

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission Briefing

Local Health Messages Development

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City Mayor

Ward(s) affected: All

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1.0 Purpose of Briefing

To outline the plans of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission to support the development of effective health message communication for the Leicester population.

2.0 Background

Effective health communication is essential to promote, and ultimately protect, health. It draws on numerous disciplines including mass media, speech communication, health education, marketing, journalism, public relations, psychology, informatics and epidemiology.

Communicating health messages can take many forms and it includes both written and verbal formats. *Healthy People 2010* defines health communication as “*the art and technique of informing, influencing, and motivating individual, institutional, and public audiences about important health issues*”.

With this in mind health messages need to be informative, encouraging, inspiring, relevant, accurate, accessible, understandable and resonate with the intended audience.

Locally, the public health department, in particular, has been involved in the development and dissemination of a number of health messages covering a range of subject matter – (see appendix 1 for key examples). However, it is recognised that whilst we can easily quantify the input allocated to these messages, we cannot always quantify how effective these messages have been or whether we use the most appropriate mechanisms available to reach our target populations. The commission recognises that effective evaluation of health communications activities, both individually and as a whole, is required to help inform and shape future health communication plans.

3.0 The Proposal

The current Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission will seek to support the Local Authority to enhance its delivery of key health messages to the local population as it

recognises that effective health communication is essential to improving the health and wellbeing of the Leicester population. Through the processes of review, confirm and challenge, it is the commissions' intention to consider examples of best practice that could potentially be adopted locally, as well as helping to support local initiatives that aim to convey positive health messages.

The commission seeks to ensure that local health messages encourage individual action by the person, collective change by the community, advocacy and leadership by decision makers and awareness and acknowledgement by the population. The scoping exercise will help in the consideration of a number of questions about local health messages, which may include the following:

- What's out there already that we can learn from?
- Who do we need to reach locally?
- What do we want to say?
- Where do we want to say it?
- How do we want to say it?
- How do we measure how effective the message was?

4.0 Conclusion

This briefing introduces the health messaging development workstream to the Health and Wellbeing Commission agenda.

Details of Scrutiny

Appendix 1

Topic	Rationale	Target Group	Method/s of communication used	When	Any evaluation or feedback carried out following
Cardio vascular disease (NHS Health Checks)	To raise awareness of NHS Checks and provide patients with information about what they can expect when they have a check	40-74 year olds who have not had a check within 5 years	Leaflet production, mass media bus campaign	June 2013 Nov 2014	none
Diabetes	To raise awareness of diabetes testing and how to reduce the risk	General public plus high prevalence populations	Diabetes UK roadshow in Humberstone gate plus local charity Silver Star in various locality areas including Evington and Belgrave.	November 2014	Diabetes UK roadshow: 279 people accessed the event and 172 of those were referred to their GP. 108 people were tested by Silver Star with 52 people referred to their GP.
Oral health	National smile month – to raise awareness of good oral health	Families with young children	Events, roadshows, leaflets, mass media bus campaign, public realm posters, schools and adult competitions, free oral health packs, traditional and social media outputs	May/June 2014 May/June 2015	All primary schools children in Leicester received oral health packs and healthy teeth happy smiles literature
Physical activity	To raise awareness of the importance of physical activity and to	General population	Event held at Aylestone leisure centre, leaflet and poster campaign,	July 2013	Over 200 people engaged with free activities and giveaways

	signpost to LCC sports provision		traditional and social media, website.		
Mental health	Raise awareness of the importance of positive mental health and signpost toward support and help and advice	General population	Public realm posters, traditional and social media	March 2015	none
Smoking	Development and production of a film to educate and inform pregnant smokers of the dangers of smoking and support their quit	Pregnant smokers in the city	Screening of the film in all CYPF centres, traditional and social media, link on our website, professional engagement	October 2014	Professional engagement led to film being shared nationally and internationally.
Alcohol	Lead agency on alcohol awareness week	General population, including targeting students	Public events, university focused events held at both universities, traditional and social media,	November 2014/15	Over 500 students at both universities were engaged with targeted alcohol awareness events. regional, and local, media coverage
Healthy weight	Promote the importance of a healthy balanced diet	Targeted families with young children (targeted through children's centres)	Supported cook and eat sessions in children's centres – these were an addition to the existing planned cook and eat session.	April – June 2013	12 families took part in the targeted our healthy city branded cook and eat sessions
Sexual health	Sexual health event held at Leicester	Student population	Student centred advertising, social	November 2014	Over 300 students attended the drop in

	University (Oadby campus)		media, supporting partner agencies events		session
'Our healthy city'	Promote the 'launch' of public health with the local authority as the lead	General public	Live cooking event in Leicester Market	April 2013	Audience for cooking made up of over 300 people. 300 bags of recipe cards and ingredients given away
Healthy children	Lead partner agency for the pilot Smart Start project	Families with young children (specifically those in receipt of NEG funding)	Targeted week of free breakfasts, cook and eat sessions, public events and giveaways, schools competition	March 2014	300 entries into school completion; 500 breakfasts given away during the week; 10 cook and eat sessions delivered; regional and local media coverage
General	General health messaging	General public	General health messages on a variety of themes via social media and public realm advertising, website updates, communication for consultations, materials, events, partnership meetings and engagement at all levels.	ongoing	It has been seen that the public health messages, in general, are more popular than other city council messages through social media