



Children and Education Select Committee
Thursday 19 September 2013

Public Health, Early Help and the Supporting Families Programme

Purpose of the report: Policy Development and Review

A brief report on how the public health prevention agenda can support and compliment the early help and the Family Support Programme.

Introduction:

1. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2013, the Public Health function transferred from the NHS to the County Council. Public Health's key role is to protect and improve the health of the population and reduce health inequalities.
2. This paper summarises how the public health prevention strategy and implementation for children, young people and families can support and compliment the early help offer and the Family Support Programme.

Overview:

3. There are three domains of public health: health improvement, health protection, and health and social care quality.
4. In the transfer of Public Health the Government mandated local authorities to deliver a number of steps and services, they are;
 - steps to be taken to protect the health of the local population
 - ensuring NHS commissioners (Clinical Commissioning Groups) receive the public health advice they need
 - appropriate access to sexual health services
 - the National Child Measurement Programme
 - NHS Health Check assessment
5. The Government published the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) that allows Local Authorities to benchmark their progress against

other local authorities and by which we will provide assurance to the Government that we are delivering key public health outcomes for the population of Surrey.

Health and Wellbeing Board priorities

Why is prevention important?

6. Preventing disease before it starts is critical to helping people live longer, healthier lives and keeping health and social care costs down.
7. The top risk factors contributing to the overall burden of disease are;
 - smoking
 - poor diet,
 - physical inactivity and
 - alcohol misuse
 - emotional wellbeing and mental health
8. Many of the strongest predictors of health and well-being fall outside of the health care setting. Our housing, employment, education, environment and lifestyle choices are major elements that impact the physical and mental health of our population including children, young people and families. Hence weaving prevention into our everyday lives at the earliest opportunity is important.
9. The Marmot Review looks at the differences in health and well-being between social groups and describes how the social gradient on health inequalities is reflected in the social gradient on educational attainment, employment, income, quality of neighbourhood. In addressing health inequalities, the Marmot Review asserts that it is not sufficient just to focus on the bottom 10 per cent because there are poorer outcomes all the way down from the top. Universal action is needed to reduce the steepness of the social gradient of health inequalities, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage. The review clearly explains that social and economic inequalities underpin the determinants of health and expresses the importance of preventing ill health and health inequalities through the lifecourse approach.

Healthy and Risky Behaviours priorities

10. The Children's Health and Wellbeing Group is accountable to the Health and Wellbeing board for the Children's priority within the joint health and wellbeing strategy. The priorities were determined via consultation with key stakeholders. They have committed to two areas that Public Health has the lead for within the Children and Young People's Priority:
 - Healthy Behaviours (universal provision for all children, young people and families) and
 - Risky Behaviours (targeted provision, aimed at those more likely to engage in risky behaviours due to the environment they find themselves in for example looked after children or young people known to the justice system)

11. The aim of these priorities is to ensure more families; children and young people develop and maintain healthy behaviours and prevent the take up of risky behaviours.
12. The universal approach is inclusive and aims to ensure that all children, young people and families obtain the health services they need and that services are accessible and have sufficient capacity of well-trained staff.
13. The targeted approach aims to prioritise certain children, young people or families such as young people known to the youth justice system that maybe more at risk of developing unhealthy behaviours or vulnerable such looked after children.

Healthy Behaviour (universal offer)	Risky Behaviour (targeted offer)
Promotion of breastfeeding to everyone	Promotion of breastfeeding to certain groups such as teenage parents
Increasing the uptake of immunisations to everyone	Increasing the uptake of immunisations in certain groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Travellers
Reducing tooth decay	
Promoting of healthy eating and healthy weight to everyone	Promoting healthy eating and healthy weight to those living in more deprived wards within Surrey
Increasing levels of physical activity in children, young people and families	
Preventing children and young people misusing substances including tobacco and alcohol	Preventing children and young people misusing substances including tobacco and alcohol who are most at risk of misusing such as young people that are not in employment, education and training
Promoting good relationships and sexual health behaviours	Promoting good relationships and sexual health behaviours to those at risk of becoming a teenage parents such as Looked After Children
Preventing accidents in all settings	

How can the Public Health agenda support and compliment the Early Help agenda?

14. Early Help is defined as providing support downstream before the problem emerges, similar to the Public Health prevention agenda which is about preventing the problem from emerging in the first place. Public Health can support and compliment the Early Help agenda by supporting families and children and young people maintain healthy behaviours and prevent the take up of risky behaviours. Examples of how are illustrated below;
 - Promoting breastfeeding - ensuring those providing local Early Help services have a consistent message with regards to the benefits of breastfeeding and support services available. The benefits of

breastfeeding are endless but in particular it improves bonding between mother and child.

- Increasing the uptake of immunisations – ensure local Early Help services have a consistent message with regards to the benefits of immunisations and when the immunisations are scheduled. Immunisation is one of the most effective Public Health interventions and prevents many serious childhood infections.
- Reducing tooth decay in children and young people – ensure local Early Help services raise awareness of the importance of registering with a dentist. Preventing tooth decay in children and young people is important to ensure their speech and language develops.
- Promoting healthy eating and healthy weight – ensure local Early Help services are equip to support families maintain a healthy weight, through awareness of healthy eating and how to provide a healthy balance diet. Promotion healthy start to eligible families. Healthy weight is important for overall health and can help you prevent and control many diseases and conditions such as type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.
- Increasing levels of physical activity in children, young people and families – ensure local Early Help services raise awareness of importance of being physical active as a family. Physical activity in childhood is important to build strong bones and muscles.
- Substance misuse including tobacco and alcohol – ensure local Early Help services are equip to support future parents to make positive choices about their health such as stopping smoking. Smoking is the still the greatest cause of illness and early death and the earlier you start the more serious the outcome.
- Promoting good relationships and sexual health behaviours – ensure Early Help services are aware of services available. Healthy relationships are important for children and adolescent development.
- Preventing accidents – ensure local Early Help services are equip to supporting families to make their home environment is safe and secure and child friendly.

15. Public Health can also support the Early Help agenda by sharing the evidence and best practice they are aware of with regards to what works in improving the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families.

How Public Health can support and compliment the Early Help and Supporting Families agenda

16. There are three main areas where Public Health can support (core offer) the Supporting Families and Early Help agenda;

- *Training:* The Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH) has an accredited 'understanding health improvement' module that the public health team are trained to delivered. Public Health also has thematic training that key staff from Early Help and Supporting Families could attend. The organisation of this is underway for the Family Support Workers for January/February 2014.
- *Commissioning:* Public Health commissions the school nursing service and other 5-19 year old services such as substance tier 2 services. We can ensure key families are prioritised through these contracts and pathways are in place. We can also ensure key outcomes are included as key performance indicators.
- *Evaluation:* Public Health has skills in evaluation and contacts at the University of Surrey. Developments are underway to look at a local evaluation of the Family Support Programme.

Conclusions:

17. Currently there is a lot good work being delivered with regards to Public Health, Early Help and the Supporting Families with a lot of synergies.
18. Key steps need to be put in place to make the most of the current similarities in improving children and young people's health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities by aligning and co-ordinating the work that is being delivered.
19. Public Health has developed a 'core offer' for the supporting families' programme, these needs to be replicated for the Early Help agenda.

Recommendations:

20. That the Directorate and its partner agencies continue to:
 - a) Ensure all commissioned services have a universal and targeted prevention element;
 - b) Mirror the Public Health core offer to the Family Support Programme to staff working under the Early Help umbrella.

Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.

Report contact: Kelly Morris, Public Health Principal, Public Health

Contact details:

Telephone: 0208 541 7968

Email: K.Morris@surreycc.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank