to improve further on this figure, and we have been taking forward a number of areas of work to develop the pathways and support to women who may wish to quit. This includes an opt out smoking in pregnancy pathway, regular carbon monoxide (CO) monitoring and a training needs analysis of midwives and health care staff at the hospital trust.

Colleagues in the Public Health directorate are working with Tommy's, a national charity which funds research into pregnancy problems and provides information to parents. This work with Tommy's is to develop and test an intervention that is relevant and reactive to women's needs and circumstances in Blackpool.

Blackpool has been chosen (alongside Kent) to take part in this national piece of research with the aim to develop a stop smoking intervention that is a) targeted specifically at young pregnant women, b) non-judgemental, c) convenient and cost effective and d) sustainable. This research is fully funded by Department of Health Innovation Excellence and Strategic Development Fund and just requires a commitment from the Council and wider partners to support the process of engagement and learning at a local and national level.

We are currently in the scoping phase of this work and Activmob (a Community Interest Company that specialises in asset based community development work) are visiting Blackpool to undertake a shallow dive for their insight. This initial insight work continued up until Christmas and they talked to many women and families, plus stakeholders to gain their views and experiences of smoking in pregnancy. Activmob will return in January/ February 2015 to undertake a deeper dive of their findings, to increase their understanding and clarify the meaning of some of the key issues raised.

It is expected that the development of an intervention programme will be ready for market testing late 2015, with comprehensive research and evaluation of its success (or failures) before a final report with findings is published in 2016.

### **Schools Catering Services**

From September 2014 school lunches have been provided free of charge to all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 throughout all schools in England and Wales. This is a Government initiative aimed at ensuring a good quality, nutritional lunch is available to all pupils and it is anticipated that this scheme will be run on an ongoing basis for the foreseeable future.

As confirmed in the October 2014 census, the take up figure in Blackpool for the Universal Infant Free School Meal is in excess of 88%.

Overall there has been an increase of 34% from the October 2013 uptake. Whilst some of this is due to the introduction of the Universal Free School Meal there has also been an increase in the number of Key Stage Two pupils taking a school meal.

In order to meet legislative requirements Allergen information is available in each school kitchen.

All the meats used are being sourced from British animals and are Red Tractor certified or have Farm Assured certification, ensuring total traceability.

Pupils continue to have a choice of hot meals available every day, complemented by a salad bar, featuring a wide range of produce, a bread basket and a selection of tasty desserts.

A new menu is being introduced by Blackpool Catering Services in January 2015, which is fully compliant with the new standards.

### **Child Poverty**

Work to establish the £45m Better Start partnership and programme continues, with the formal partnership expected to be signed off early in January and a robust governance structure being agreed. A delivery timetable for the £45m project aimed at 0 to 3 year olds and their parents in our most deprived wards is now in place. There is a project to extend the Family Nurse Partnership programme underway and the development of new play spaces in parks, an outdoor education programme, Parenting Programmes for Toddlers and the setting up the Food Dudes project to follow amongst many other initiatives in 2015.