

Case study: Wiltshire – January 2012

“The new role for Public Health and Wiltshire Council means that we are joining up all our public protection services for the residents of Wiltshire and it will enable us to deliver these services more efficiently and effectively. We believe our integrated model will bring together existing plans to improve the health of the local population.”

Jane Scott OBE, Leader, Wiltshire Council

Key elements of the model

- The Director of Public Health and Public Protection as head of a large directorate, with additional local authority responsibilities covering 150 frontline services
- A new model for public health in the County with people and communities at the centre
- A ‘One Council’, ‘One Wiltshire’ approach to public health as part of a strategic place-based approach to all public services.

Vision

There will be a ‘One Council’, ‘One Wiltshire’ approach to public health across the public, voluntary and business sectors, with health as part of a county-wide Joint Strategic Assessment which ranges over numerous quality-of-life issues. People and communities, rather than structures or individual services will be at the heart of the model for public health. The new model will draw on what local government is good at, ie engaging with communities. It will try to capture people’s imagination about the life they want to lead and will provide not just health services, but healthy lifestyles.

The transition will not interrupt the provision of robust public health services which will continue to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The public health team is dedicated to serving the local population and is prepared and available to deal with public health emergencies and incidents.

The starting point

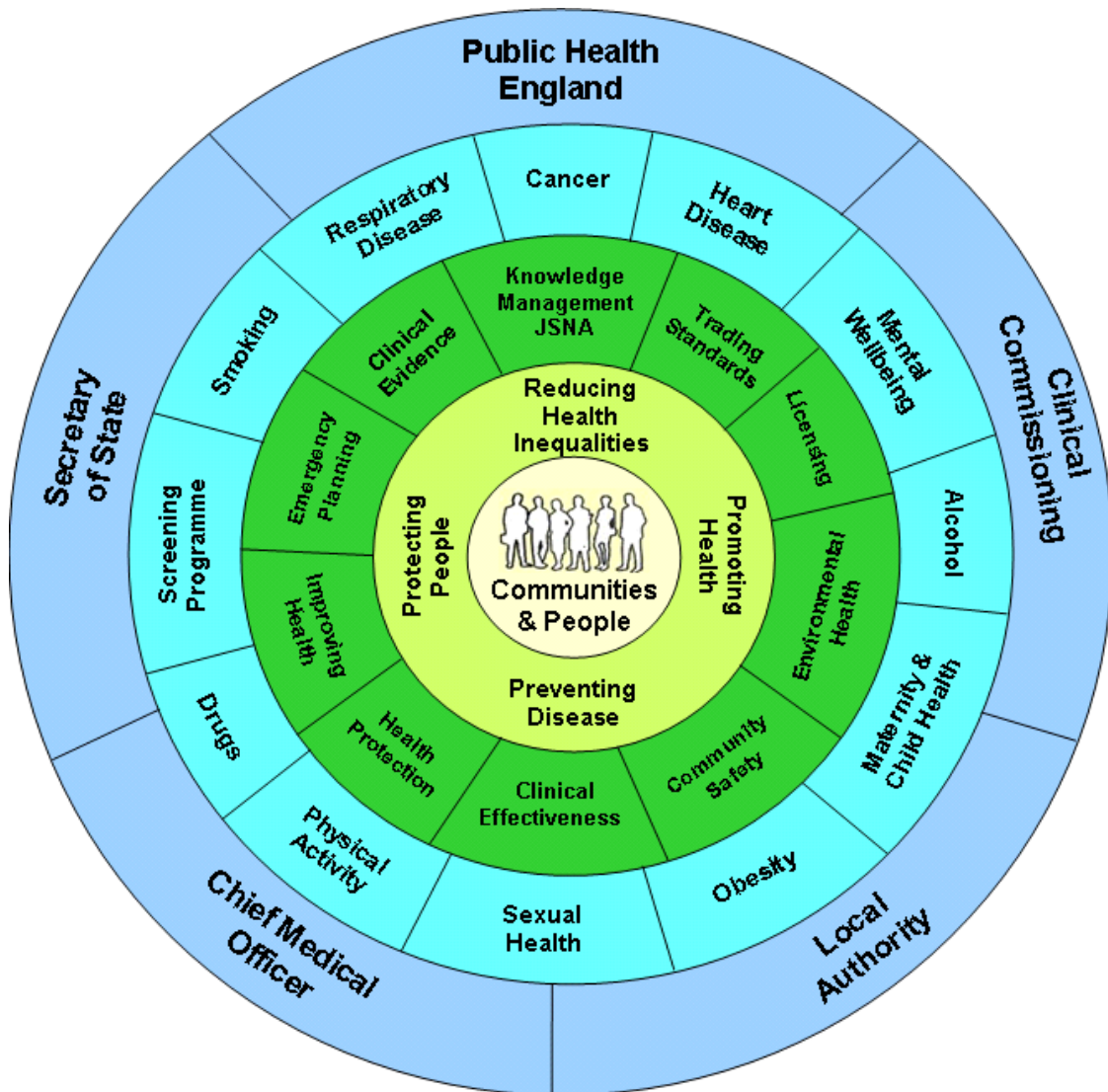
Life expectancy for people in Wiltshire is currently higher than in England or the South West at average 79.4 years for men and 83.3 years for women. As in the national picture, the two major causes of premature death in Wiltshire are cardiovascular disease and cancer. Mortality from all causes both in the under-75 age group and among infants has been declining, but the most recent figures show a 15% difference in mortality rates between the fifth least deprived and the

fifth most deprived wards in the county. Approximately a third of the population reports a long-standing illness or disability.

The Director of Public Health (DPH) in Wiltshire has been a joint appointment by the NHS and the Council since 2007. Before the formation of Wiltshire PCT, there were three small PCTs in the county. This made it difficult for them to relate to non co-terminous local authorities and there was no significant investment in public health.

Planning the transition

In 2009, Wiltshire Council underwent the transition from a county council and four districts into one unitary authority, with a reduction in the number of corporate directors. This facilitated the Director of Public Health taking on additional Council responsibilities in addition to the traditional Director of Public Health duties. These include community safety, environmental health, knowledge management, emergency planning and resilience, licensing, trading standards – over 150 frontline services. These services are all focused on improving the quality of life and effective delivery systems that can improve and protect population health, particularly for the most vulnerable. To demonstrate this approach, the Council, in conjunction with the Director of Public Health, adopted a new model of public health, illustrated below.



Since 2009, the DPH has been part of the Corporate Leadership Team at the Council, alongside other corporate directors. The DPH attends Cabinet and Full Council, and there is a portfolio holder for Public Health and Public Protection.

Since May 2011, there has been a joint Public Health transition project board in place which is chaired by the Portfolio holder for Public Health and Public Protection. This project team comprises of a number of officers from across the Council and PCT including human resources, ICT, finance, communications, and staff representatives. The trade unions were consulted prior to the commencement of formal consultation with public health staff in summer 2011.

The first phase of the transfer of the public health team took place in October 2011, when the team began to work on a more formal basis with Wiltshire Council.

Building for the future

The Council is committed to improving public health outcomes; within the Council's balanced scorecard 2011-12, there are public health outcomes relating to life expectancy, health inequalities, childhood obesity, alcohol, drugs and injuries from falls.

The Council, along with other public sector, voluntary sector and business sector organisations in the County, has signed up to one cross-cutting Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) for the whole of Wiltshire. This encompasses the issues contained in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, including health, but ranges much more widely across numerous quality-of-life issues such as housing, transport, children and young people, community safety, resilient communities and economic issues. Each of the three Clinical Commissioning Groups has its own version of the JSA, jointly designed between the CCGs and the Public Health team, with additional richer clinical data for the area it covers. There is also a version of the JSA for each of 20 community areas in the County.

A refreshed JSNA, to be known as the JSA for Health and Wellbeing, will be signed off by the shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, chaired by the Leader of the Council.

As part of service planning for the transfer of public health and also as an awareness-raising exercise, the public health team has carried out a service mapping exercise of the functions that are being brought together under the Director of Public Health, to establish where there are synergies between previous local government and new public health functions. This exercise has already begun to lead to action which will deliver better outcomes. Two examples are:

- The development of an Air Quality Strategy which brings together public health expertise with previous local authority regulatory and other functions. The Strategy identifies a number of linkages with other strategies (eg climate change, transport and community involvement), noting common areas with shared objectives. These objectives have been refocused to provide outcomes based on joint working and overlapping targets. The new focus is intended to be outcome and achievement based, with air quality measurement taking place to support the strategy, rather than driving it.
- A concerted focus on reduction in violent crime as part of a joint approach to the Night-time Economy, driven by the Community. Safety partnership, chaired by the Director of Public Health, and the Alcohol Strategy. Following night-time visits to various 'hot spots' in the county by the Leader, Portfolio Holder for Public Health, the Director of Public Health and a Chief Superintendent of Police, new measures were put in place to

Health priorities for the immediate future include introducing a new screening programme for abdominal aortic aneurism and work to encourage people, especially men, to present earlier with potential cancer symptoms. There will be a particular emphasis on an innovative approach to taking the National Health Check Programme, for eligible people aged 40-74, to disadvantaged groups, for example in working men's pubs and clubs, building on earlier experience of outreach work with young people.

Contact

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Websites

Wiltshire JSNA - <http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/health/jsna/>

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2010/11:
<http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=50171&type=full&servicetype=Attachment>

Joint Strategic Assessment for Wiltshire:
<http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/joint-strategic-assessment/>

Community area JSAs - <http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/local-area-profiles/>

Wiltshire Air Quality Strategy: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/report-draft-air-quality-strategy-for-wiltshire-october-2011.pdf>