

Core brief

Monday, 02 November 2015

Introduction

This issue of Core Brief details an NHSGGC press release on the Director of Public Health biennial report: Back to Basics.

NHSGGC Director of Public Health launches biennial report: Back to Basics

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde's Director of Public Health has joined forces with Glasgow Warriors stars in her mission to encourage more people to embrace healthy lifestyles.

Dr Crighton and Warriors players James Eddie, Grayson Hart and Hugh Blake launched the health board's biennial Public Health report – 'Back to Basics' – on Monday, 2 November to highlight the ongoing need to educate people on healthy eating and the importance, both mentally and physically, of participating in sport.

As well as looking at the health needs of residents, the report addresses the findings from the recent Health & Wellbeing survey which informs on trends in public health across the area.

Crucially, the report also analyses what has been achieved in the two years since the previous report thanks to the efforts of many people and services with a role in public health.

Emilia said: "The report looks at a wide range of public health issues from engaging people to lead healthy lifestyles and tackling long-term inequality to the impact of poverty, and maternity and early years.

"I'm delighted to think about how much has been achieved in our area. These achievements have been as diverse as Glasgow's bike hire scheme and the work of the Poverty Commission in Renfrewshire as well as primary care developments in chronic disease management and the strengthening of child health surveillance.

"However, we continue to see the effects of lack of exercise and poor diets across Greater Glasgow and Clyde and the increasing impact they have on our services in the form of diabetes and cancer.

"Despite an increased focus on sport in the wake of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and London 2012 Olympics, the proportion of adults taking part in the minimum recommended amount of physical activity has disappointingly shown no improvement."

Alarming, almost half of those interviewed were overweight and 21% were obese. More men than women are overweight, but women tend to be more obese. Obesity rates were almost twice as high for women than men aged 16-24 with women becoming obese earlier and more severely obese than men.

“Obesity is having a growing impact on both peoples’ lives and the health service,” Emilia continued.

“The rise of obesity in the general population is also mirrored in the increasing number of women being overweight or obese at the start of pregnancy.

“More than 25% of all pregnant women in NHSGGC were overweight with 20% obese or severely obese.

“Due to the higher risk of developing complications obese women stay nearly five days longer in hospital than healthy women and their care cost is estimated at five times higher. The costs associated with newborns are also increased as babies born to obese mothers have a three and a half-fold increased risk of admission to the neonatal intensive care unit.”

The report also addresses the effects of poverty on the health of residents. Of the 1.1 million people - a fifth of Scotland’s population – who live within the NHSGGC area, more than 400,000 of our residents live in communities belonging to the country’s most deprived areas.

Emilia said: “One of the biggest challenges for the health service, as a whole, is to improve the health of people suffering the effects of disadvantage due to poverty. Socio-economic inequality has a unique impact on our population and we’re determined to continue tackling it in order to improve the health of people across the board area.”

Financial inclusion is key to improving the health of our population. NHSGGC plays a vital role in supporting patients avoid any major financial crisis, and the resulting negative effects on health, through early intervention on financial issues.

Emilia said: “Over the last four years our staff have made more than 32,000 referrals to Money Advice Services resulting in a £37 Million gain for many vulnerable patients and families.”

Emilia concluded: “If we are to see real improvements in health we must find ways to continue to prioritise prevention, early intervention, early years programmes and investment in areas that will truly improve health.

“The key is working together to build on peoples strengths and improve their future. I want this report to promote discussion with our communities so that, together, we’re reaching solutions to improve all our residents’ health.”

To read the full report, visit: <http://www.nhs.gov.uk/your-health/public-health/the-director-of-public-health-report/>

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