

Worcestershire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

13th November 2023

Link to papers: ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 13/11/2023 10:00 \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Public Health and Protection:

The report is based around the Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032 https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-02/health_and_wellbeing_strategy_2022_to_2032.pdf

There have been successes in regard to active Kids and preventing vaping in children. Worcestershire are leading the way on this nationally. The Prevent programme to counter terrorism and extremism is the strongest in region. Getting into the heart of deprived areas helping them form local committees rather than the organisations coming in and doing it to the community.

It is important that every stakeholder understands that prevention is everyone's job, it can't be left to public health on their own. The system must invest in primary prevention to shift the balance. Healthwatch agree with this and want to help push health prevention right into the heart of communities. To achieve this the system needs to work with all sizes of VCS groups.

We discussed the increase of life saving de-fibs being installed across the county, many by County Councillors utilising their Divisional funding. It transpires that nobody is responsible for the defib circuit across the country. Public Health are starting to take responsibility and ensuring the de-fibs are where they are supposed to be and are being maintained. They are working with the ambulance service to maintain existing units, but they are also going to put in more defibs across the county.

The ABCD method has been showing success in communities. Redditch has 3 ABCD community builders, 1 in Woodrow, 1 in Abbeydale and a third community builder who is not place based and is focused on community building within minority groups. The ABCD method is now forming more and more of the approach for community enablement and development. Instead of doing to people ABCD encourages enabling communities to build what they want from within.

We discussed areas of deprivation. There is more data available on deprivation metrics all the way down to ward level. [Data and Intelligence \(worcestershire.gov.uk\)](#)

Preventing vaping with children, work is continuing to prevent the sales of vapes to under 18's and working with schools on prevention.

There is a national consultation on tobacco and vaping projects here: [Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping)

There are 9 family hubs across Worcestershire, each district has at least one hub, these join up services. Mapping each hub and connecting to the community and VCS offering in the area.

Best start in life partnership is focusing on prevention for early years, mental health, enabling parent to parent support, speech and language therapy and identifying issues early for SEND.

Access into sports such as walking rugby and junior park run are great to allow people to access into physical activity but also to bring community together. The team want to bring opportunities to rural communities and elderly communities as well.

Sexual health services are really good in Worcestershire, but older people don't know where they are or how to access them. There is work ongoing to increase signposting for people out of education. The signposting within education is felt to be very good.

Need to have other ways to signpost than online. Especially as the broadband 3g is being switched off and there isn't enough connectivity for those with mobile phone. GP's have been sent information by Public Health so that written advice is available. It was suggested that instead of putting leaflets in GP's surgeries they are put in community hubs as less people are now visiting GP surgeries with more and more phone and virtual appointments.

Suicide prevention – men are less likely go to the doctors and it transpires 73% of men who die by suicide where unknown to the mental health services The Orange Button Scheme is doing really well with it being impossible to know how many people it saves, but it is already known that the Orange Buttons are enabling conversations. There is now an aim to increase training through training others trained up to train others on how to be an Orange Button wearer. Worcestershire are leading the country on suicide prevention, especially in males. There is a role within ABCD to create opportunities to speak to someone with an orange button to speak about suicide. There is data showing finances can be a huge contributory effect with the most likely person to end their life by suicide being middle aged men. It is important we get suicide prevention training out to VCS groups and organisations where they can best help.

There are Your Health vans going out to more rural or deprived areas to bring more opportunities to people to access preventative medicine. The teams focus is to get more targeted health checks on people who would otherwise be unlikely to go to the GP for one by utilising the van. There are people who are not registered with a GP and therefore would not get a reminder letter. Men in deprived areas more likely to not have flu jab, health checks or vaccines. The van is hoping to reach these people. The Now Your Talking programme will have a specific element for Romany, Gypsy, Traveller communities. The van will go into these communities and asylum seeker communities to engage.

Worcestershire has seen success with smoking cessation: work with midwifery has seen the biggest drop in 10 years for smoking in pregnant women. There will be new cessation programmes to be released in the next months.

Councillor Emma Marshall

Redditch Borough Council's Representative on Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee