

Healthy Lives, Healthy People

The future of public health

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// Bournemouth 2026 Information day

Outline

- **How is the delivery of public health functions changing?**
- **Progress with transition locally**
- **Challenges**
- **Opportunities**
- **Summary**

Public health functions

Health protection

Emergency planning including pandemic flu preparedness, resilience and business continuity, winter pressures etc

Support to local on-call rota for Health Protection Agency

Effectiveness of immunisation and screening programmes, support PCT response to outbreaks including seasonal flu

Health improvement

Tackling unhealthy behaviours in populations and individuals (smoking, alcohol and drug misuse, obesity, sedentary behaviour, sexual health, poor diets)

Healthcare public health

(quality, effectiveness and efficiency of commissioned services for health care)

Health protection: post-transition

- New executive agency of DH, **Public Health England** will provide national health protection service to all local bodies
- Screening and immunisation services will be commissioned by the National Commissioning Board
- Local authority directors of public health will have a **scrutiny and challenge** role in relation to local screening and immunisation programmes
- Emergency planning staff formerly working in PCTs will transfer to the NCB to support the new **Local Health Resilience Partnerships** which will co-ordinate the NHS response to emergencies – DPHs remain key role in providing public health advice to LHRPs and the Local Resilience Fora

Health improvement: post-transition

- Local authorities become responsible for improving the health of their populations and reducing inequalities
- They will be assessed on their local progress by a new **Public Health Outcomes Framework**
- All local authorities will receive a ring fenced Public health budget allocation, from which it can commission public health services and interventions in programmes
- Free to determine their own priorities
- Small number of mandated programmes that all must provide:
 - // **Sexual health services // NHS Healthchecks // National Child Measurement Programme // Public health advice to NHS commissioners**

Healthcare public health (advice to NHS)

- Local authorities must provide **public health advice to NHS commissioners**
- This will be in two main ways:
 - Public health specialists (consultants) will continue their work on needs assessment, public health intelligence, effectiveness and efficiency of health care services for the NHS
 - New **Health and Wellbeing Boards** will set the strategic framework for population health improvement and the reduction of inequalities
 - **Clinical commissioning groups** led by GPs must ensure their plans take note of the HWB strategy

Public health transition in Dorset

- Transition board to oversee transfer of functions representing all local authorities
 - Work streams on HR, finance, public health programmes, developing a MOU for advice back to GPs
- Agreement on a single public health team for Dorset, hosted by Dorset County Council
- Each local authority will have an Assistant Director of Public Health supported by a small team
- 2 project managers now in place to oversee operational detail of transfer
- Appointments to new structure due to begin in October

Challenges

Organisational

- Working as a single team across three local authorities
- Developing integrated public health function in each local authority v.s. lifting and shifting people
- Managing expectations around amount of public health support back to NHS commissioners

Actual

- 10–year gap in life expectancy for males in Bournemouth
- Obesity, diabetes, lifestyle risk factors not improving quickly enough in some parts of population

Opportunities

- Local authorities being responsible for population health provides a chance to work closer to issues that affect health and wellbeing
- Chance to influence and shape places where public health efforts have previously failed from within NHS
- Health and Wellbeing Board should focus effort and resources on e.g. inequalities issues and areas where public health outcomes are not improving quickly enough
- Single team across Dorset will provide consistent high quality public health advice to all authorities
- Can bring public health skills like priority setting, understanding evidence to wider range of commissioners