

COMMITTEE: HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE: 14 MARCH 2019

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TITLE OF REPORT: Draft Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2020

**Report of:** Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Veronica Jones, Portfolio Member for Adult Wellbeing and Health

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**Purpose of report**

To share the draft Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan with the Board and seek input and approval.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board:

1. Note the contents of this report and provide comment;
2. Consider whether any additional actions are required to improve oral health in Northumberland;
3. Agree and support the Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan.

**Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the commitments in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021 to enable people to feel safe, healthy and cared for and to provide access to the things they need. The document will also support children in achieving and realising their potential by improving overall health and wellbeing and potentially improving school attendance and educational attainment.

**Background**

Oral health can be defined as “a standard of oral and related tissues which enables an individual to eat, speak and socialise without active disease, discomfort or embarrassment and which contributes to general wellbeing”. In other words, oral health is an important part of the overall health and wellbeing of individuals and poor oral health can have a significant impact on many aspects of an individual’s life including social and emotional wellbeing.

## **Key issues**

Oral health is important in terms of public health as tooth decay is largely preventable; there are inequalities in its distribution; and it places a financial burden on services. The NHS spends £3.4 billion a year on dental care, including over £50 million for extracting decayed teeth in children<sup>1</sup>. Poor oral health can have a significant effect on children as it can result in considerable pain, school absence and also poor self esteem and anxiety as a result of the pain and subsequent treatment. Dental decay and other oral diseases such as gum disease and oral cancer share common risk factors with several other non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. These risk factors include unhealthy diet (including excessive sugar intake and sugary drinks), excessive alcohol consumption. Tooth decay and obesity may also be more likely to occur together, given that social deprivation and excess sugar intake are associated with both.

An oral health needs assessment was completed for Northumberland in 2017<sup>2</sup> and this highlighted several areas for further action including:

- Reducing inequalities in oral health in the county (i.e. there are notable differences in childhood tooth decay between the most deprived and least deprived areas of the county);
- Addressing the oral health needs of 0-5s (e.g. Northumberland has the highest rate of hospital admissions and general anaesthetics for dental issues in the North East);
- Work towards meeting the recommendations of the relevant NICE guidelines.

The Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan (**Appendix 1**) supports the learning identified in the health needs assessment and the general principles of a population-based approach to improve oral health across the county, but also some targeted approaches in the most deprived communities, who are already displaying some of the worst oral health in Northumberland.

The document aims to improve oral health and reduce inequalities in Northumberland by endorsing the following four strategic priority areas:

- Giving every child the best start in life and best opportunities for oral health
- Improving the oral health of older people
- Service development and commissioning
- Partnership working

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health England (2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-oral-health-applying-all-our-health/child-oral-health-applying-all-our-health>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Northumberland-Knowledge-and-JSNA/JSNA/Oral-Health.aspx>

The document sets out 14 actions for collective action by partners including targeted provision of toothbrushes/toothpaste by health visitors; actions to improve the oral health of care home residents; and consideration of the extension of the existing community water fluoridation scheme in Northumberland.

### **Conclusions**

Poor oral health has life-long and wide ranging implications. There is evidence to suggest that there are inequalities in the oral health of children under 5 in Northumberland, and there are concerns regarding the relatively high numbers of children from Northumberland who require general anaesthetics to manage tooth decay and other issues with oral health. Action is also required to safeguard the oral health in older people in Northumberland to enable residents to be as healthy and independent as possible.

The Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan aims to address these areas and make progress towards reducing inequalities by 2022.

Appendix 1. Northumberland oral health strategy and action plan 2019 - 2022.

### **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	The Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022 has policy implications in respect of health promotion, breastfeeding and commissioning, amongst other areas
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	There are financial implications relating to some actions and the plan includes Return on Investment figures for the most cost-effective oral health improvement interventions.
<b>Legal</b>	There are legal processes which will need to be followed for any proposal to extend existing community water fluoridation.
<b>Procurement</b>	Any procurement implications will be considered as part of ongoing commissioning processes.
<b>Human Resources</b>	N/A
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	The Northumberland Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan aims to reduce inequalities in oral health across the county.

<b>Risk Assessment</b>	N/A
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	N/A
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	N/A
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	N/A
<b>Wards</b>	There are implications for all wards in terms of improving the oral health of Northumberland residents.

**Background papers:**

N/A

**Report sign off.**

***Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:***

	initials
Monitoring Officer/Legal	
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	N/A
Relevant Executive Director	CMC
Chief Executive	
Portfolio Holder(s)	VJ

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