

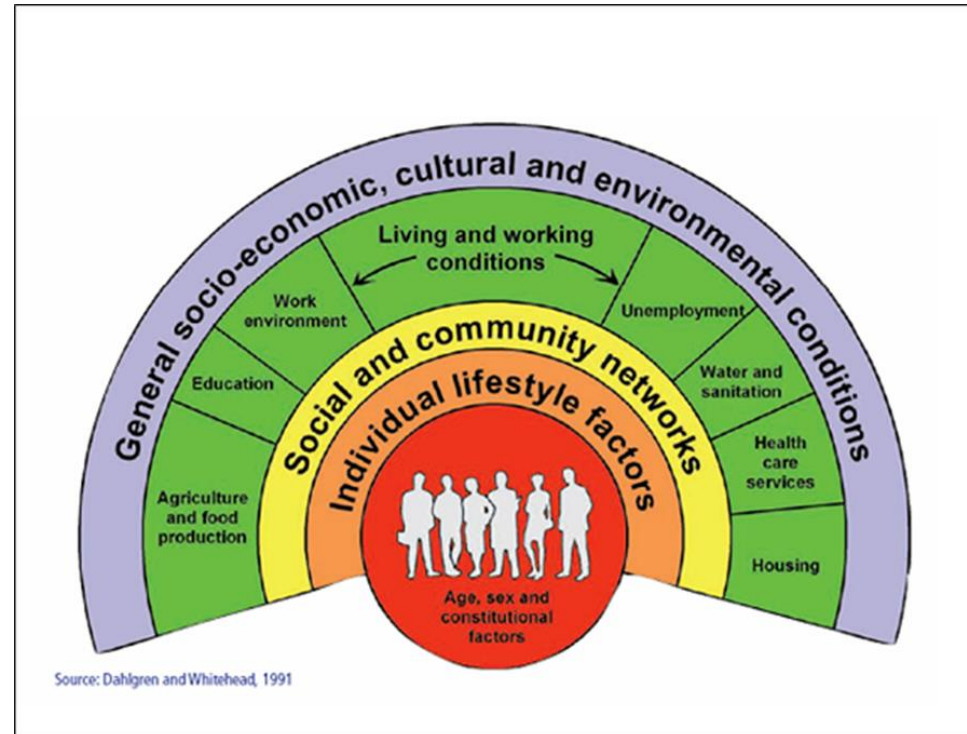
Public Health Update and New Director Approach

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What is health, and what impacts on it?

- More than the absence of disease
- More than just living longer
- Healthcare services contribute a fraction to health (National Illness Service)



Where do we “lose” health?

- Huge amount lost to lifestyles in industrialised countries
 - Smoking
 - Physical inactivity
 - Drinking alcohol, other substances
 - Diet
 - Collectively, these risk factors will knock ~23 years off an average males life expectancy
- Huge economic burden (11bn to NHS – probably equivalent cost to rest of society when you consider people dying young and lost productivity)

What is “Public Health”

- Generally, a service to promote prevention
 - Stopping disease / illness before it starts (health promotion)
 - Preventing the spread of disease (health protection)
- Working to improve the efficiency of services (healthcare public health)

Where Public Health has been

- Journey of the last two decades was increasingly focussed on doing things with individuals
 - NHS type focus
 - Weight management services, smoking cessation services
- I would argue this has become increasingly futile when tackling issues where the drivers remain the same or get worse
 - Eg ~62% of population locally are obese or overweight
 - Approx 170,000 people...

What we've learned about changing behaviours

- People are rational, but their rationale is sometimes not conducive to long term gains
- Having information about what is good for us is a weak predictor of what we will do
- Most of our behaviours are ingrained – we make decisions through intuition or based on routine / convenience
- We like doing what we want to, and we don't like doing something that makes us look “abnormal”

Environments that influence behaviours

- Physical environment
 - Eg distance to the nearest junk food, layout of supermarket shelves, ability to see the cigarettes, availability of safe cycle paths etc
- Social environment
 - What is “normal” in our society – eg how socially acceptable it is to smoke in a public place
- Legislative environment
 - What the law says we must (or mustn't do)

Delivering gains to population health in the future

- Recognise key role of health improvement, but take a different path
- Shift from individual interventions to ones which change the environment in which decisions are made
 - Build the “healthy” infrastructure
 - Align the economic drivers
 - Change the social norms

Where to start?

- Smoking – still the major killer
- Physical inactivity is not far behind
- Also need to recognise importance of starting young – very high levels of child poverty

Challenges

- Usual ones
 - Not enough time in the day
 - Shrinking budgets
- Special ones
 - Team emerging from major reorganisation
 - Need development
 - (Still) Need embedding in LA
- Focussing on what is achievable

Opportunities

- Using resources across two sites
 - Joint learning
 - Specialism
 - Attracting good staff
- Strong links (eg with children's teams)
- Economic growth
 - Capturing this to push “right” jobs
- Harnessing potential spend of LA/CCG/other employers