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20 July 2013

Dear Lead Member for Children's Services and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board,

Improving health outcomes for children and young people: Delivering and commissioning children and young people's public health services and invitation to sign the pledge

You will be as shocked as we are that childhood mortality in this country is among the worst in Europe. You will also want to know how poor many outcomes are for children and young people with long-term physical and mental conditions as well as those who are acutely sick. April 2013 marked the transfer of public health from the NHS to local authorities. Local authorities are now responsible for delivering and commissioning a range of children and young people's public health services for five to 19-year-olds, with responsibility for children under five following from 2015. This puts local authorities and health and wellbeing boards in a prime position to tackle the poor health outcomes experienced by children and young people.

We are writing jointly to you to share the resources available to assist councils with this increased responsibility and to invite you to sign up to the "Better health outcomes for children and young people pledge". The pledge is a part of the February 2013 system wide response to the Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum Report (2012).

Health and wellbeing boards are a crucial part of the new health landscape. Each board will want to ensure there is a proper focus on children within its priorities, that it has a thorough assessment of their needs through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, as well as from engagement with children and young people themselves. With a well-informed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, services can be commissioned that will give children the best start in life. The resources outlined in Appendix A will help you to make this a reality.

We hope that signing up to the pledge will demonstrate a commitment to giving children the best start in life. We also hope it will start local conversations about how health and wellbeing boards, local authorities, health and wider partners can work together to improve health outcomes for children and young people, and tackle the unacceptable variation in the quality of care for children and young people across the country and reduce health inequalities. The Local Government Association (LGA), the Royal Colleges, the Department of Health and Public Health England are proud signatories of the pledge. We encourage you to work with partners and to engage with local children and young people to adapt the pledge to reflect local needs. A copy of the pledge is available at Appendix B.

Lead Members for Children's Services play a key role in these conversations and in ensuring that the health needs and wellbeing of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families



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and carers, are addressed. Lead Members will want to ensure they are working closely with their health and wellbeing boards in doing this.

We recognise that many local authorities are already doing important work to prioritise children's health outcomes through integration and partnership working. If all local areas were as good as the best, together we could improve children and young people's quality of life now, and their ability to live fulfilling lives as they move through childhood. We are inviting local authorities, health and wellbeing boards, health, schools and wider partners to share examples of good practice so that learning can be promoted nationally. If you would like to share what your local authority is doing or planning to do to improve health outcomes for children and young people email a short description to Samantha.Ramanah@local.gov.uk. All examples will be published on the LGA's website and Knowledge Hub for the National Learning Network for Health and Wellbeing Boards to share learning.

Not all change is an improvement, but there is no improvement without change. We ask you to make a commitment to using the information and resources attached to challenge the status quo and to signing the pledge. Bold and brave decisions will be needed if we are to give children, young people and families the services they deserve.

Dan Poulter MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of
State for Health,
Department of Health

Cllr David Simmonds,
Chair of the Children and Young
People Board,
Local Government Association

Christine Lenehan, Director, Council
for Disabled Children and Co-Chair of
the Children and Young People's
Health Outcomes Forum

Professor Ian Lewis, Medical Director,
Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation
Trust and Co-Chair of the Children
and Young People's Health
Outcomes Forum

Dr Hilary Cass,
President,
Royal College of Paediatrics and
Child Health

Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive
Public Health England



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Appendix A – Further resources

The Pledge can be accessed at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pledge-to-improve-children-s-health-and-reduce-child-deaths

Knowledge Hub for the National Learning Network for Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs)

The Knowledge Hub for HWBs is a free online platform, it shares information, resources, ideas and learning on Health and Wellbeing Boards. Members can ask for help from other members and participate in live question and answer sessions.

Join here:

<https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/group/nationalllearningnetworkforhealthandwellbeingboards>

Email Samantha.Ramanah@local.gov.uk for help or further information

LGA dedicated children's health webpage

The LGA works with local authorities, including lead members for children's services to deliver better health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. Access the full range of support tools and latest information on children's health issues including safeguarding in the reformed NHS system, Health and Wellbeing Boards, local Healthwatch and public health issues.

www.local.gov.uk/childrens-health

The LGA has a dedicated webpage on health with tools and resources on public health, Healthwatch and health and wellbeing boards.

www.local.gov.uk/health

Child Protection Information Sharing project

The Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum welcomed the Department of Health's child protection – information sharing project, which Dan Poulter MP announced in December 2012. This will enhance national IT systems in emergency departments and other unscheduled health care settings to include information, fed securely from local authority systems, on the child protection status of individual children.

Local authorities are encouraged to express interest in the project now and to be ready to come on stream when it starts to roll out next year. More information can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/news/child-protection-information-sharing-project

Child Health Profiles

Child Health Profiles provide a snapshot of child health and well-being for each local authority in England using key health indicators, which enable comparison locally, regionally and nationally. By using the profiles local organisations can work in partnership to plan and commission evidence-based services based on local need. The profiles allow local authorities to



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compare the outcomes in their local population with others in order to identify and share best practice. Find your local profile at: www.chimat.org.uk/profiles

Atlas of Variation in Healthcare for Children and Young People

The Atlas of Variation provides information to allow clinicians, commissioners and service users to identify priority areas for improving outcome, quality and productivity.

Variations in healthcare exist for many legitimate reasons. Populations and individuals have distinct needs, and some of the variation observed is a reflection of the responsiveness of the service to meeting particular needs. However, the degree of variation demonstrated in the Child Health Atlas cannot be explained solely on that basis. Identifying and tackling variations in healthcare will improve both the quality and efficiency of the care provided, and deliver the best possible health outcomes for all children and young people.

www.rightcare.nhs.uk/index.php/atlas/children-and-young-adults

Establishing Local Healthwatch: Engaging with Children and Young People

Local Healthwatch's duties extend to involving children and young people in their work. It includes the need to develop strategies for effectively involving children and young people, and particularly those who are most disadvantaged. This is covered in one of a series of briefings produced by the Local Government Association to assist local authorities and their partners in local communities and the NHS to support the commissioning, setting up and early development of local Healthwatch. <http://tinyurl.com/kxartmk>

Factsheets for School Governors and Health and Wellbeing Boards and Children, Young People and Families

The Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum has published a range of factsheets. Local authorities may find the factsheets for school governors and health and wellbeing boards and children, young people and families of particular interest.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-experts-set-out-recommendations-to-improve-children-and-young-people-s-health-results

Factsheet on School Nursing

In addition the Department of Health has published a school nurse factsheet for head teachers and governors. The factsheet sets out details of the model and vision for school nursing which will positively impact on standards in all schools and improve health and wellbeing of school aged children and young people. <http://tinyurl.com/kwpqvo2>



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Briefing on School Health Service

The Department of Health and Local Government Association have produced a briefing for Lead Members for Children's Services (LCMS) providing an overview of the School Health Service and sharing top tips to help LCMS think about how they can use the School Health services to deliver better health outcomes for 5-19 year olds.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-health-service-briefing-for-local-council-members

From transition to transformation in public health

The LGA and Department of Health has produced a set of online resource sheets. The purpose of this resource is to assist local authorities and public health to develop a local public health system that is designed to have the greatest potential for improving health, not just in councils but with all local partners. The focus is on transformation, showing how councils and public health are going beyond the practical steps of transition to develop a local vision public health, supported by new models for implementation.

<http://tinyurl.com/kdk5w9t>

National Child Measurement Programme: Briefing for elected members

These frequently asked questions for elected members have been jointly produced by the Local Government Association and Public Health England. They address a number of transitional issues relating to the transfer of responsibility for delivering the National Child Measurement Programme, which moved from PCTs to local government in April 2013.

<http://tinyurl.com/n5etuj8>

'Must Knows' for lead members for children's services

The 'Must knows' are a long-standing source of information and support for lead members for children's services (LMCS). The suite of information has been comprehensively revised for 2013 and focuses on the key issues facing lead members for children's services and the current and planned reforms impacting on children's services.

<http://tinyurl.com/n3pdwt3>

Teenage pregnancy resources for elected members and officers

The LGA has launched a number of resources on teenage pregnancy to help local authorities understand and address the key issues. The resources include: Relationships and sex education: a briefing for councillors and a briefing on local government's role in tackling teenage pregnancy.

<http://tinyurl.com/l5ekp56>

The council's role in tackling public health issues – resources for local authorities

The LGA has launched a number of resources on key public health issues including obesity, mental health, drugs and alcohol.

<http://tinyurl.com/cod86q6>



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The 2012 report of the Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum
www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-experts-set-out-recommendations-to-improve-children-and-young-people-s-health-results

The system wide response to the Forum's Report
<http://tinyurl.com/msaupsh>

Statutory guidance on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies
<http://healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/jsnas-jhws-guidance-published/>

Safeguarding children in the reformed NHS system
The Department for Education has published revised statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children' (2013)
<http://tinyurl.com/brwtm77>

NHS England has published an updated accountability and assurance framework for safeguarding vulnerable children and young people which sets out the responsibilities of each of the key players for safeguarding in the new NHS system. <http://tinyurl.com/c57dca4>

A guide for new councillors 2013/14
This Councillors' Guide, produced by the Local Government Association is designed to provide new councillors with all the information they need to know. It explores some of the key issues and challenges facing local government today and includes useful hints and tips from experienced councillors.
<http://tinyurl.com/l95trlg>

National Health Visitor Plan: progress to date and implementation 2013 onwards
The 'National Health Visitor Plan' is a joint DH, NHS England, Public Health England and Health Education England document. It sets out how these partner organisations will work with the health profession, families, local authorities and communities to achieve the government's health visiting commitment to increase the workforce by 4,200, transform the service by April 2015 and support its sustainability beyond 2015.

In 2011 the ['Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-15'](#) set out action to revitalise the health visiting service, to help an expanded workforce to provide a new health visitor service model. We are now at the half-way point of a 4 year programme of recruitment and retention, professional development and improved commissioning linked to public health improvement.

'The National Health Visitor Plan: progress to date and implementation 2013' celebrates the successes of the programme so far and sets out how partner organisations within the new health landscape will work with the profession, families and communities in delivering the national commitment up to and beyond 2015. www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-visitor-vision