

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

13 November 2013

**STATEMENT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENTION
COUNTY COUNCILLOR DON MACKENZIE**

Report of the Director of Public Health

Colleagues will have received a copy of Dr Lincoln Sargeant's first report as Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire. I hope that you found the report of interest and benefit, as I did. The report provides a summary of the key challenges we face in North Yorkshire from a public health perspective. I hope you agree, that the report illustrates the complexity and WIDE scope of public health, and that it reaffirms the role that the wider Council, local partners, and our communities play in improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in North Yorkshire.

2013 North Yorkshire Wider Partnership Conference

The health of our local population and the inequalities that exist in health outcomes across the county cannot be improved by working in isolation. With this in mind, I draw to Members' attention that the 2013 North Yorkshire Wider Partnership Conference (TO BE held at the Pavilions in Harrogate on 22nd November) will have reducing health inequalities as its key theme.

The conference will feature key-note speeches from our Director of Public Health and Professor David Hunter (Durham University) and Dr Stephen Morton (Director of Public Health England Yorkshire and Humber Centre). There will be six workshops covering the themes of children and young people, physical activity, rural health, the economy, housing, and health and social care. A report on the conference will be forwarded to the Health and Wellbeing Board. I hope to see colleagues at the conference.

2013 Health Profiles

Colleagues may have seen in the press that the 2013 Health Profiles have been published for North Yorkshire as a whole and for the district council geographies. In summary, the vast majority of the indicators for North Yorkshire illustrate that the health of the population is very good and compares well with that of England.

Two areas are noted as being significantly worse than that of the England average. These are road traffic injuries and death, and breast feeding initiation.

- Deaths on the road continues to be an area in which North Yorkshire performs poorly relative to England. However, we have improved our position (both the number and rate of deaths) from the data reported in the 2012 Health Profile. We continue to lead the work on the 95 Alive Road Safety Partnership with the

Police, Fire and Rescue Service and the districts among others.

- Breast feeding initiation is a new area of concern – North Yorkshire has now been identified as having significantly lower breast feeding initiation rates than the England average. This is of concern given the importance of breastfeeding in reducing childhood infections and improving the longer term health of both the mother and the baby. Although this is not a service that we directly commission we continue to work closely with health partners to increase the rates of initiation on maternity wards. We are also seeking to commission additional activity in the community to support breast feeding initiation and maintenance.

Development of Prevention Strategy

The Care Bill will help to improve people's independence and wellbeing. It makes clear that local authorities must arrange services that help prevent or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support. Public health staff are working closely with social care colleagues to develop a prevention strategy which will mitigate some of impact of any future changes on eligibility thresholds. There has been good debate on the importance of prevention during the consultation meetings described in Cllr Wood's statement.

Sexual health

Colleagues will most likely be aware that we now have the responsibility for commissioning open access sexual health services in North Yorkshire. To support improvements in the sexual health and wellbeing of the North Yorkshire and York population, North Yorkshire County Council and the City of York Council are undertaking an in-depth review of sexual health services across the two Council areas in order to inform the future commissioning (and re-procurement) of these services.

As part of this review there has been a series of engagement exercises that have taken place with current providers and the public during August and September 2013. The wealth of information gathered from the engagement activity is currently being analysed and used to develop a sexual health service model, which will be consulted on by the end of February 2014. We look forward to receiving your feedback as part of this formal consultation process.

Winter Health

Addressing winter health is key to reducing health inequalities within vulnerable households, reducing excess winter deaths and increasing energy efficiency. 'Excess winter deaths' are additional people who die in winter in the UK; they generally have underlying health problems but would not have been expected to die. On average 27,000 people a year die in the UK simply from being too cold. Fuel poverty is a contributing factor to people being at risk. The Public Health teams in North Yorkshire and City of York have produced a Winter Health and Older People factsheet which gives advice on how to identify those at risk and how to

help. The factsheet has been circulated to NYCC staff, community pharmacists, partner organisations and is available on the NYCC website.

We have been successful in securing dedicated support from the National Energy Action charity, which was offered to all Health and Wellbeing Boards, to enable the development of a winter warmth/fuel poverty needs assessment for North Yorkshire. THIS assessment will guide our proposals for reducing excess winter deaths.

DON MACKENZIE