



Northumberland
County Council

Northumberland Integrated Wellbeing Service

Highlights Report

2022/23



Northumberland
County Council

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Acknowledgements

The information contained within this highlights report is the result of work delivered by a well-qualified, committed, dedicated group of Integrated Wellbeing Service staff, that includes Health Improvement Practitioners and Specialists, Health Trainers, Stop Smoking Advisors and Specialists, and administrative support.

The examples within this report represent a small proportion of the work of the Northumberland Integrated Wellbeing Service undertaken during the 12-month period of 2022/23.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the service.

Introduction

I am delighted to introduce the Northumberland County Council Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS) Highlights Report 2022/23.

I hope you enjoy reading about the work of this diverse service – for example, it's programme delivery with communities, capacity building with agencies and professionals, and treatment and behaviour change support programmes for individuals. Work is focused on identifying the burdens faced by Northumberland residents and working with them to use their resources and resilience to plan and make changes.

During 2022/23, the staff in the Integrated Wellbeing Service continued to align their health improvement practice with the values and strategic aims of the council, developing place-based and community links, with a key focus on public health and reducing health inequalities with partners.

Enclosed in the report are highlights and case studies from the various elements of the service, demonstrating the impact of the team and the difference they make to our residents. The report also outlines development ideas which will be considered and implemented alongside the strategic aims of the public health team.

I hope you enjoy it.

Kerry Lynch
Senior Public Health Manager
Northumberland County Council

Contents

Page

The IWS Team	5
IWS Activity in Numbers.....	6
Public Health Campaigns	7
Health Trainer Service	9
Specialist Stop Smoking Service	17
Tobacco Control.....	20
Starting Well Programme	21
Roots and Shoots Programme	24
Community Engagement & Community Health Champions	27
Making Every Contact Count	28
Accident Prevention	31
Drugs and Alcohol Education.....	32
Mental Health Promotion.....	33
Oral Health Promotion.....	36
Sexual Health Promotion	38
Workplace Health.....	46
Healthy Ageing	49

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Senior Health Trainer

Mark Foden

Stop Smoking Support Advisor

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Stop Smoking Administration Team

Deb Brown

IWS Activity in Numbers

1075 Clients
supported to set a
stop smoking quit
date

946 Clients
supported by health
trainers to achieve
healthier lifestyle
goals

69 Health trainer
groups and
education sessions

1141 Brief
intervention
conversations

570 Successful stop
smoking quit
attempts

37 Public Health
campaigns
supported

96 Health
Improvement
Training courses
delivered

9 Making Every
Contact Count
workshops delivered

48 Local employers
supported with the
Better Health at
Work Award

4 Ageing Well
Roadshows

Public Health Campaigns

Overview

The Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS) focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of the residents of Northumberland. The campaign work is a key part of this, as it ensures residents are kept up to date with the correct health information and messages.

Throughout the year, IWS works towards raising awareness of health campaigns through various interventions, including pop up stalls, displays, brief interventions with residents and attending health and wellbeing events.



Figure 1 Image of Eyes Open U=U commissioned artwork

As part of the Eyes Open Steering Group, IWS held an Art Exhibition at a local theatre, which was an open event for members of the public & those working or living with people affected by HIV. Combining artwork created by professionals & local charities, with theatrical performances, motivational guest speakers and live music to promote U=U, with the aim to reduce the stigmas which are still attached to those living with HIV. As well as highlighting the positive developments relating to treatment/medication, which are available and used to reduce the transmission of HIV and AIDS related illnesses.

Development plans for the next 12 months

- New electronic form to make it easier to receive campaign updates.
- Support the development of Community Health Champions by distributing monthly campaign information to Champions to ensure they deliver clear and concise health information to the wider communities.
- Continue to build our capacity building with Health Advocates delivering local and national campaigns in various settings including community and workplace.
- Review our campaigns to include service case studies.

Health Trainer Service

The IWS Health Trainer Team have a broad range of public health backgrounds including community development, nutrition and physical activity. They work with clients aged 16 and over who live, work or are educated in Northumberland on a one-to-one basis and in group settings to support individuals and communities to set realistic goals to improve their health and wellbeing.

We have continued to receive an increasing number of referrals into the service from a range professionals and self-referrals. We have one to one clinics delivered from a range of community venues across the county. The Health Trainers also get involved in supporting new and existing community groups and events to deliver information and education sessions around the following topic areas;

- Mini health MOT
- Public Health Campaign information
- Health walks
- Making healthier food choices
- Weight management
- Increasing physical activity
- Emotional wellbeing
- Stopping smoking
- Reducing alcohol intake

Case Study One

Senior Health Trainer, Katherine, received a referral for a client who needed support with weight loss and looking for ways to improve her diet and nutrition.

During her initial assessment, the client discussed how she had struggled with her weight all her life. She had numerous weight loss attempts, including crash diets, where she lost a lot of weight, but put the weight back on very quickly through bingeing on foods high in fat.

We discussed the Eatwell guide, portion sizes, reading food labelling etc. We emphasised the importance of seeing this process as a lifestyle change rather than a diet, and how making small, manageable changes through SMART goal setting is the best way to sustain weight loss.

We then set some SMART goals for her to achieve before her next appointment. We also took the client's blood pressure which was 150/106. We explained to the client that this reading was high, and that it was important for her to get this checked out by her GP as soon as possible. The client advised that she would do this and left the first appointment feeling very positive and happy.

On the next appointment, we felt the client was quite down, and when Katherine asked how she had been getting on, she became upset and went into detail on how she had tried

to make small changes but was not successful and continued with her unhealthy habits. The client's weight had stayed the same at 157kg. When discussing with the client the reasons behind her not making any changes, it became apparent that the client had a very unhealthy relationship with food and would possibly benefit from some psychological support. The client advised that she had received support in the past and would be willing to pay privately for this.

We discussed reading up on binge eating disorders to see if there was any useful information/support on these websites. The patient advised this was not something she had tried before however she would look at the evidence-based websites that we had sent via email.

Katherine also asked the client how her appointment with her GP had gone regarding her high blood pressure reading, but she advised she had not made an appointment. We re-took a blood pressure reading and this time it was 158/108, we urged the client again to seek advice from her GP and we advised that we would call her the following day for an update and the additional support we had discussed.

Outcomes

We called the patient the next day and she had contacted her GP regarding her blood pressure readings. The GP was concerned and arranged an appointment straight away. The client also advised me that she found the recommended websites extremely useful and had been using the live chat forum for support. When the client returned for her next appointment, she advised that following her GP appointment, she was placed on medication to help bring her blood pressure down. She also mentioned that this had given her a shock and was the motivation to change her unhealthy habits.

The client had started to look at sugar swaps for the high sugar foods she was eating, as well as ways to increase her vegetable intake and reduce portion sizes. She said she was feeling ten times better than she did after her previous appointment and felt like her mindset had completely changed. When we took the client's weight at this appointment, it was 153.4kg, meaning she had lost 8lb.

Reflection and learning

Although the patient had been referred for weight loss, it was clear that there were multiple factors behind why the patient had struggled to lose weight in the past. Exploring the client's previous difficulties to lose weight helped them to identify and overcome barriers, which led to her starting to lose weight sustainably, without any crash diets.

Case Study Two

Health Trainer Chloe received a referral for a 46-year-old male who was looking for support around diet, nutrition, weight management and physical activity. His starting weight was 139.7kg.

The client had requested a telephone consultation to discuss the Health Trainer service offer around 1-1 appointments or the group programme. The client opted for the group programme, Momenta, as this would align with his work commitments.

The Momenta programme ran over 12- weeks, each week running 1x 60-minute session, split into 12 different topics, all in relation to lifestyle change in the areas which the client felt he needed the most support. The client started the programme in August 2022 and each week the group would self-report their progress. The service user found they were losing weight every week from putting the information and tools they had learnt into practice. The client completed the 12-week Momenta programme in November 2022 with a reported end weight of 121.6kg. Follow up phone calls were also made to check in with the client up to 24 weeks to see if he needed any additional support.

Outcomes

Throughout the programme the client achieved a steady weight loss by putting the information and tools provided into practice. Covering physical activity, internal and external triggers, eating out, snacking, sugars, fats and many more topics supported in the client's weight loss.

During the final session, the client gave very positive feedback and said he found the programme very useful. The client achieved a reported weight loss of 18.1kg.

Case Study Three

Health Trainer Graham received a referral from a Practice Nurse for a 71-year-old female who was looking for support around weight management, diet, nutrition and to increase physical activity levels.

At the initial assessment in May 2022, the client weighed 79.4kg (12st 7lb), had a blood pressure reading of 182/85 and her BMI was 31.02. The client worked with the service across 12 appointments until February 2023, where she was reweighed at 67.1kg (10st 8lb). The practice nurse took the client's blood pressure, which read at 139/60 and her new BMI was 26.21. This was a total weight loss of 12.3kg, as well as a lower blood pressure reading and BMI score.

During their appointments, Graham discussed the support that was available to help the client quit smoking. The client said that they didn't feel ready to quit at that moment in time, although she was grateful to now have the information for when she was ready to tackle this.

Throughout the 12 sessions, the client managed to lose a significant amount of weight without restricting any food types. Instead, the client engaged with the Health Trainer

service to make changes around healthy eating, portion sizes, current eating habits, internal & external triggers, fats and hydration, as well as increasing physical activity levels.

It was suggested that the client was also reviewed by her Practice Nurse regarding blood pressure readings, which was subsequently carried out.

Throughout the 12 sessions, the client increased their physical activity levels, which included various activities such as walking, chair-based activities, and lower and upper body exercises.

Some additional benefits that the client reported included they had an improved sleeping pattern, had cut down on their smoking, and felt their general wellbeing score was 10/10.

Case Study Four

Health Trainer Jack received a referral for a client who was looking for weight management support, including support on making healthier choices and becoming more physically active.

During the client's appointments, Jack discussed tips and methods to increase healthier food choices into their diet, as well as building on their preferred methods to increase physical activity. All of the changes discussed were then decided by client, this ensured the changes fit their lifestyle and were therefore going to be sustainable.

Outcomes

Over the 10 appointments with the Health Trainer service, the client managed to lose 5kg of bodyweight and reduce their BMI by 1.84, as well as reducing their blood pressure reading from 158/108 to a healthy 129/89.

The client found the Health Trainer service very helpful to discuss any issues they were experiencing with diet or barriers they had been facing. The biggest motivation for this patient was by setting physical activity goals to work towards every appointment which helped keep them motivated.

Case Study Five

Health Trainer Jack received a referral to support a female client with weight loss, how to live a healthier lifestyle, and how to increase physical activity.

During the initial consultation they discussed key barriers that impacted the client's ability to reach her goals. This included consuming high salt/fat foods in the diet and barriers to becoming more active.

Jack used the sessions to educate the client around the impact of high salt in the diet and how this can impact their health. They discussed methods of reducing salt and high calorie foods in the diet sustainably and using a food diary to help track the dietary changes that

were agreed. Jack encouraged the client to take the first step in becoming more active and this helped them greatly with their mental health. This helped the client change their mindset about doing more exercise in a gym environment.

Outcomes

The client is still engaging with the Health Trainer service, and has so far lost 8kg of bodyweight, as well as reducing her BMI by 3 points. The client now increased her physical activity and reduced salt in her diet.

The patient is very grateful for the support they have received from the Health Trainer service and knows this will help her keep on track with the healthier lifestyle changes until the point of discharge is reached.

Case Study Six

Health Trainer Jack received a referral for a client who was looking for lifestyle advice on how to reduce their high blood pressure.

During the initial consultation Jack talked to the client about some of the causes of high blood pressure and how to reduce it. The key piece of information the patient learned was the impact a high in salt diet can have on blood pressure.

The client started to massively reduce all added salts and began to check the traffic light system on food labels to aim for mostly green products.

From receiving advice from the Health Trainer service regarding lifestyle changes, it was recorded that the client managed to reduce their blood pressure from 180/90 to 142/70 within a couple of months.

The client was very grateful to have met with Jack to discuss their health problem and how to reduce the risk.

Fishermen of Amble

The Health Trainer service attended the Fishermen of Amble event where health checks were offered. This included individuals having their weight taken, having their blood pressure checked and receiving advice on BMI. Further advice offered included weight management and healthy eating alongside raising awareness around drugs, alcohol and cancer.

We didn't get the best of weather for the event, which meant the bigger trawlers were tied up. Nevertheless, we managed to have some good MECC brief interventions with three active fishermen on the Quayside.



Figure 2 Photo of local men standing in front of fishing nets with a Health Trainer

Social Prescribing Community Engagement Event

Health Trainers Liam & Kirsty attended this community engagement event in Hirst Welfare in Ashington to promote the Health Trainer offer to the local community. We took along different resources and leaflets to hand out and gave advice to local residents around healthy lifestyles; with a focus on sugar in drinks and healthy sugar swaps.



Figure 3 Photo of Health Trainers demonstrating the fat and sugar content in some drinks and food.

There was an opportunity for free blood pressure checks and signposting to our local clinics/programmes. Liam & Kirsty engaged in over 40 MECC brief interventions about the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.



Figure 4 Members of the community and staff attending a health walk



Figure 5 Members of the community setting off on a health walk



Figure 6 Photo of Health Trainer taking blood pressure readings at a local community group.

Better Health at Work Award - Healthy Lifestyle Programme

Health Trainers Graham and Jack delivered a 4-week healthy lifestyle programme to staff from a local factory in Cramlington, who are part of the Better Health at Work Award. Sessions covered some interesting information for the staff. This included the fat and sugar content of various common snack choices. They also discussed the benefits of adopting a healthier lifestyle, and used the energy equivalent game to demonstrate how much exercise you must do to burn off certain food choices such as McDonald's, chocolate muffins etc.



Figure 7 Photo of Health Trainer demonstrating fat and sugar content in food



Figure 8 Photo of Health Trainers along with staff from a local factory explaining the fat and sugar content in some snacks.

Northumberland Specialist Stop Smoking Service

Northumberland Specialist Stop Smoking Service continues to provide high quality, free individual support to all residents who smoke in Northumberland, offering a combination of recommended treatments and behavioural support for those wishing to stop.

During 2022/23 we have increased our face-to-face clinics in venues such as the Northumberland Community Hubs. We continue to provide the convenience of telephone support appointments during the day and evenings to offer flexibility around our clients working arrangements.

We continue to offer a high-quality service using National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Treatment (NCSCT) recommended programmes, with behavioural support as well as fully funded free NRT products for all residents.

We have incorporated many new referral pathways to support Northumberland residents who wish to stop smoking. All pathways include access to recommended free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) products, access to enhanced stop smoking app features and one to one support from our trained Stop Smoking Practitioners. Some pathways also include free Vape starter kits.

The local authority stop smoking service offers stop smoking support as part of system-wide programmes with partners such as the NHS, including:

- NHS Long Term Plan
- NHS Staff Tobacco Dependency offer
- Newcastle Hospitals Waiting Well referrals
- Northumbria Healthcare Stop before the Op referrals

We are also currently engaging in a pilot programme to improve the health of patients identified as having a Severe Mental Illness, where we offer a flexible quit programme following referral from primary care and the community outreach team. This is a partnership between the ICS, the ICB (Northumberland), Wansbeck and West PCNs and Northumberland County Council.

Client Feedback

Following client and staff feedback, we are updating our appointment system to identify ways of making the service more efficient. This includes late clinics for those requiring appointment times outside of work.

Communication

The Northumberland Stop Smoking Service has launched a new dedicated website that outlines a range of support services for Northumberland residents who are contemplating making a quit attempt.

The website has quickly become a popular method for residents to engage with the service to receive up to date advice, access to motivating information such as a cost saving calculator, and an easy way to contact the service, where they can register for an appointment in their local clinic with a trained Stop Smoking Practitioner.



Figure 9 Image from the Stop Smoking website

www.stopsmokingnorthumberland.co.uk

We have worked with the NCC Communications Team to produce a Stop Smoking Service Client Guide and a mouse mat with useful conversation starters for all GP Practices.

The Health Improvement Practitioner for Tobacco Control has worked with the team to produce a series of talking heads videos clips and supported various public information stands for stop smoking public health campaigns.

Wider Stop Smoking Professionals Network

Our commitment to support the Wider Professionals Stop Smoking Network continues. We have recently updated our Intermediate Advisors list in Pharmacies and GP surgeries, as well as dental practices, which has depleted since Covid. This will enable us to better target our update training.

Training

The service continues to offer a range of training programmes that support the wider network of professionals who support residents to stop smoking.

This includes:

- Intermediate Advisor training to new Pharmacies and GP staff.
- Annual update training to all intermediate trained staff.

- Making Every Contact Count (Stop Smoking) to CNTW community staff, pharmacies, dental practices, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and community groups such as those involved with housing provisions.
- Specialist Stop Smoking training for those who support patients on the SMI register.

Case Study

A Mandarin speaking client with very limited English contacted the service to access support to stop smoking. He had additional health concerns including Diabetes and Hypertension.

The service was able to request an interpreter for the client. As the client was unable to communicate well over the phone, a letter was sent to the patient to arrange a suitable face to face appointment at a convenient local clinic. It was anticipated that this would enable the patient to access a full treatment programme with behavioural support and medication to aid their quit attempt by ensuring effective communication.

We appreciated that the appointment times would need to be extended and arranged around the client and interpreters' availability. We also had to work with the interpreter, who was often not the same person, and they had no knowledge of previous discussions around medication and smoking issues.

Our learning from this case study is to ensure that we have lots of preparation for clients who have additional requirements to ensure they understand how we can support them. The coordination of all three parties and working around clinic times was a challenge, therefore we would recommend that where possible, clients bring along some support to appointments, so that they can help in-between appointments.

Development Plans for 2023/24

- Our 2023/24 priority will be to continue to look at a more efficient solution to transfer NRT vouchers to local pharmacies.
- We hope to continue to work closely with those from CNTW and support those with a severe mental illness to access the service.
- We have recruited a new Health Improvement Practitioner to support the development of new programmes of work going forward, that will include how we better engage with residents through our new website and community forums.
- The use of targeted social media to promote our new website.
- To continue to work with our partners in the new referral pathways to reduce the rate of smoking and reduce health inequalities in Northumberland.

Tobacco Control

Overview

During 2022/23 tobacco education programmes were delivered to Northumberland College along with 6 new and 5 existing schools. This included assemblies and workshops aimed at pupils. The sessions covered a background on tobacco, the dangers of smoking, second-hand smoke and a large proportion of the sessions were spent on the topic of e-cigarettes, as similar to last year, there continues to be an increased demand from schools around this topic.

Training

14 tobacco control updates and e-cigarette training sessions were delivered to 168 delegates, including Health Trainers, health champions, nurses, children's centre staff and community centre staff and attendees.

National and Regional Campaigns

The main campaigns supported were Stoptober and No Smoking Day. Awareness stands were held in community settings for Stoptober, with 10 briefings around the campaign delivered to frontline staff accompanied by supporting training sessions around the topic. Daily smoking facts were sent out to networks during the month of October to keep the campaign on professional's agendas.

Additional campaigns such as No Smoking Day, Keep It Out Campaign (illicit tobacco), New Year Quitting Activity and Don't Wait Campaign were also supported in the lead up to Stoptober and No Smoking Day.

Achievements during 2022/23

- Support delivery of Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) within the education sector through the Tobacco Control Education Programme.
- Co-ordinate delivery of regional and national campaigns aligned with stopping smoking.
- Responding to increasing requests from the children and young people workforce, schools, and alternative curriculum providers for education sessions to be delivered to children and young people around tobacco control and e-cigarettes.

Development plans for Tobacco Control

- Develop key resources for Northumberland schools to access via the electronic PSHE platform on padlet. This will enable us to build capacity in schools to deliver education sessions and to increase in engagement.
- Continue to plan and direct work based on the Tobacco Control Plan.
- Continue to strengthen established and build new relationships with networks.

Starting Well Programme

Overview

The National Child Measurement Programme was set up in 2006 and measures the height and weight of children in Reception and Year 6. Initially set up to look at trends in the number of children who were overweight, this is now a key national programme in providing support for children and their families around healthy lifestyle choices and weight loss.

Within Northumberland, Harrogate and District school nursing team began child measurements in May/June 2022 and results were shared with the Integrated Wellbeing Team in July 2022. Telephone calls were made to 615 families by a Health Improvement Practitioner Specialist and the Health Trainer Team throughout July and August to offer the Starting Well Programme. This was offered to families of children above the 98% centile. Starting Well sessions were offered in local venues across Blyth, Cramlington, Ashington, Alnwick and Berwick. Due to high demand in Ashington, sessions were organised for September and an online programme in November.

Achievements over the report year

We signed up 45 families to the Starting Well Programme and connected with 15 families at one or more Starting Well sessions.



Figure 10 Photo of Starting Well session covering the Eatwell Guide

Starting Well sessions ran for 5 weeks and covered topics including:

- The Eatwell guide
- Fats and sugars
- Portion size and healthy snacks
- Food labelling and physical activity
- Cooking session - Vegetable soup

A Starting Well celebration took place online in January 2023.

Families fed back on their progress and had the opportunity to ask questions and gain further support.

Feedback

- *“Very informative and friendly. Learned things I never knew”.*
- *“Helps us understand how much we need to have in each portion in a professional way with good guidance”.*
- *“(child) Talks about avoiding foods in the red triangle and enjoyed the food sorting game”.*

Development plans for the next 12 months

We will be reviewing the Starting Well programme and planning how we can best support families going forward. Any new developments will consider the needs of our families and young people, ensuring the programme is accessible to all and will allow ongoing support to maintain healthy lifestyle habits.

Case Study

The client joined the Starting Well Programme with his mam and dad after concerns around their eating habits. The client struggled with anxiety and would often eat large amounts of crisps and sweets throughout the day to deal with emotions. For example, 4-5 packets of crisps and 4-5 bags of sweets and chocolate during the day. The client spent up to 10 hours a day on video games and would eat meals very fast. For example, they could complete a full meal in under 10 minutes.

The client was invited onto Starting Well programme after their weight was recorded above the 98% centile in the NCMP programme.

An educational and behaviour change approach was taken throughout the group sessions. This was achieved by providing information and advice and encouraging small changes to improve diet. Motivational interviewing techniques were used to support the client in setting SMART goals.

Anticipated outcomes

- For client to develop different coping mechanisms for dealing with anxiety rather than using food.
- For client to understand the importance of reducing screen time and increasing physical activity.
- For client to understand the impact too much sugar and fat can have on your health and how to make sugar swaps.
- For client to understand the importance of mealtimes and eating as a family to try and slow down speed of eating. For example, sitting at a table, not having a TV on in the background etc.

Unexpected outcomes

- Improved health and nutrition for the whole family. For example, parents commented that they have also started to change food habits.

Lessons learnt

The client often commented on how peers would influence his food choices and make comments about what he was eating. Therefore, there is a need to consider the impact peers can have on children's food choices, and to work with children on how to respond and communicate with peers around why they are changing their food habits.

Next steps

A post- assessment follow up has been completed with the family and goals for the client have been set for the next 6 months. The client commented that he is more aware of his eating habits and has been reducing his sugar intake. We will follow up with the client at 6 and 12 months.

Roots and Shoots Programme

Overview

The Northumberland Roots and Shoots School Programme works with a selected group of schools across Northumberland to improve the health and wellbeing of primary school children.

Working in partnership with Alnwick Gardens, Roots and Shoots allows children the opportunity to attend both gardening and Senior Health Trainer led educational sessions around healthy eating. These sessions concentrate on Change4life and NHS guidance on diet and physical activity.

Achievements over the report year



Figure 11 Photo of a vegetable patch at the Alnwick Garden.

Seven schools were selected following an open application process facilitated by the Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS) and staff from the Alnwick Garden. These schools included:

- Otterburn Primary School
- Highfield Middle School
- Bedlington West End First School
- Belford Primary School
- Whittingham Primary School
- Cleaswell Hill School
- Brightside Adult Services

Educational sessions this year concentrated on the Eatwell guide, fats and sugars, healthy packed lunches and the importance of physical activity. The children had the opportunity to taste test healthy snacks and complete an Eatwell scavenger hunt. Our Senior Health Trainer also attended an outreach session at one of the schools, where they were able to engage in MECC Brief Interventions with parents around healthy eating messages.



Figure 12 Photo of a group of students working on their vegetable patch

A celebration event for the programme was set up in September where the children were able to harvest the crops they had grown and present their scrap book. Further activities for the day included a Bush Tucker trial “What’s in the box”, “Make your own healthy fruit pot” and two physical activity games “Create a healthy plate” and “Corners Food Group”.

Feedback

What healthy swaps have you made since coming on Roots and Shoots?

I have
carrot
sticks in
my
packed
lunch

I try not to
eat as
many
sweets

I try to
drink
more
water on a
weekend,
than drink
tango

I spent
less time
on my
XBox try
to do 60
minutes of
activity a
day

Help my
mum
make
healthy
teas

Quotes from children who attended the Roots & Shoots Programme

Development plans for the next 12 months

10 schools are attending our Roots and Shoots 2023 Programme which will begin March 2023.

Case Study

One school applied for a place on Roots and Shoots 2023 Programme to help children understand where fruit and vegetables come from and how eating a healthy, balanced diet could improve their health and wellbeing. The school hoped to use this knowledge to grow their own food at the school which could be used in school projects and cooking sessions.

This school took part in the 2022 programme and applied for the Roots and Shoots 2023 Programme after an open application process

An educational and behaviour change approach was taken through the IWS sessions. This was achieved by providing information and knowledge around healthy eating and encouraging children to consider small changes to their eating habits. Practical skills and empowerment were included in the garden sessions, where children felt able to grow their own food and have the skills to look after crops.

Anticipated outcomes

- To have a better understanding of where foods came from and how to use fruit and vegetables in cooking sessions.
- To understand why having a healthy balanced diet is important.
- To understand the impacts of too much fat and sugar in the diet.
- To understand what a healthy packed lunch looks like.
- To understand the importance of physical activity.

Unexpected outcomes

- Improved social skills and mental health and wellbeing through attending the sessions.

Lessons learnt

- Children's understanding of healthy eating messages varies; therefore, sessions need to be adaptable to support a range of learning styles and needs.

Next steps:

- School will take away learning and continue to discuss healthy eating within the school environment. They will continue to grow their own crops at a plot within the school.

Community Engagement & Community Health Champions

Overview

Northumberland's Inequalities Plan 2022/23 identified the importance of taking a Community Centred Approach to closing the inequalities gap. A new Health Improvement Practitioner was appointed in September 2022 with a focus to support the Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS) in maintaining a Community Centred Approach.

A key aspect to the IWS Community Centred Approach is through the Community Health Champions Programme. This programme has been redeveloped and launched in April 2023. The Community Health Champions Programme is for anyone who has an interest in health and wellbeing. The programme is designed to give people the skills and knowledge to spread health messages, raise awareness of health and wellbeing, and engage in healthy conversations through the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) approach. The programme aims to empower communities to make healthier lifestyle choices and take control of their own health and wellbeing.

Achievements over the report year

- Attended 7 Community Engagement events to help gain an insight into the needs of communities.
- Developed a thorough training programme for Community Health Champions, covering all key health topics and MECC.
- Supported the promotion of IWS services through pop up events and window displays throughout various settings, including the community and workplaces.
- Developed materials to promote the Community Health Champions Programme.

Development plans for the next 12 months

- Continue to deliver the Community Health Champions training programme to individuals from a range of sectors including NCC, education, voluntary organisations and community settings.
- Support the professional development of Community Health Champions through offering and delivering Level 2 Royal Society of Public Health: Understanding Health Improvement.
- Continue to attend Community Engagement events to gain insights into community needs.
- Continue to support the promotion of IWS services through pop up events.
- Create a network for Community Health Champions to stay active in their role and share information across the county.
- Work in partnership with Community Health Champions to support them in improving health and wellbeing in their community.
- Develop a newsletter for Community Health Champions to stay up to date with information, upcoming campaigns and further training opportunities.

Feedback

Feedback from participants:

- *“The links to relevant services will be very useful.”*
- *“The trainer was very knowledgeable.”*
- *“The training has provided me with the foundations to support and sign post.”*

Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

Overview

MECC is an evidence-based approach to improving the health and wellbeing of individuals by encouraging them to change their behaviours. This is carried out by individuals being trained to deliver consistent and concise health information and encouraging others to engage in conversations about their health and wellbeing.

MECC recognises that across health and social care, local authority, voluntary sectors and communities, there are thousands of interactions that take place every day with people who are ideally placed to support health and wellbeing.

IWS are continuing to work towards a culture change which promotes the use of MECC conversations in day-to-day interactions across all sectors. This includes supporting people to understand how MECC fits into their role and encouraging organisations to embed their own approach.

MECC continues to be embedded throughout local communities through Northumberland's Community Health Champions Programme.

The IWS capacity building for MECC supports the Northumberland MECC system wide partnership in achieving their aims and objectives on a county wide level.

Further bespoke MECC delivery is planned for 2023/24, including MECC for Financial Wellbeing.

Achievements over the report year

- MECC is now embedded across all training programmes delivered by the IWS Health Improvement team.
- Facilitated 4 Train the Trainer courses delivered by the regional MECC at scale team to 30 participants across a range of sectors including Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service, Community Pharmacy, Library Services, Primary Care Networks & Early Intervention & Prevention.
- Delivered MECC to 77 participants across 8 sessions.
- MECC Northumberland Trainer Forum has been set up to encourage connecting, updating and supporting for MECC trainers in Northumberland.

Feedback

Feedback from participants:

- *"In my role, I see a significant number of people face to face, and talk to people on the telephone, for 30+ minutes each week and there were lots of resources here that I may be able to signpost people to."*

- *“Thinking about a person's financial circumstances as part of their wellbeing was new to me but also really obvious that this is something we should have been considering as it has huge impact on individual wellbeing.”*
- *“The health statistics for Northumberland were really interesting and I'll review them further.”*
- *“Ask, Assist & Act. I really liked this simple terminology.”*
- *“I feel a bit more confident in broaching conversations with the clients I work with. I also intend to look further at all the resources and share relevant ones with my team.”*

Campaign work

- MECC has been embedded across all Health Improvement Practitioner portfolios, meaning it is now aligned with any campaigns that run throughout the year.
- Utilising the 3 A's framework across all portfolio areas.
- Trialled MECC monthly sessions linked to national health awareness campaigns overlaying the 3 A's framework.

Development plans for the next 12 months

- Continue to raise the profile of MECC in Northumberland across all sectors.
- Continue to raise the profile of MECC within communities by delivering bespoke sessions to local organisations.
- Development of MECC for Financial Wellbeing, with a two-year fixed term Health Improvement Practitioner post focusing on financial wellbeing and MECC.
- VSCE & MECC Project – Northumberland will implement a bespoke MECC Train the Trainer with the regional MECC team, for regional co-delivery.

Accident Prevention

Overview

The Accident Prevention training provides professionals working with children, families and parents/carers the knowledge and practical skills to address the leading causes of unintentional injuries among children and young people. The interactive training includes demonstrations and visual materials which when used, raises awareness of injury, hazards and prevention measures that reduce the risk of unintentional injury, disability or death to children and young people.

As part of this topic area, we delivered quarterly themed briefings to professionals, which included poisons, slips, trips & falls, burns awareness, toy safety and unintended trips to A&E. This programme of work is designed to highlight and inform professionals so that they can deliver targeted work with families in local communities.

Achievements during 2022/23

- 2 Accident Prevention workshops delivered.
- 4 themed Accident Prevention campaigns developed based on local intelligence.

Development plans for accident prevention

- Continue to develop the local training offer to include latest themes around causes and effects of accidents to children and young people.
- Establish effective information sharing methods through the introduction of a working professional network.
- Delivery of training across a number of learning platforms, to suit the growing needs of the required learning around accident prevention aimed at community professionals.

Drugs and Alcohol Education

Overview

The IWS have delivered a total of 10 Alcohol Awareness training sessions and 3 Basic Drug Awareness training sessions over the year. Outside of the pre-determined catalogue sessions, the increased number of sessions delivered were due to demand in Primary Care Networks, MECC Networks, workplaces and in-house training for NCC staff.

Campaign work

There have been 2 alcohol campaigns supported:

- Alcohol Causes Cancer
- Dry January

A briefing named 'What's the Harm' was circulated to the campaign networks as well as internally briefed to all those who attended the NCC Alcohol Awareness training.

Development plans for the next 12 months

With the newly changed date of Alcohol Awareness Week, now to be during the summer (3rd – 9th July), this has led to better coverage for promoting a reduction of alcohol throughout the year and can help address a peak time for alcohol consumption.

Mental Health Promotion

Overview

A range of Mental Health training courses have been delivered to professionals living or working in Northumberland. The training includes Adult Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health Awareness, Adult Mental Health Awareness and Basic Suicide Awareness.

Achievements over the report year

- 19 Adult Mental Health First Aiders trained
- 31 Youth Mental Health First Aiders trained

The Adult Mental Health Awareness training and Youth Mental Health Awareness training was developed and rolled out via the online platform Microsoft Teams from January 2023. The training has been evaluated well and was delivered in accordance with the appropriate health promotion campaign such as the Time to Talk Day and Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

The Basic Suicide Awareness training was updated to ensure that the training aligns with the Health Education England (HEE) Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention Competence Frameworks. This was completed by using the Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention Training Audit Tool (SHSPAT) v2.0, which is a pilot study at the Teesside University commissioned by the North East and North Cumbria Suicide Prevention Network.

Feedback

Adult Mental Health First Aid training

- *'I found Andrew, the trainer, incredibly engaging and motivating. As the sessions were virtual, he made it easy to keep our attention and keep us interacting with one another. I found the ALGEE action plan useful and have already put this to use. I also found the nonverbal language teaching interesting and useful too.'*
- *'Increased awareness of how mental ill health may present itself and what to do. I can use this in my work with people with a diagnosis of dementia and their families.'*

Youth Mental Health First Aid training

- *'Wow I really enjoyed this, and I feel very strongly about this course and think it should be mandatory for those in any form of care/education profession and as a professional and a parent I feel this evoked lots of feeling where if I knew this then things could have been dealt with in a much better way. I'm reassured for the youth of today and moving forwards this would bring lots of newfound support and understanding of mental health and dealing with a situation in a non-judgemental and calmer way. The course was especially well delivered as it kept me interested at all times I had not time to get distracted!'*

- *'The presenter, Andrew, was excellent and a real asset to the organisation.'*

The Adult Mental Health Awareness training, Youth Mental Health Awareness training and Basic Suicide Awareness training evaluated well. The training evaluation feedback shared the following common themes:

- Increased awareness of resources and techniques to support others facing mental health difficulties.
- Attendees felt more confident to support others with their mental health after the training.
- Knowledge and understanding of mental health and suicide increased.
- Increased understanding of the language and terminology related to suicide and mental ill health.
- Raised awareness of risk and protective factors of mental ill health.

Some feedback from the training sessions is shown below:

Adult Mental Health Awareness training

- *'I am more aware of the different types of mental health and how it can affect people. It will enable me to support my colleagues more.'*
- *'Due to being a health advocate and currently undergoing the silver better health at work award, the knowledge gained will allow me to better support staff and have a greater awareness of the 5 ways to wellbeing, how to have conversations about mental health and how to provide the best support I can.'*
- *'I now have more awareness of signs to look out for and how to respond.'*

Youth Mental Health Awareness training

- *'Learnt new resources and techniques that can be used when working with young people'*
- *'Knowing the signs of mental health deterioration'*
- *'How to approach people about mental health'*

Basic Suicide Awareness training

- *'As I work with young people who sometimes do self-harm, this course has been helpful in promoting a deeper awareness of how young people are presenting themselves and communicating how they are.'*
- *'Being more mindful of the language I use around suicide'*
- *'Knowing more signs to look out for and how to approach from different angle with more open and leading questions also how to offer help and where to find it'*

Campaign work

IWS has supported five Mental Health Awareness campaigns during 2022/2023, these include:

- Mental Health Awareness Week
- World Suicide Prevention Day
- World Mental Day
- Time to Talk Day
- Eating Disorders Awareness Week

The activities included facilitating online training sessions, hosting an internal virtual cuppa morning, and sharing information and resources to internal and external networks such as Ageing Well Network, Better Health At Work Award Network and Campaigns Network.

Development plans for the next 12 months

IWS will continue to work with community groups to increase awareness of mental health wellbeing and reducing stigma associated with mental health and suicide.

Development plans for mental health promotion

- Identify new community groups that would benefit from attending training sessions such as organisations that work with individuals with protected characteristics.
- Offer face-to-face training sessions in addition to online sessions.
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for Youth and Adult will be rolled out following the facilitator's completion of MHFA instructor training.
- Connect 5 training will be offered following the facilitator's completion of Connect 5 Train the Trainer training.

Oral Health Promotion

Overview

IWS has digitised the Promoting Oral Health Care for Children and Young People training in place of the paper-based workbook. Since the launch of the digital module on NCC Learning Together in September 2022 to date (latest report February 2023) there has been a total of 36 completions, all of which achieved a passing grade at the assessment at the end.

There is also another digital education module in development expected to be launched in Q1 2023, which includes information of the Promoting Oral Health Care for Adults including lifestyle choices, dentures and potential challenges surrounding oral health care.

The content for both of these modules has been ratified by Health Education North East and the adult's content is in the process of being built by the NCC Learning and Development team. There is going to be an expectation to review the content on a yearly basis to ensure the best information and guidance's are available to the learners. An evaluation assessing the education content and impact will be distributed.

IWS has partnered with the NCC Family Hubs to enhance the oral health promotion within their settings when working directly in the community with families. The Ashington and Bedlington Family Hubs are the pilot sites used, with the potential to roll out County wide. The Family Hubs have weekly themes which repeat each term where they cover a variety of health topics. Oral/dental health is addressed each term and the staff engage families around this. To support the Family Hubs staff, we've directed them to the online training module for the Promoting Oral Health Care for Children and Young People, so that they have the foundation knowledge in which they can share current guidance and tips and tricks. This is accompanied by handing out packs that include a toothbrush, toothpaste and an optional leaflet to help provide the families with the knowledge and resources to practice good oral health at home.

Achievements over the report year

- All 36 people who attempted the assessment on the Children and Young People's module have achieved a pass.
- The pilot within the Bedlington and Ashington Family Hub has been very well received by the families engaged, which is reflected in the feedback. The feedback includes impact quotes from a number of individuals who have participated in the oral health promotion session as well as high numbers of packs distributed.

Campaign work

IWS supported both World Oral Health Day and National Smile Month by distributing overviews and campaign resources from the associated organisations.

Development plans for the next 12 months

- Over the next year it is hoped that, once launched, the Adults digital module will start to gain momentum and the Children and Young people digital package will continue to be accessed.
- The toothpaste/toothbrush pack provision will hopefully be rolled out County wide within the Family Hubs, so that they will be able to offer the great service for families across all sites during their termly oral health awareness week. They will continue to get support from IWS around this. A resource box has been compiled and will be trialled within these pilot settings in Q1 2023 to see if they are able to provide a higher quality delivery, which has been replicated from the shared good practice from Durham Council and their Oral Health lead.

Sexual Health Promotion

The current Integrated Wellbeing Service Public Health Sexual Health Promotion Training Programme includes

- Introduction to Sexual Health
- Supporting Parents, puberty and growing up/Relationships & Sex Education
- Sexual Exploitation (Vulnerability Not Age)
- Basic Sexual Health Awareness
- HIV and Aids Awareness

Achievements during 2022/2023

- 11 Sexual Health Improvement training sessions with a total of 306 delegates attending training sessions.
- 5 Sexual Health Public Health national campaigns supported.
- 9 Health Promotional Health events attended.

Training sessions have been completed face to face and via the online platform Microsoft Teams, offering a blended learning approach to suit individual needs. Sessions delivered were aligned to specific national public health campaigns and delivered in accordance with the appropriate month/health promotion subject.

Campaigns included organising various events both face to face and online, facilitating training sessions, hosting 'Question and Answer' sessions, webinars and health promotional events, with the aim of raising awareness with sexual health related props/aids, as well as creating information blogs intended for media, radio, schools, colleges, residential homes, workplaces, social media and general public use.

Campaigns

U=U: Positive About HIV

This was one of the biggest celebrations for IWS Public Health and health promotion during 2022/23. This year, in partnership with Eyes Open Steering Group & NHS Sexual Health Services, we teamed up to create an inclusive Art Exhibition event, combined with theatrical performances and live music to promote U=U & reducing the stigmas which are still attached to those living with HIV.

The aim of the event, which was held in a local theatre, was to create art which celebrates the positivity of HIV & AIDS in current times, in relation to antiretroviral therapy (ART).



Figure 13 Staff holding up a positive about HIV photo frame.

The key message being that ART is not only good for your health, but it also protects your partners. By taking one tablet per day, this prevents transmission of HIV by suppressing the viral load within the body 'Undetectable = Untransmittable'. Our aim was to highlight the positive developments relating to treatment/medication which are being used to reduce the transmission of HIV and AIDS related illnesses. As well as the work from local artists & charities, we enlisted the support and professional artwork of Sir Henry Hate, a London-based artist/tattoo artist, who has been living with HIV since 2003. Henry created a contemporary art piece, specifically for our campaign, and delivered a motivational speech on the day. We also enlisted the support of actor, singer, playwright & HIV Activist Stephen Hart, who also lives with HIV.

The campaign event was a roaring success, with over 100 local people attending, very much enjoying themselves and taking inspiration from the strong, courageous people who live with HIV every day. With the cast of RENT offering a production, this was followed by a light lunch & late-night DJ/disco.

As a follow up to the event, with the aim to expand knowledge & skills, IWS offered Introduction Sexual Health & Sexual Exploitation training sessions to various members of the community, all of which work with vulnerable adults & young people.



Figure 14 Photo of attendees at the U=U event.

Sexual Health Awareness Week

As part of this national campaign, IWS Public Health held a health promotional stall within Northumberland College, where we were inundated with swarms of young people, looking for advice & signposting to local services for contraception, C-card & STI screening. The aim was to promote reproductive health supplies and provide demonstrations using contraception aid visuals.

The session was very popular, and so we attended the following week at Northumberland Freshers Fair, at both the Ashington & Kirkley Hall campuses. IWS also marked the week by delivering a range of training events including Relationships & Sexual Education, Basic Sexual Health Awareness, Sexual Exploitation & Growing up & Puberty training sessions to various professionals, health champions/ advocates, youth services and public members.



Figure 15 Photo of a sexual health promotional stand

LGBT+ Month

In celebration of LGBT+ month, IWS supported the NCC staff network to offer two health promotional stalls, one within a local busy community hub, and another in a local shopping precinct. The combined events resulted in approximately 125 MECC conversations relating to local services and support for LGBT+ diversity within the community. As a follow up to the sessions, IWS offered 'Supporting Parents with Difficult Conversations' training to parents, carers, residential workers & teaching staff. The session draws upon support with 'coming out' and aims to develop skills on how best to support a person in this situation, with a focus on sexual orientation & gender issues. The session evaluated extremely well, resulting in further requests to attend within the new financial year.

HIV Testing Week

This year, in partnership with Eyes Open Steering Group, IWS teamed up with NHS Sexual Health Services to launch a social media campaign, which aimed to promote 'Know Your Status', inspiring people to get tested for HIV using the online links available for free HIV testing kits. We used social media to promote the campaign, & recorded radio

adverts and interviews with people living with HIV from the North East, which were broadcast on local radio stations such as Metro Radio & BBC radio. The campaign, which lasted a month, came to an end with IWS holding a health promotional stall within a local shopping centre. We asked members of the public to support the national campaign by wearing a red ribbon, many of whom were not aware of the latest groundbreaking developments in HIV and were not aware of 'U=U'.

Throughout the course of the month, IWS offered HIV & Aids Awareness, Sexual Exploitation & Sexual Health training sessions to various professions working & living across Northumberland.

Developments for 2023/24

- IWS remains passionate about developing training with the latest information, ensuring delegates knowledge & skills development is met to the highest standard.
- We will continue to work as part of the Eyes Open Steering Group, with a focus to tackle and reduce HIV/AIDS stigma, using national campaigns and social media resources.
- Remain in partnership with NHS Sexual Health Services to promote future campaigns and events such as Sexual Health Awareness Week & the popular 'Nail it' campaign, which will be back for 2023/24.

Women's Health

The current Integrated Wellbeing Service Public Health Women's Health Promotion Training Programme includes:

- Women's Health: Throughout the Lifecycle
- Domestic Abuse Level 1
- Domestic Abuse Level 2

Achievements during 2022/2023

- 5 Women's Health Improvement Health Improvement training sessions with a total of 57 delegates attending training.
- 5 Women's Health related national campaigns supported.
- 12 Health Promotion events.

Training sessions have been completed face to face and via the online platform Microsoft Teams, offering a blended learning approach to suit individual needs. Sessions delivered were aligned to specific national public health campaigns and delivered in accordance with the appropriate month/health promotion subject.

Menopause Awareness Month

Brand new for 2022, IWS launched a new training course '*Women's Health: Through the Lifecycle*'. This 2.5-hour session was developed with an aim to focus on Women's Health topics throughout the female lifecycle, from menstruation to menopause, and potential health issues. Course content focuses on female specific cancers, fertility & genealogical problems which women of all ages may experience throughout their lives. The course aims to educate, build knowledge and develop skills in this public health area, looking at symptoms, causes, prevention, treatment and signposting support, as well as resources available.

NCC provides a staff network specifically for menopause, which IWS have worked closely with those attending to develop this training, as well as specialist consultants. The sessions have been evaluated extremely well, as well as welcomed suggestions for further developments. IWS also attended 3 Menopause events in Northumberland, as well as 4 educational webinars.



Figure 16 Photo of a Women's Health promotional stand.

Cervical Screening Week

As part of Cervical Screening Week, IWS partnered up with a team of educational specialist nurses from the NHS to deliver a ‘cancer awareness’ training session, focusing on genealogical female cancer awareness. The session was aimed at and attended by professionals who work closely with and hold health sessions for members of the public. With an all-time record low of attendance for cervical cancer screening, IWS also held a health promotional stand within the workplace, encouraging staff members to attend regular screening. We used educational resources to show examples of screening kits and materials that are used during a screening for HPV testing/smear testing, to reduce the barriers of attending. We successfully engaged with around 109 staff members, initiating MECC conversations with both male and females where we raised awareness of the importance of cervical screening. We also launched our new ‘Women’s Health’ training during this campaign week.



Figure 17 Photo of a Women's Health promotional stand.

International Women's Day

IWS currently work in partnership with Thriving Together Northumberland, an exciting network of women who aim to bring the voluntary, community & social enterprise sector together to make a positive impact on the lives of Northumberland residents.

As part of this network, IWS supported & attended 3 various 'Women's Health Events' throughout Northumberland. Guest speakers came forward to give motivational talks on empowering women and celebrating the successes of inspirational women across the Northeast.

IWS attended the NCC IWD event within the workplace, promoting the Thriving Together & Staff Networks available, as well as promoting our bespoke training offers relating to Women's Health & beyond.



Figure 18 Photo of attendees at the International Women's Day event.

16 Days of Action: Against Domestic Violence to Women & Girls

As part of the NCC White Ribbon UK campaign, which aims to end violence to women and girls, 2022/23 saw IWS join the wider team of NCC to commemorate White Ribbon Day and the 16 Days of Action campaign, striving to provide several Domestic Abuse training

sessions. Together, we have successfully delivered to hundreds of professionals working and living in Northumberland.

We have also been supporting Northumberland County Council, having promised to be White Ribbon UK Ambassadors and Champions, which saw us hold 3 health promotional stalls across Northumberland within Community Hubs. With the aim to improve the knowledge, skills and confidence within this very current women's health topic, we engaged with over 150 people from various walks of life, some of which, supported us by signing a pledge to be allies of the White Ribbon movement campaign. IWS also attended the 'Women's Rights Event' held by Thriving Together Northumberland, which saw Kim McGuiness from Northumbria Police support us to develop safety within the community and give local women a voice to discuss issues within their residential areas.



Figure 19 Photo of a worker at the White Ribbon campaign promotional stand.

Developments for 2023/24

- We have listened to feedback and recommendations provided, and new for 2023/24, IWS will be offering a bitesize training session, solely focusing upon Menopause Awareness.
- IWS will continue to support NCC Staff Networks at various health promotion events across the County, as well as attending planning sessions & events.
- We will continue to strengthen and establish current networks as well as build new relationships with appropriate networks.
- IWS will continue to contribute to and develop the Northumberland Network for Domestic Violence & Abuse. IWS also aims to work in partnership with Northumberland College to introduce '*16 days of Action Against Domestic Abuse*'. This holds a theme for each day exploring the various forms of domestic abuse, aiming to raise awareness and help young people recognise different types of domestic abuse.
- We will focus on the delivery of more face-to-face sessions as well as blended online training, as per requests from evaluations & feedback.

Training dates can be accessed via Learning Together. IWS will continue to represent Northumberland as part of Eyes Open, tackling HIV stigma and sharing good practice at events, roadshows, social media, national campaigns and teaching/training sessions

Workplace Health

Overview

Each year, the Better Health at Work Award (BHAWA) engages with businesses which have sites based in Northumberland, and these can vary in their service and operations and can be factories, nurseries, schools, accountants, councils, NHS Trusts, GP practices and everything in between. There is a continuous cycle of businesses participating in the award as well as ongoing recruitment, which is often by word of mouth between businesses and the partners they work with. We are fortunate to have this stream of new sign-ups as it is not the same in other local authorities.

IWS continues to support the businesses through their journey on the award in a number of ways. One of which is providing an award coordinator who is there to assist and help the businesses meet the criteria in order for them to pass the stage they are working towards.

Having access to a survey tool has proven vitally important, as having a robust Health Needs Assessment (HNA) template provides all businesses with an excellent benchmark in which to work from as they progress and achieve in the award at all levels. It is mandatory that this HNA tool is revisited when looking to achieve Bronze and Gold levels. The stages are, starting at Bronze, Silver, Gold, Continuing Excellence and Maintaining Excellence.

There are a number of opportunities for businesses to share good practice with each other and create mentor/mentee partnerships which can flourish outside of a facilitated BHAWA session.

There are locality-based networks which encapsulate all businesses within the localities, who are invited to quarterly online Networks to share best practice. These are usually based on a predetermined/prevalent theme for the current climate. These were reinstated officially in the New Year, and businesses have already met to share their best practices on ideas that were 'free or at a very low cost'. The next upcoming theme will be how businesses have supported their staff around Financial Wellbeing, and most of these networks will take place in Q1 2023 covering that theme.

There is a rolling offer allowing businesses to continuously have their staff trained as Health Advocates, so that staff are better informed around what the goals are and what may be expected of them within their business. This is also accompanied by our robust training programme offer, covering a range of topic areas which give the staff the best opportunities to be educated to then help improve health and wellbeing in their workplace.

As of Q4 2022, the total number of businesses being supported is 48, although some of these are still working towards Bronze, and some have deferred their assessments by 1 year. Out of the 49 total, 36 achieved at least Bronze during their journey. In 2022, there were 24 businesses who achieved their next desired level of the award, a 100% pass rate for all those submitting in 2022.

The Health Trainers and Health Improvement Practitioners have supported 12 different businesses both on and off the award, by offering health checks and/or training sessions surrounding health topics; delivering sessions that are relatable and easy to digest for the staff.

The award offers the opportunity for additional social value, and it arises through a few different avenues. There are established networks with group businesses who share a similar locality together but include a variety of business types. Having the wide variety of business types broadens the reach of the individuals within each setting. For example, if an idea that has been successful in a factory is shared, it may have the potential to be adapted to suit a small nursery, in which a new audience can be engaged with. There are also the possibilities of creating peer mentoring between businesses. This is often used when a veteran business who have achieved Gold level or higher, can help to guide the progression of a new business on the award who is looking to achieve Bronze or Silver. These relationships flourish and become self-sustaining, which leads to better practice in their delivery or ability to build their portfolio.

There is a mandatory requirement at Gold, Continuing Excellence and Maintaining Excellence in which social value needs to be showcased. As well as the examples above, some businesses have excellent partnerships with local schools and often invite students in for educational sessions, especially with factories and engineering roles where STEM is important. There are also businesses who perform local litter picks either around their sites or at a Northumberland asset like one of the many beaches.

Fundraising is always very popular, and money gets generated for charities and sometimes individual causes.

Achievements over the report year

There was a 100% pass rate for those submitting in 2022, and all businesses who were looking to achieve the next stage or maintain their excellence level were successful.

There have been a further 25 staff members trained up to be health advocates for their setting.

Campaign work

18 public health campaigns were promoted through the distribution network, covering a range of topics which included overviews and links to reputable sources for further information and resources. These have been additionally supported through the Health Trainers or other professional partners such as Suzanne Doney, Community Awareness & Health Development Officer and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

Development plans for the next 12 months

Plans have begun to reinstate the large celebration event that previously occurred annually prior to pandemic. There will be an in-person celebration evening for all achievers in 2023, held jointly between Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside businesses, as this has always been a North of Tyne approach.

Healthy Ageing

Overview

Healthy Ageing promotes independent living and good quality of health and wellbeing for older people.

Achievements over the report year

Ageing Well has had a challenging year due to the Covid pandemic and the effects it had on the older population of Northumberland. Loneliness and social isolation have been the main concerns and due to the rurality of the County, this has proven difficult. The focus of the past year has been about trying to get older people more confident to come back out into the community and engage in activities that have positive benefits to mental health and well-being.

Stepping into Spring/Winter Warmer roadshows

Stepping into Spring roadshows are events that happen in the community to encourage older people to come along and find out what happens locally. The focus of the roadshow is to embrace springtime, enjoy the outdoor environment, meet friends, and find out about existing opportunities to increase social activity. This includes learning about the benefits of social inclusion and having the opportunity to hear about new groups available for older people in Northumberland.

The Winter Warmer roadshows are the same format, however, focus on staying well, safe, and warm during the wintertime. The focus is also around falls prevention, flu jabs, and home safety.

The events work well because the organisers are local community advocates and are knowledgeable about what the benefits and challenges are for their community. Information from other organisations, charities and voluntary groups adds interest and value to the events.

Four roadshows were held throughout the year, reaching over 400 people. Venues were:

- Bumersund Welfare, Stepping into Spring
- Powburn Breamish Village Hall, Stepping into Spring
- Cramlington Community Hub, Summer Sizzler
- Morpeth Town Hall, Winter Warmer

As part of the roadshows, several public health campaigns were promoted, covering

- Dementia Awareness
- Falls Prevention
- Flu and Covid jabs

All events were very well received by the local communities and had a positive impact on promoting and networking using a community focused approach.

Ageing Well Network

The Ageing well network is a long-established network, and it has a membership of over 250 people. The network meets 4 times a year via Teams and runs virtually throughout the rest of the time. The purpose of the network is to disseminate information, training, community events etc. The network covers all of Northumberland and receives good feedback.

Below is an example of some feedback received:

Hello Helen,

I am a dementia adviser for the Alzheimer's Society covering the North of Northumberland.

I just wanted you to know how really useful & informative these Ageing Well Network meeting presentations & minutes are. I read each one thoroughly & always find a new way to offer support to at least one of my clients.

Please feel free to pass this feedback around.

Thank you & best wishes,

Kate

*Kate Watson (she/her)
Dementia Adviser, North Northumberland
Alzheimer's Society"*