

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 16 July 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Health Strategy &
Strategic Director, Health & Community

SUBJECT: National Support Team for Health Inequalities

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board with a progress update and action plan in response to the visit by the National Support Team (NST) for Health Inequalities in February 2009.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

That the Executive Board:

i) Approve the Action Plan as detailed in Appendix 1.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Members will recall that a detailed report was submitted to the Executive Board on 2 April 2009 which provided a comprehensive overview of the National Support Team visit and it was agreed that a further report be presented in July 2009.

3.2 In February 2009 the Health Inequalities National Support Team assessed the position in St Helens and Halton and made a number of recommendations for improvement. The focus of this review was not on long term strategies but on immediate action which St Helens, Halton and the Primary Care Trust could take to dramatically reduce health inequalities within the next two years.

3.3 Since the visit, a working group has been established and an action plan developed (appendix 1), Halton & St. Helens Council's have agreed to lead on two of the main recommendations.

4.0 AREAS WHERE THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE LEAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION

4.1 The National Support Team identified two key areas where it would seem appropriate for the Council to take lead responsibility for action. These are seasonal excess deaths and alcohol harm reduction.

4.2 The term seasonal excess deaths is used by the National Support Team and it is normally associated with winter. However this is a year round issue and relates to promoting health rather than focussing on avoiding death. For this reason both St Helens and Halton Council's would prefer to use the term targeted community health initiatives. It has now been agreed with the PCT by the overarching strategy group with responsibility for health and inequalities that St Helens and Halton Council's will take the lead on this issue

4.3 Key areas of action for Halton / St Helens Council include:

- Ensuring all community based staff (in house and contracted services) are trained in identifying and addressing health inequalities for example, obesity, smoking cessation, alcohol etc. (This will be linked to the health and wellbeing schedule suggested by the National Support Team). The training will be supported by mechanisms to ensure prompt and appropriate referrals.
- Developing a register of all vulnerable people based on a list of lists rather than creating a new register and ensuring that all people on the list are offered assessment for affordable warmth interventions.
 - A regular review of benefits entitlement.
 - Annual flu and pneumococcal vaccine.
 - An annual medicines utilisation review (MUR) and follow up support for adherence.
 - A personal health promotion plan to include physical activity, hydration and nutrition.
 - Assessment and support to prevent falls.
 - A personal crisis contingency plan.
 - Telecare/telehealth if available/necessary.
 - Inclusion in the meteorological warning cascade.
- Extension and development of affordable warmth and fuel poverty initiatives.
- Developing a Winter Mortality Steering Group (title to be confirmed).
- Continuing to develop electronic common assessment frameworks

4.4 A range of partnership mechanisms are in place across St Helens and Halton and an overarching plan has been developed with all key partners. **All of the actions identified in this report are consistent with both the overarching Action Plan and other**

relevant partnership strategies. The focus of the report is on those actions which will have an immediate impact in the period 2009/2011. The report does not replace the range of medium and long term strategies agreed in relation to health improvement. It is complementary to them.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Failure to address the Health Inequalities of the Borough will lead to a deterioration in the health needs of individuals living in our communities.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 To be determined when the community health initiatives group has been established. If resources are required, these will be considered by the Executive Board.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The feedback makes reference to a wide range of education and prevention work being undertaken with Children & Young People and a local approach needs to be taken to address issues such as under age drinking and obesity.

7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Reducing the psycho-social and economic impact of depression will enable more people to enter the job market.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

In order to improve health outcomes and to improve people's experience of health services, the Council will continue to work in close partnership with Halton & St Helens PCT and St Helens Council towards the re-shaping and re-direction of health services.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

The NST feedback advises that a well co-ordinated, multi-agency approach (Police, PCSO's, Youth Services) would help ensure that vulnerable people are identified early and are provided with advice and support on a range of services.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 Without concerted effort by the Council and its NHS partners, patterns of health and equality are likely to continue.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 The successful delivery of the outcomes set out in the Health Summit will result in greater consistency of health outcomes across the Borough.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
National Support Team for Health Inequalities Executive Board Report 02/04/09	Municipal Building Widnes	Dwayne Johnson Strategic Director Health & Community / Fiona Johnstone Director of Health Strategy, Halton & St. Helens NHS