

SUNDERLAND'S JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

VISION

Our vision is to have the:

Best possible health and wellbeing for Sunderland

....by which we mean a city where everyone is as healthy as they can be, people live longer, enjoy a good standard of wellbeing and we see a reduction in health inequalities.

Faced with reducing public resources and increasing demand and expectations many current ways of delivering services are recognised as no longer appropriate. Large scale changes to the way public services are being delivered are well under way. Although challenging, the changing environment offers an opportunity to fundamentally review and improve the way agencies engage with residents and communities in the future. There is also growing recognition of existing but often untapped assets and potential within communities that can enhance and complement the public sector's offering.

Consideration will need to be given to relationships between agencies and the communities they serve and how services can be delivered in the future to make best use of all resources in order to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes. Ultimately we want to enable and support individuals, families and communities in Sunderland to enjoy much better health and wellbeing, with less reliance on the public sector in the longer term. This involves recognising and being responsive not only to local needs but also to community strengths and exploring how these can be better harnessed to help address the challenges faced. By building on and utilising the resources and energy of our communities, we can support people to take greater control of their lives to bring about better health and wellbeing outcomes that matter to them, their families and communities.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Community Resilience Plan and the Strengthening Families will come together to forge a new way of working for the benefit of the people of Sunderland.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

We have established a set of design principles that will underpin our new approach to health and wellbeing and upon which action planning and ultimately commissioning throughout the health and social care system will be built. These design principles are:

- **Strengthening community assets**

By recognising everyone has a valuable contribution to make, we will empower individuals, families and communities, increasing their capacity to be involved, including in the co-production of services. This will enable residents to mobilise and build on existing community strengths and potential to help them address their own, their family's and their community's needs. This asset-based approach does not ignore needs – instead, it distinguishes between those needs that can best be met by families and friends, those best met by communities working in partnership with public services, and those that can only be met by public sector providers.

- **Prevention**

A greater emphasis will be placed on customer insight, local intelligence and experience to effectively identify risks to health and wellbeing and to work within communities to prevent people developing problems.

- **Early intervention – actively seeking to identify and tackle issues before they get worse**

We know that early intervention with children, young people, adults and carers can reduce more complex health issues in the longer term. Identifying and tackling issues at an early stage whenever they occur throughout an individual's life can prevent them escalating into more problematic and complex needs.

- **Equity – providing access to excellent services dependent on need and preferences, that are also based on evaluated models and quality standards**

The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age are responsible for the avoidable differences in their health. Equity in health means everyone being able to achieve their full health potential regardless of their personal circumstances. To achieve this there needs to be a fair distribution of resources and opportunities for health as well as fairness in the support offered to people when they are ill.

Health inequalities exist both within Sunderland's communities, and between Sunderland and England. These health inequalities are often related to obesity, alcohol related diseases and smoking rates. We know that we have particular communities where these health inequalities are most evident and we need to address this.

- **Promoting independence and self care – enabling individuals to make effective choices for themselves and their families**

The increasing emphasis on personalisation of services and of individual health and care budgets means that we must focus on creating alternative types of services that can be sustained within the community. We will continue to support our most vulnerable individuals, families and communities. Wherever possible and appropriate, our interventions will enable and re-able people to live their lives effectively without the need for recurring agency support.

- **Joint Working – shaping and managing cost effective interventions through integrated services**

Working together to make best use of our strengths and assets so that we can provide flexible and tailored services that respond to local conditions and focus on what matters to residents to achieve more for our communities.

- **Address the factors that have a wider impact on health – education, housing, employment, environment, and address these proportionately across the social gradient**

Differences in people's health result from differences in the opportunities that people are able to take advantage of during their lives. A government commissioned independent review of health inequalities identified a number of social determinants which increase inequalities in life expectancy across the life course. The review identified six key objectives to reduce health inequalities caused by these determinants. These are:

- Give every child the best start in life

- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximize their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure healthy standard of living for all
- Prevent ill health
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.

To see a sustainable improvement in life expectancy for all of the population, including a reduction in inequalities, the wider determinants of health need to be addressed – this includes a major focus on achieving the best start in life to break the cycle of health inequalities.

- **Lifecourse – ensuring appropriate action throughout an individual’s life with a focus on early years and families**

Intervention and support should be available throughout our lives, recognising that triggers for crisis can occur at different points in people’s lives (particularly at key transition points). It is important that we set in place the foundations in early years and encourage families to play a strong role in developing their own resilience whilst also recognising and responding to the changing needs of individuals as they age.

ASSETS

There are community and individual assets that we share and that need to be developed, nurtured and supported including:

- the practical skills, capacity and knowledge of local residents
- the passions and interests of local residents that give them energy for change
- the networks and connections – known as ‘social capital’ – in a community, including friendships and neighbourliness
- the effectiveness of local voluntary and community sector organisations
- the resources of all agencies to support a community, including public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations, local schools or faith groups.

There are interdependencies between these and a number of strategic assets which come together to make Sunderland unique – these should be built on where they exist and be improved and developed where they are weaker or missing. These are:

- **Strong and stable family and community relationships**

Sunderland is characterised by low movement of people – families and communities are relatively stable and as such there are opportunities to harness the involvement of the wider family, including older people, to provide support and promote healthier choices and healthy lifestyles

- **The coast and countryside and a passion for sport and activity**

Sunderland has an attractive coast and easy-to-reach countryside and urban green spaces that provide opportunities for promoting an active lifestyle. The city’s passion for sport and exercise should be nurtured and developed to ensure broader involvement with more wide reaching health impacts.

- **Employers providing access to a large proportion of the workforce and understanding of different communities**

The economy in Sunderland is characterised by a small number of large employers employing the majority of the workforce. By developing relationships with these employers we can tap into their understanding of the communities in which they operate and the people they employ to promote healthy workplaces and healthy lifestyles.

- **A vast number of contacts with residents through daily provision of a wide range of services**

Sunderland's many businesses, organisations and support groups are in touch with residents across the whole range of service delivery. Integrating health improvement into these day-to-day contacts will reinforce and bring support to those people who need it so that every contact is a health contact.

- **At the leading edge of putting new technology to work in the public interest**

Sunderland is at the leading edge of using new technologies and making sure that the whole city can make best use of this resource. There is great potential to use new technologies to enable people to take more control over their own health and wellbeing through technological solutions and by improving information sharing.

- **A huge variety of local businesses, organisations, partnerships and networks with a strong track record of effective delivery and providing support to vulnerable people**

We are starting from a strong position whereby there has been a long history of joint working to deliver real changes. We will build on this to ensure that the achievement of better health outcomes involves individuals, communities and providers.

The following Strategic Objectives describe how we will achieve our vision for health and wellbeing. Detailed action plans will be developed for each. Each strategic objective utilises one or more of the assets and applies all of the design principles.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Promoting understanding between communities and organisations

- 1.1. Increasing awareness of the services and support available to people in their community and assisting them to access these**
- 1.2. Services are responsive to community needs and assets, becoming co-produced where possible.**

If the health of local people is to improve then we must all pull together and play our part. Relationships between agencies and local people, including patients and service users, need to be much more dynamic and enable local people to have a much greater influence on which services are provided, as well as how and when they are provided. Equally, individuals and communities need to develop an understanding of the strengths that they have and can draw upon collectively, enabling them to take control of their own health.

If we do these things then we will all have a much better understanding of our own health needs and how best we can address these, either through our own endeavours or with the help of others if we need it. This will give us confidence in ourselves and in the services that we rely upon in times of need.

2. Ensuring that children and young people have the best start in life

- 2.1. Encouraging parents and carers of children to access early years opportunities**
- 2.2. Supporting children and families throughout the whole of a child's journey, including the transition into adulthood.**

Many of us understand and acknowledge the influence (directly and indirectly) that families and schools have on the development and life chances of children and young people. These two important factors can have a huge impact upon the health, education and future

employment opportunities of a child or young person.

To ensure a positive future for our children and young people there needs to be effective joint working across agencies and the wider family to encourage individuals and families to achieve their full potential by addressing their physical and emotional health issues. Schools in particular are in a position where they are able to support the physical and emotional development of their pupils and their immediate family.

3. Supporting and motivating everyone to take responsibility for their health and that of others

- 3.1. Increasing emotional health and resilience of individuals, families and communities**
- 3.2. Frontline workers, volunteers and community leaders becoming aware of the main social determinants of health as well as the risks and opportunities and when and how services can be accessed**
- 3.3. Supporting people to make sustainable changes throughout their lives that will improve their health, utilising new technologies and methods of engagement with communities**
- 3.4. People (including young people) are aware of the importance of accessing long-acting health protecting interventions such as immunisation and screening and early presentation following the development of signs and symptoms of ill-health**
- 3.5. Making the healthy choice the easier choice.**

The most powerful influences upon how we behave come from our family and friends. They shape our knowledge, perspectives, experiences and preferences and as a consequence can either encourage or discourage us to lead a healthy lifestyle. It is important that we realise this affect on ourselves as well as the effect we can have on those around us. However there are also a range of options open to agencies that can help to make a healthy lifestyle an easy option, for example this can be through health education, provision within schools, mentoring programmes, as well as providing good transport links and easy access to the city's natural assets such as open and green spaces. Our agencies also need to consider how they can encourage and sustain people's interest in a healthy lifestyle through local and national events, cultural activities, and through Sunderland's major employers.

4. Supporting everyone to contribute

- 4.1. Understanding the health barriers to employment and training, and supporting people to overcome them**
- 4.2. Working together to get people fit for work**
- 4.3. Working with local businesses to ensure a healthy workforce**
- 4.4. Supporting those who don't work to contribute in other ways.**

Those of us that find ourselves unemployed will realise already the detrimental affect this can have on our health, indeed it is known that poorer health can be found amongst those who are unemployed for longest. The effects of poor health can be divided into the short-term (resulting from the immediate impact of unemployment) and the long-term more complex health impacts that can develop. The potential health and wellbeing impacts of unemployment are:

- Distress, anxiety and depression that may also impact upon other family members
- Worsening health behaviours in the form of increased smoking, increased alcohol consumption and a decrease in exercise.
- Financial problems that can reduce living standards, increase the likelihood of social isolation and lower self-esteem.

So it is important that agencies work together to build confidence and motivation and provide pathways into training and employment. But we must also work with employers so that they understand how the policies they implement can have a significant effect on both the health of their employees and their employee's families. Good health in this environment can be promoted through healthier working conditions and more flexible employment.

For those of us not in work there will be the opportunity to contribute to those communities that can benefit from our skills and talents. This will enable us to improve the lives of those around us and enable us to build community pride through a variety of volunteering opportunities.

5. Supporting people with long-term conditions and their carers:

5.1. Supporting self-management of long-term conditions

5.2. Providing excellent integrated services to support those with long-term conditions and their carers

5.3. Supporting a good death for everyone.

We realise that carers and people with long term conditions can be experts in their care because they understand better than others the problems they encounter on a daily basis. Our agencies need to reflect on how they can work together and redesign their service provision in order to incorporate the preferences of patients and service users, as well as self-management of their condition where this is possible. We will ensure that this approach incorporates a range of services that are reliable, consistent and maximise the quality of life for those people with long-term conditions as well as their families and carers.

6. Supporting individuals and their families to recover from ill-health and crisis:

6.1. Supporting individuals and families to have emotional resilience and control over their life

6.2. Providing excellent integrated services to support people to recover from ill health and crisis

6.3. Winning the trust of individuals and families who require support.

Any of us may find ourselves in need of support in a crisis situation. This may result from ill health or injury where we are suddenly unable to undertake everyday tasks, or where our main carer's own health and ability to carry on caring has suddenly broken down. Where this is the case our agencies will identify the best ways of facilitating rehabilitation by working together through a mixture of appropriate integrated services.