

TITLE OF REPORT: Review of Children's Oral Health in Gateshead
- Twelve month update April 2018

REPORT OF: Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health, Care
Wellbeing and Learning

SUMMARY

The Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2015 reinforced that ensuring that children have the best start in life is firmly established in public health thinking as the most important issue for improving health and tackling health inequalities.

The Annual Report 2015 and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment have highlighted how poor oral health impacts on children and families health and wellbeing and how oral health is an integral part of overall health in children and young people. Good oral health can also contribute to school readiness.

Background

Following consultation with Councillors the Committee agreed its annual work programme for 2016/2017 and it was decided that as part of this programme a review of children's oral health in Gateshead would be undertaken. The review was carried out over a six month period and the final report and recommendations were presented to the Committee in April 2017. The final report was also presented to Cabinet on 23 May 2017 by Councillor Oliphant.

Update on recommendations

1. The final report set out four recommendations which were agreed by the Committee. A six month update on progress was given to Committee in September 2017. The following paragraphs outline further progress to date against each recommendation.

Recommendation 1 – Work collaboratively with all commissioners of oral health services to ensure that services are meeting the needs of the population and addressing inequalities as detailed in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the findings from the school dental survey (June 2017):

2. The findings from the National Dental Epidemiology Programme Survey, which was completed at the end of July 2017, will not be available until summer 2018. Once the findings are published we will identify any particular areas of concern and work with relevant services and partners to decide how these can be addressed to improve the oral health of children and young people.

3. Work on this recommendation is ongoing and will be progressed further with the new 0-19 public health nursing service and all commissioners of oral health services. The priority in the last six months has been the mobilisation of the new service.

Recommendation 2 – Review oral health promotion work in line with the transfer of responsibility from NHS England (April 2018) as part of the 0-19 public health services review:

4. As previously advised oral health promotion work has been embedded in the new specification for the 0 to 19 public health nursing service. The Service has been awarded to Harrogate and District Foundation Trust and will commence on 1 July 2018. We are currently in the process of mobilising the service. Once service delivery commences they will deliver key oral health messages in line with Public Health England guidance. This includes “A Healthy Mouth Factsheet” and “Improving Oral Health for Children and Young People”. The service will also focus on encouraging dentist attendance at mandated health reviews for all children and young people.
5. The 0-19 public health nursing service will have an identified lead for infant feeding and nutrition who will work on policy and pathway development, in conjunction with key partners. This will include, but not be limited to, breastfeeding, oral health promotion, promotion of healthy family diet and nutrition.

Recommendation 3 – Embed oral health promotion across the early help strategy to ensure a life course approach to oral health improvement:

6. Discussions have taken place with the Manager of the early help service to decide how the new 0-19 public health nursing service will work with them to ensure that a life course approach is taken in relation to public health including oral health promotion. This will include equipping staff with oral health promotion knowledge to enable them to have conversations with families, children and young people and encourage attendance at the dentists.
7. The new 0-19 public health nursing service will work with the early help team to look at how health promotion questions can be incorporated into the routine enquiries/assessments they undertake with families.
8. The early help team will also adopt the “Making Every Contact Count” approach and this will also enable them to facilitate discussions with families, young people and children about oral health.
9. The 0-19 public health nursing service will also make links with other key agencies/services once service delivery commences to ensure that staff are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to have discussions with families, children and young people about oral health.

Recommendation 4 – Ensure Making Every Contact Count (MECC) approach incorporates Change 4 Life programme (e.g. sugar smart, food smart):

10. As previously advised the public health team has three MECC posts and a public health resource and information assistant who will work together to ensure that they incorporate appropriate Change 4 Life programme materials as part of the MECC training programme. In addition the resource assistant will promote the use of Change 4 Life apps and resources with partners and services and can support anyone who needs help in accessing the apps and resources.
11. The new 0-19 public health nursing service will reinforce long term, sustainable positive change using a MECC approach and providing ongoing advice and support to children, young people and their families around health promotion, including oral health.

Next steps

1. The committee is asked to note and comment on the update of the oral health review 12 month update.

Contact: Alice Wiseman

Ext 2777
