

# *Living Better, Living Longer, Caring More*

Bulletin One: April 2007

## A North West programme to be launched June 2007

---

### **Realising our Potential**

The North West is well known for many things – its music, sport, universities and industry. However, poor health is having a major impact on life expectancy and quality of life in the region and is increasingly influencing the region's economic performance. To reverse this trend requires action at all levels – in schools, businesses, workplaces and in the home, for we all have a part to play.

Regional and local organisations have expressed a commitment to work in partnership to improve health in the North West; the *Living Better, Living Longer, Caring More* programme will become a key component to support the NW population in realising its potential. If people in our region begin to experience better health, just think what more we could achieve.

### **Living Better, Living Longer, Caring More**

The programme will be delivered by an independent, not-for-profit 'Community Interest Company', funded initially through NHS North West. The focus for the company will be to harness commitment from a wide range of public sector and other organisations, along with the energy and talents of local people. We want people in the North West to enjoy longer and healthier lives.

*Living Better* – We would like to see a reduction in illnesses related to smoking and drug taking, obesity, excessive drinking, physical inactivity and poor diet. We need to show people that by making healthier lifestyle choices, they can have a better quality of life.

*Living Longer* – We want to improve the low levels of life-expectancy experienced by people who live in certain areas of the North West. The region has the potential to increase the life expectancy of some local authority areas by up to 10 years (from 72 – 82 yrs in males <sup>(1)</sup>). We want people to enjoy longer, healthier lives.

*Caring More – We want local people to become more involved in developing services and initiatives that address public health issues in their community. We want them to expect good health and not see poor health as the norm.*

Progress is being made but at the moment the prognosis for the future health of the region is not good. We need to do something different.

This major, new health initiative – working title, *Living Better, Living Longer, Caring More* – will build on and support existing work and good practice and provide an umbrella for local activity. It will look to positively influence local, regional and national policy around healthy lifestyle influences and it will aim to assist the public sector in communicating key health messages to the public, helping mobilise local people to take action for themselves.

Key local and regional stakeholders will be engaged throughout the programme and local delivery will be supported by Area [sub-regional] leads. These leads will focus on locally agreed targets to achieve demonstrable improvements in health. These targets will be linked to Local Area Agreements.

To support this process the company will co-ordinate a series of extensive consultation sessions and deliver a comprehensive region wide social marketing campaign on a specific theme; in its first year this will be obesity.

The initiative has attracted core funding from the NHS in the North West and is seeking to secure additional contributions from a wide range of organisations in order to implement the intervention.

We aim to inspire everyone to build good health into their everyday lives.

### **Want to know more?**

---

For more information about health in the north west, visit the North West Public Health Observatory website <http://www.nwph.net/nwpho/default.aspx>

A report went to the *NHS North West* board meeting in March, outlining initial plans for taking *Living Better, Living Longer, Caring More* forward (go to [http://www.northwest.nhs.uk/document\\_uploads/Board\\_Papers/06.%20Living%20Better%20Living%20Longer.pdf](http://www.northwest.nhs.uk/document_uploads/Board_Papers/06.%20Living%20Better%20Living%20Longer.pdf) to see a copy of the paper).

A group has been established, chaired by NHS North West, whose role will be to guide the initiative in the lead up to the launch. Heart of Mersey are leading on this work until the Community Interest Company is formally launched in June.

It is important that we keep key stakeholders up-to-date on this initiative as it develops, leading up to the launch in June. To this end, we will be issuing a regular bulletin.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please contact: Angela Cockburn. Heart of Mersey

Email: [angela.cockburn@heartofmersey.org.uk](mailto:angela.cockburn@heartofmersey.org.uk)

**For all media enquiries contact:**

**Cathy Stuart**

Assistant Director – Communications

NHS North West

Tel: 0161 237 2903

Email: [Cathy.Stuart@northwest.nhs.uk](mailto:Cathy.Stuart@northwest.nhs.uk)

**For general enquiries contact:**

**Sue West**

Corporate Communications Manager

Heart of Mersey

Tel: 0151 928 7820

Email: [sue.west@heartofmersey.org.uk](mailto:sue.west@heartofmersey.org.uk)

---

**Note:**

Data taken from:

(1) **Life expectancy at birth by health and local authorities in the United Kingdom, 1991-1993 to 2003-2005.** National Statistics Website Release, 21st November 2006