

6. Lifestyle Factors

Lifestyle factors describe the way people live their lives. These include behavioural and social issues e.g. smoking, food, nutrition, sedentary lifestyle, alcohol and substance misuse. All these factors may contribute to the development of Coronary Heart Diseases and cancer deaths.

Poor nutrition may impact health and well-being in various ways, including overweight and obesity, and malnutrition, which can reduce quality of life and life expectancy. Unsafe sexual behaviour can result in a sexually transmitted infection (STI), or in unplanned pregnancy.

6.1 Health Challenge Gwynedd Alliance

The Health Challenge Gwynedd Alliance is a multi-agency group whose main aim is to develop and implement evidence based plans and projects to improve the health of Gwynedd's population by encouraging and enabling them to lead healthier lifestyles.

The Health Challenge Gwynedd Alliance is essentially the health promotion arm of the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Partnership, taking on a large part of the preventative role that contributes to a number of health and well-being factors including tackling the causes of chronic conditions.

The Needs Assessment, identified several key areas for action in relation to health prevention. These are:

- Tobacco Control – 29% of adults in Gwynedd report that they smoke (Welsh Health Survey 2004/06), and 30% of a target group of children and young people consulted with in the 'Our Voice, Your Voice' report 2007 recorded that they smoked. This is a vital area for action as smoking has long been established as a key risk factor for many acute conditions, and almost all chronic conditions. There is also a need to invest in campaigns and initiatives aimed at discouraging children and young people from smoking and forming a habit.

What we aim to do:

Decrease the numbers of people who (all ages) in Gwynedd who smoke.

- Food and nutrition – Only 42% of adults in Gwynedd eat at least 5 fruit and vegetables a day. There is limited data available on the proportion of children and young people that eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day but the 'Our Voice, Your Voice' report tells us that 21% of those

questioned ate 5 or more fruit and vegetables the previous day (18% ate 4, 15% ate 3). A worrying 34% of the target group reported that they had not eaten any fruit or vegetables the previous day.

What we aim to do:

Increase the number of people in Gwynedd who eat a balanced and healthy diet.

- Physical activity - Only 35% of adults in Gwynedd undertake the recommended hours of physical activity a week (30 minutes, 5 times a week). Data on the number of children and young people that undertaking the recommended hours of physical activity a week is also limited however the 'Our Voice. Your Voice' report records that 42% of children and young people questioned undertake more than 4 hours of physical activity per week. In the target group only 18% undertake 4+ hours activity.

What we aim to do:

Increase the amount of daily physical activity undertaken on a daily basis by all age groups.

- Alcohol and other substance misuse - 38.6 % of Gwynedd adults have reported that their average alcohol consumption was above the recommended guidelines of 21 units for men 14 for women per week. A survey of 2,000 young people in Gwynedd found that experimentation with drugs increases with age throughout the teenage years, and that by the age of 17 more than 40% of adolescents will have tried illegal drugs, with 13-14 is the most common age to first be offered them. The same survey found that around half of young people drink alcohol either once a week or 2-4 times a month, and the frequency and amounts increase steadily as they get older.

What we aim to do:

Increase awareness of the harmful effects of alcohol and binge drinking, and other substance misuse.

- Sexually Transmitted Infections – Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) numbers are rising. The number of positive tests for Chlamydia in Gwynedd residents in 2006 was 313, having risen sharply in 2005 to almost twice the average rate for Wales. Many of these cases will be in teenagers. The 'Our Voice. Your Voice' report tells us that 64% of the young people (17-25 years old) questioned did not know what a sexually transmitted disease was compared to 33% in the target group.

Interestingly 100% of those young people questioned who lived in the north of Gwynedd did not know what an sexually transmitted disease was compared to 64% in the south of the county.

What we aim to do:

Increase awareness of safe sex and aim to reduce the numbers of young people who contract an STI.

- [Mental health and well-being](#) - Good mental health in children and young people, adults and the elderly is a prerequisite for well-being. Preventative action can take numerous forms e.g. improving self esteem, stress reduction, volunteering and other projects which actively aim to boost well-being.

What we aim to do:

Promote good mental health and well-being.

- [Injury prevention](#) - Preventable accidents and injuries in the home and on the road have been identified as an area for action, particularly in deprived areas due to the link between high incidence rates and deprivation.

What we aim to do:

Reduce the numbers of older people and children and young people who are involved in preventable accidents.

All information relating to Children and Young People derived from the 'Our Voice. Your Voice' consultation with children and young people across Gwynedd conducted by 'Prosiect Clywed' on behalf of the Gwynedd Children and Young People Partnership. For a full copy of the report follow www.gwynedd.gov.uk

6.1.1 Evidence based intervention

All actions undertaken will be based on the World Health Organisation's Ottawa Charter for Health Improvement (1987) to help ensure a positive impact on health. The framework consists of the following action areas:

Building healthy public policy	Creating supportive environments	Strengthening community action	Developing personal skills	Re-orienting health services
(Achieve policy change)	(Achieve environmental change)	(Build community capacity, community engagement & involvement)	(Increase individual knowledge and skills)	(To promote/support health development)

There is clear evidence that any health promotion approaches that use these pillars are more effective.

In practical terms by looking at an example for preventing skin cancer you can clearly see that using the Charter ensures a comprehensive and thorough approach.

Building healthy public policy	Creating supportive environments	Strengthening community action	Developing personal skills	Re-orienting health services
Sun bed industry to review industry practices Prohibit un staffed coin operated sun beds	Develop Workplace Sun Smart strategy Protection for outdoor workers from the sun Planning for heat waves – Advice for	School sun protection policy Provision of shade in school grounds	Sun protection information for travelers to avoid burning during holiday Information campaign warning parents about the dangers of too	Sun safety information via health visitors

	residential and nursing home staff		much sun	
	World Health Organisation guidelines for Tour Operators		Information campaign raising awareness of the dangers of skin cancer and how to detect early signs.	

6.2 Education and Health Promotion

Educational attainment offers people the greatest potential for improved social and economic circumstances and is therefore a key element in reducing poverty, deprivation or exclusion and thus reducing health inequalities and improving public health.

Gwynedd has the lowest overall proportion of people aged 16 – 24 without qualifications – 14.3% compared to the Welsh average of 19.9%. Attainment at each Key Stage in Gwynedd has continuously improved over the past few years, with results consistently exceeding Welsh averages.

Schools in Gwynedd also play a key role in promoting health and fitness both within the curriculum and through extra curricular activities.

100 Gwynedd schools are now part of the **Healthy Schools Project** whose ten core aims include:

- Community involvement
- Healthy eating
- Healthy workplace
- Emotional health and well-being
- Safe environment
- Health and fitness activities
- Smoke-free schools
- Substance Misuse
- Sex and relationships education
- Health promotion

Specific activities developed to address the health eating core aim include fruit shops, lunch structure and guidelines for lunch boxes, milk for the under 7s,

healthy food for after school clubs (jointly with Healthy Schools Menu Project) and student access to drinking water.

Each primary school yard in Gwynedd has been marked with a track in order to implement the 'Clwb Dal i Fynd' Scheme which encourages children to increase the physical activity that they undertake by awarding certificates and/or prizes for each distance milestone reached.

5 x 60 Scheme: The Welsh Assembly Government has laid down the fitness gauntlet by setting the target of seeing 90% of young people taking part in regular and frequent activity by 2020. 5 x 60 is rising to that challenge by helping to create the environment necessary for children to take part in extra-curricular sport and physical activity on a regular basis.

It is hoped that all schools will have a 5 x 60 Officer by September 2008. The aim is to raise the fitness level of school children and to target especially those children who do not usually show an interest in sports and exercise.

What we aim to do

Further support and ensure partnership working with the Healthy Schools Scheme to ensure all schools participate.

6.3 Healthy School Menu's Project:

The Gwynedd Healthy School Meals project was authorised jointly as a pilot by the Gwynedd Community Strategy Partnership and the Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnership to develop the school menu and to offer healthy food and drink options to children and young people using a 'Whole School Approach' towards healthy eating.

The pilot project was established in 8 primary schools - Ysgol Manod, Ysgol Bro Tegid, Ysgol Nefyn, Ysgol Llangybi, Ysgol Carmel, Ysgol Glan Cegin, Ysgol Morfa Nefyn and Ysgol Beuno Sant. Three control primary schools were also established - Ysgol Hendre, Ysgol Chwillog and Ysgol O.M. Edwards, Llanuwchllyn. The schools were chosen using an agreed matrix made up of a range of factors in order to get a sample of schools with different characteristics and issues such as school size, rural/ town, eating facilities, schools where food is not prepared on site, and also to gain an equal geographical split.

Numerous approaches were adopted to consult with head teacher, kitchen staff, pupils and their parents throughout the project lifespan.

Overall the results of the pilot to date have been highly satisfactory in terms of outcomes and a full project report is expected in early 2008.

What we aim to do

Facilitate the implementation of the Gwynedd Food and Nutrition Strategy for primary schools. The strategy is supported by a good practice package to facilitate implementation within schools.

6.4 Sports and Physical Activity Service

The work of the Gwynedd Sports and Physical Activity Service and the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy are closely linked and aim to 'improve the health of the County's residents by encouraging them to increase the amount of physical activity that they take'.

The Service will give priority to the preventative aspects of the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy by supporting the Gwynedd Physical Activity Network and provide a comprehensive action plan to the Gwynedd Health Improvement Alliance on an annual basis.

In responding to national physical activity strategies such as ***Climbing Higher: Next Steps*** (2007) and ***Extending Entitlement*** the service will ensure that there will be:

- An annual increase of at least 1% in the number of adults participating in physical activity.
- Annual increase in the percentage of primary school children who take part in sports and physical activity for at least 60 minutes, five times a week.
- Annual increase in the percentage of high school aged boys and girls who take part in sports and physical activity for at least 60 minutes, five times a week.
- That all Gwynedd children will have had experience of outdoor adventure activities before they reach 12 years old, and one other experience of this type before they reach 16 years old.

What we aim to do

Support the activities undertaken by the Sports and Physical Activity Service ensuring a cohesive approach to improving the health and well-being of Gwynedd residents.

6.5 Corporate Health

The public sector including Local Authority, NHS and Higher Education is a key source of employment in Gwynedd. Promoting the health and well-being of staff is a priority for these agencies and for the Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnership.

The Corporate Health Standard is the national mark of quality for health and well-being in the workplace. It is a tool to support the development of policies that promote the health and well-being of employees, and is awarded at different levels of attainment, the highest standard being Platinum. At this level employers must demonstrate business excellence, and take full account of their corporate social responsibility.

What we aim to do

Encourage local organisations, both public and private sector, to achieve the Corporate Health Standard.

Promoting a healthy lifestyle

6.1 Health Challenge Gwynedd

Key areas for action	What we aim to do
Smoking	Decrease the numbers of people (all ages) in Gwynedd who report that they smoke.
Food and Nutrition	Increase the number of people in Gwynedd who eat a balanced and healthy diet.
Physical Activity	Increase the amount of daily physical activity undertaken on a daily basis by all age groups
Alcohol and other substance misuse	Increase awareness of the harmful effects of alcohol and binge drinking, and other substance misuse.
Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)	Increase awareness of safe sex and aim to reduce the numbers of young people who contract an STI.

Mental Health and Well-being	Promote good mental health and well-being.
Accidents and injuries	Reduce the numbers of older people and children and young people who suffer accidents or injure themselves.

Key areas for action	What we aim to do
6.2 Education and Health Promotion	Further support and ensure partnership working with the Healthy Schools Scheme.
6.3 Healthy School Menu's Project	Facilitate the implementation of the Gwynedd Food and Nutrition Strategy for primary schools. The strategy is supported by a good practice package to facilitate implementation within primary schools.
6.4 Sports and Physical Activity Service	Support the activities undertaken by the Sports and Physical Activity Service ensuring a cohesive approach to improving the health and well-being of Gwynedd residents.
6.5 Corporate Health	Encourage local organisations, both public and private sector, to achieve the Corporate Health Standard.