A locality approach to tackling childhood obesity: London Borough of Hackney

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Hackney: Context

- Densely populated inner London borough

- Relatively young population
  Greater proportion of the population is under 40 than nationally

- Diverse communities
  As many Black young people as White British young people
  Large Orthodox Jewish community
  Large Turkish community

- High level of deprivation
  11th most deprived local authority
  10th highest prevalence of child poverty
Childhood Obesity: National Picture

- Obesity increases with level of deprivation
- Rates of obesity are fairly stable since NCMP introduced
- Obesity doubles between 5 and 10 years of age

Year 6 NCMP 2014/15 National figures linked to deprivation

NCMP 2008/09 – 2014/15 City & Hackney figures compared to regional and national
Childhood Obesity: Hackney

• **Hackney has the 7th highest obesity rate in reception children**
  
  Based on NCMP 2014/15 data alone
  
  An improvement from the highest rate in 2013/14

• In the NCMP 2014/15, at 12% the City and Hackney had the lowest rate of obesity in Reception children recorded in City and Hackney since the NCMP began (2007/08)

• **NCMP is only mandated in state-maintained schools**
  
  22% of Hackney’s children are Orthodox Jewish (Charedi)
  
  Most Charedi children are educated in independent Jewish schools

• **Pilot scheme to measure Charedi children**
  
  689 of 793 Hackney’s Charedi school reception children measured
  
  12% of Hackney’s state-maintained reception children obese
  
  5% of Hackney’s Charedi children obese

• **Overall, Hackney has the 27th highest obesity rate in reception children**
  
  Including the results of the Charedi measurement pilot
Our challenges

Hackney ‘A Place for Everyone’

• Fast changing demographic, economic and population growth
• Rise in health inequalities
• Challenge to address this gap by targeting services to meet the needs of our most vulnerable communities

Financial challenge

• Reduction in public health budget and local authority cuts
• Have to be smart about where we invest and direct resources
• Uncertainty over public health budget post 2016/17

Evaluation of programmes – Limited available evidence about ‘what works’ at local level to address the wider causes of obesity

Commissioning – ambiguity over who has responsibility for commissioning some tier 2 and tier 3 obesity services (CCG or LA?)
The ‘obesogenic’ environment

Hackney has a high proliferation of hot food takeaways across the borough.

The heat maps shows the concentration of hot food takeaways across the borough, and around our schools.

How do we influence the wider ‘obesogenic’ environment?

The challenge is enforcing our new planning policy on potential hot food takeaways - would rejection of planning permission on these grounds be supported on appeal?
Our challenges

**Ethnic diversity**

- A high level of ethnic diversity in the borough, especially in our young population, means that given the continuing uncertainty over the validity of the BMI tool and subsequent weight classifications for non-white ethnic groups, we are not fully confident in NCMP child obesity rates.
What we have done so far

- Leadership and buy-in from senior council officers and elected members through the Health and Wellbeing board

- Since the Public Health transition in 2013 Childhood obesity remains priority number 1 as outlined in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014/15

- Since the Public Health transition in 2013 the implementation of ‘Get Hackney Healthy’ a borough-wide work programme with an investment in the early years centred around a family approach (£500K a year and up to £1.5million across wider council on physical activity, sports and healthy eating)

### Project activities

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<th>Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>Development of borough-wide child obesity framework</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>Communications campaign and small grants for community and voluntary organisations</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Training programme and support for key professionals working with children and young people, e.g. supporting implementation of Eat Better Start Better in Early Years settings</td>
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<td>Roll-out of interventions</td>
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<td>• Health Heroes programme in primary schools</td>
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<td>• HENRY (Health Exercise Nutrition for the Really Young)</td>
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<td>• Play Streets</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Literature reviews of ‘what works’ to tackle obesity in the pre, ante- and post- natal periods, and in the first two years of life</td>
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What we have done so far

Get Hackney Healthy key achievements to date:

• 40 active **play streets** are now operating in the borough with 2,000 children taking part in Play Streets in 2014/15 and 1,000 adults; with 341 volunteer stewards.

• An Early Years dietician and Early Years Consultant worked with 47 settings (children’s centres) and 15 childminders in 2014/15 to implement the **Eat Better Start Better** Voluntary Food and Drink guidelines, reaching approximately 2200 Hackney children

• £5K yearly **Healthy Lifestyles grant** to strategic children’s centres

• Wide ranging borough-wide **communications** campaigns, tapping into national Change4Life, alongside the development of local campaigns

• e.g. Hackney Wild Walks maps around three locations distributed to all Hackney residents in Hackney Today July 2014, and 50,000 Hackney Active Kids Guides through children’s centres, GPs and other community settings
What we have done so far

• 7 primary schools took part in Health Heroes between 2013-2015 with a wide range of interventions taking place from gardening clubs, catering reviews, food co-ops and targeted physical activity clubs, with children showing increased physical activity levels recorded at break-times and afterschool, and increased knowledge of food groups and healthy eating

• Development of local whole borough framework for 0-5s

• Literature review recommendations are being considered in the commissioning of our new 0-19 childhood obesity pathway

• HENRY programme tailored to reach vulnerable communities (e.g. Orthodox Jewish, Turkish, hard of hearing)
What we have done so far

• Across the council worked in **partnership** with planning, sustainable transports, parks, education and early years, among others

• **Active travel** – the 2011 census showed that Hackney has the highest rates of active travel in London – the **Hackney Transport Strategy 2014-24** focuses on early years and schools, through programmes such as Children’s Traffic Club, School Travel Plans, STARS accreditation, and Bike Around the Borough

• Good use of, promotion, and investment in Hackney’s 58 parks, gardens and open spaces with 19 currently holding Green Flag award status

• 330 hectares the most of any inner London borough
New opportunities

- **0-5s transfer of public health services** to local authorities allows greater focus on prevention and joined up commissioning for 0-19s (Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership)

- **New Early Years service** (Health Visiting service) with emphasis on maternal and child obesity in new service specification – starting in July 2016

- Full 0-19s **child obesity pathway review** complete with recommendations for commissioning services along the full pathway in 2016
New opportunities

• **Establishing and coordinating a whole-systems approach** – to achieve this we are launching an Obesity Strategic Partnership in February 2016, chaired by the Chief Executive, it will bring together partners from across the obesity system (NHS and local authority commissioners, planning, housing, transport, environmental health, parks and public realm, leisure and sports, libraries and cultural services, and public health)

• **ADPH Child obesity peer review workshop February 2016** – completed ADPH self-assessment framework for child obesity and peer review workshop looking at council-wide approach to tackling child obesity
New opportunities

**Evaluation** – working collaboratively with academic partners through the Obesity Strategic Partnership to run robust evaluations to find out ‘what works’ locally – even more pertinent now given reduced public health budget and local authority cuts

**Investing in programmes to tackle the ‘obesogenic’ environment**

- The Hackney Healthier Catering Commitment is being rolled out across the borough after a successful pilot last year – a dedicated Environmental Health Officer, funded by public health, will work with up to 145 food outlets to achieve healthier catering over the next two years

- The development of a model of working with retail outlets in areas of high social deprivation (e.g. on council estates) to encourage healthy food choices is underway