

Shaping up for Public Health



“We are ... committed to a reformed public health system for England in which local authorities take new responsibilities for public health. Giving this role to local government opens new opportunities for community engagement and to develop holistic solutions to health and wellbeing embracing the full range of local services”

Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Update and way forward, Public Health Command Paper, July 2011

The development of new Public Health arrangements and responsibilities provide an opportunity to look ahead to the future. With the arrival of Health and Wellbeing Boards areas can use this opportunity to look at devising new arrangements rather than being stuck with those that may have worked in the past but are now unwieldy or inappropriate. More partners and new responsibilities brings the possibility for confusion, but also the potential for creativity.

Before you can work effectively together a first step could be to understand more fully what each other does and can contribute. Without this partner review there is the potential for partners not to see the benefit of being involved. This may lead to other partners missing out on their skills, expertise and energies.

This process provides the potential to utilise established structures for work with young people, older people, sport and leisure, crime and economic development to look, perhaps for the first time, at a joint approach to tackling the root causes of ill health and health inequalities.

In addition the development of Health and Wellbeing Boards provides the opportunity to hard wire community engagement into developing commissioning priorities; improving the health of the area.

This is where we can help.

What we can do

Using our experience and expertise of public health issues and developing effective partnerships we can work with you, new and existing partners using different methods to help build a common understanding. We would do this in a variety of ways, tailored to your individual needs. For example we can:

- Conduct a partnership review to strengthen infrastructure for joint working;
- Make sense of your partnership arrangements; resolving blockages and facilitating a shared agenda;
- Map current provision to identify gaps and opportunities;
- Share effective practice with local practitioners amongst all departments and agencies including community organisations;
- Make sure that your structures and processes reflect the differing needs of operating at local authority and neighbourhood level and across commissioning consortiums;
- Establishing a baseline of involvement for all to recognise what they do and can contribute;
- Explore how all local intelligence and research functions can work to support your work effectively such as in carrying out joint needs assessments.

How we will do this

We will assess the evidence and your practices by reviewing documents, data and local commissioning plans and speak with representatives from partner organisations. Joined together this process will show you what your initial priorities should be to tackle the key health and wellbeing issues in your area and address health inequalities.

We also are experienced in facilitating away-days or partnership review events; seeking and gaining consensus and planning future actions and activities.

Working with you we will:

- Review your commissioning arrangements, protocols, policies and business planning processes;
- Consult with key stakeholders, including elected members, to assess levels of awareness;
- Assess your structures and partnerships to make sure you are taking a proactive approach and your governance arrangements are fit for purpose;
- Make recommendations on the membership of your Health and Wellbeing Board to bolster the prescribed members;
- Come up with clear recommendations detailing where you're up to and how you could improve in the future.

Our Experience

We have undertaken a variety of health focused work such as needs assessments, service reviews and strategy development including the alcohol strategies for both Birmingham and Sheffield. We are experienced in exploring the links between health issues and broader policy areas this particularly being seen in work with Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, LSPs, community safety partnerships and our alcohol strategy development.

Linxs Consultancy Ltd. provides high quality and practical advisory consultancy, training and research services. We have been awarded a framework contract by the Local Government Association (LGA) for a range of advisory services.

We also bring with us experience of community engagement and involvement. We have recently been selected as a finalist in the 2011 UK Housing Awards for the Involving and Empowering Communities category.

Contact Us

For further details of all our services please visit our web-site: www.linxs.org.uk .

For details about this package to develop health and wellbeing work in your area please contact:

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