

TITLE OF REPORT: Development of the Tobacco Control Ten Year Plan

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update to the Health & Wellbeing Board on the development of the 10 year Plan for Tobacco Control in Gateshead.
2. To seek the Board's continued support for the reduction of adult smoking prevalence in Gateshead to 5% or lower by 2025.

Background

3. In July 2014 a Health and wellbeing Board session considered the issue of tobacco. In response to this session the Health and Wellbeing Board asked for a concerted effort to review and reinvigorate action to address tobacco in Gateshead.
4. Over the past 12 months work has been undertaken within the Gateshead Smoke-free Alliance to review activity. Over the year attendance at this meeting has been low, and so in an attempt to increase engagement, a workshop to develop a ten year strategy for tobacco control in Gateshead was planned for October.
5. The overall aim of the strategy is to reduce smoking prevalence to 5%, or lower, by 2025 with a view to ultimately creating a tobacco-free society.
6. Key areas of focus have included:
 - a. Fewer people starting to smoke
 - b. More smokers quitting
 - c. Protecting people from second hand smoke
7. The previous action plan comprised seven sections:
 - a. Developing infrastructure
 - b. Reducing exposure to second-hand smoke
 - c. Supporting Smokers to Stop
 - d. Media Communications and social marketing
 - e. Reducing Supply
 - f. Tobacco Regulation / Reducing tobacco promotion
 - g. Prevention and reduction of smoking prevalence amongst children and young people.

8. In early 2014 Gateshead Youth Assembly (GYA) contacted the Smoke-free Alliance to ask how they could support the Tobacco Control agenda. The GYA have had an interest in smoking related issues since 2010 and have regularly supported local campaign activity.
9. The young people were specifically interested in local issues such as tobacco related litter, smoking education and young people starting smoking as well as influencing local and national policy through lobbying and campaign work.
10. In September 2014 there was a conference that brought together members of the GYA with key policy makers across Gateshead. A number of key issues were raised and research was presented on young people's views of tobacco education in schools.

Current position

11. Across the North East the news is good with the proportion of North East smokers falling from 22.3% of people smoking in 2013 to 19.9% in 2014. The figures are from the Integrated Household Survey published by the Office for National Statistics.
12. There are now 165,000 fewer smokers in the North East than there were in 2005, when 29% of people smoked. (Currently awaiting the further breakdown of figures to Gateshead level data.)
13. There has been a significant culture shift in the last decade with regards to smoking, introduction of new laws and changes in public opinion to reduce smoking and protect children.
14. Smoke-free legislation has been linked to improved early outcomes. Evidence published in March 2015¹ estimated that in the first four years following smoke-free legislation, 991 stillbirths, 5,470 cases of low birth weight and 430 neonatal deaths were prevented across England.
15. However, smoking remains the single biggest preventable cause of premature death in the UK and major contributing factor to health and social inequalities in Gateshead.
16. Gateshead has provided robust leadership over last few years, together with the North East region it has led the way nationally and can continue to do so with a strong vision to 2025.
17. The North East Tobacco Control Office conducted research with the public that showed that the North East public is largely supportive of regulatory measures to address the harm tobacco causes with only 12% thinking the government has gone too far.

¹ Been, J. et al (2015) 'Impact of smoke-free legislation on perinatal and infant mortality: a national quasi-experimental study' accessed at www.nature.com/scientificreports 15th October 2015

Progress

18. As outlined above, a workshop was held on October 1st 2015, bringing together partners from across the Gateshead system, to identify some key aspirations for Gateshead's approach to tobacco control. Attendance at the workshop was disappointing and not all organisations were fully represented.
19. However, despite low attendance, the outputs from the workshop are being used to inform the development of an ambitious 10 year Plan for Tobacco Control in Gateshead. During the event a number of overarching, deliberately ambitious aims to be achieved by 2025 were identified including:
 - a. Ban on all burning tobacco products
 - b. No young people start smoking
 - c. Law introduced making it illegal to smoke during pregnancy.

For each action a timeline of activity and outcomes has been written tracking back to what needs to be done in the years leading up to this point.

20. It was recognized that these ambitions will require considerable work across crosscutting areas with specific activities identified to take each piece of work forward including political lobbying. This long term activity will require work in alliances to create the pool of evidence to support the adoption of the change, and to create a wide enough coalition of supporters to influence the government.
21. During the workshop colleagues discussed the potential contribution of e-cigarettes to the tobacco control agenda. As evidence is currently limited it was acknowledged that e-cigarettes may have both positive and negative impacts. As a consequence the group decided that further evidence was required before agreeing a position.

Next steps

22. The next stage of development is to take the outputs from the workshop back to the Gateshead Smoke Free Alliance for discussion alongside a review of what is already included in the current strategy.
23. Discussion within the Alliance will provide the opportunity for further refinement of the actions needed to re-galvanise Gateshead's approach to Tobacco Control.
24. In order to identify and develop the most effective approach, to reducing harm caused by tobacco, it is essential that there is a fully engaged system across all organisations in Gateshead. Consequently the membership of the Alliance needs a radical overhaul to ensure all organisations are appropriately represented.

Recommendations

25. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to consider the continued support for the development of this plan. This includes:
 - a. Comments on the priority aims identified so far.

- b. Agreement for the Gateshead Smoke Free Alliance to lead on the next stage of development of the 10 year Tobacco Control Plan. This includes the alliance focusing initially on the aims outlined above but with a view to the inclusion of others aims, such as measures to address illicit tobacco, as the plan gains momentum.
 - c. Continue to raise awareness and build support around a longer term aspiration for the North East around tobacco which also feeds into rapidly evolving national discussions.
 - d. Agreement that a key aspect for future development is the further engagement of children and young people with this agenda, as highlighted by the Gateshead Youth Parliament's report.
26. Health and Wellbeing Board members are asked to reconsider who is best placed to represent their organisation at the Gateshead Smoke-free Alliance. Members will be contacted outside the board for nominations.
27. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to receive a developed plan within the next six months.

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