

# **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2020-2025**

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Easy read version

# Contents

What is the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy? .....	3
What do we know about health in County Durham? .....	3
Our approach to wellbeing .....	4
Main areas of work.....	5
Starting Well.....	6
Living Well.....	6
Ageing Well.....	7
We want to make sure that by 2025: .....	8
What will be in place to make this happen.....	9

# What is the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes the most important health needs in County Durham for the next 5 years, and more importantly, how we plan to make County Durham a healthy place to live, so people live well for longer.

The council and other organisations such as those who buy or provide health services, social care and other services for people, work together to prepare the Strategy. This group is called the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Board collects lots of information about people's health in County Durham. This information is then compared with the rest of the North East of England and then all of England.

That tells us if we have worse or better health than other parts of England, so we can see where we need to do extra work. When we know where we need to do extra work, it is included in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

# What do we know about health in County Durham?

We know:

- that people are healthier if they live in some parts of County Durham rather than in others
- that some people are not as healthy as people living in other parts of the country
- that lots of things can help to make people healthy or unhealthy such as; their environment, a good education, their home, the

food they eat, money, family, friends, communities and good jobs.

This is getting better, such as: less people smoke now, more schools are helping children to be fitter by doing the 'Active 30' exercises, we have more 'Dementia Friendly Communities', and more people are going to appointments to check for cancers.

We know that we can offer better health and wellbeing services by working with communities, patients, service users, carers and the public. As this helps us to know what is best for them and how to offer these services.

We also need people and communities to know how important it is to take care of their own health and wellbeing and where they can go for help or activities, such as local community centres, leisure centres, parks and open spaces.

So, it is important that we continue to work with everyone who can help, including schools, housing providers and local communities so people in County Durham are healthier in the future.

## **Our approach to wellbeing**

People's wellbeing is very important and is often measured by 'how well we are doing' or 'how satisfied we are with our lives'.

As well as our health, the things which affect our wellbeing include; our relationships; our work and finances; our levels of participation in sport, culture and community events; where we live; how safe we feel; and the services we can access.

We feel that people's wellbeing is so important to their lives that we want to measure this in the same way as we measure how strong the economy is in County Durham.

We know that there are lots of good things in communities (assets) which can help people and their communities to be strong, build their spirits, keep them flexible and protect them against challenges to their health or wellbeing.

Since 2009, we have been engaging communities and sharing decision making through Area Action Partnerships to give people a voice in how local services are provided. We know that this can make a difference and we want to build on this approach to work with local communities more to improve the wellbeing of residents.

We will use this approach to wellbeing and by working with communities, turn our County Durham Vision into a reality. We plan to:

- Find solutions that have been designed and produced together with service users
- Work with communities and support their development and empowerment
- Acknowledge that the needs of our communities might be different and build on their potential strengths
- Target our work to make the biggest difference to those who are most vulnerable and help to build strength (resilience)
- Deliver services and support to meet the person's needs, and help to make them stronger
- Have agencies working together efficiently to get the best results for our communities.

## **Main areas of work**

We think it's important to help people throughout their lives and support them to help themselves. So, we will look at three parts of people's lives, which are:

- Starting Well
- Living Well
- Ageing well.

See below for how we will do this over the next five years.

## Starting Well

Starting well in life begins with a baby's mother being healthy before the baby is born. We know that what happens in the early years of a child's life, can have a good or bad effect on their health and happiness as they grow older. Such as, being a healthy weight.

Some children and their families may need extra help so they can have the same chances as other children, so we will give that extra help to those children who need it most.

We know that to make our services better, we have to work with, and listen to what young people and their families tell us.

We will work to:

- Support women not to smoke in pregnancy
- Develop a Health and Wellbeing Framework for different places, including schools to improve the health of children
- Make it easier for children to eat healthily and be physically active

## Living Well

We know that good jobs, healthy environments, good housing and being able to help others, helps to make people healthier and happier.

In some parts of County Durham, where people have less chances of having good jobs, good housing or healthy places around them, more people become ill or die younger than they should. We want to stop that happening and we want people to want to have long and healthy lives.

We know that where people live, their family, where they work or socialise can have a powerful influence on their health. So, it is important that the places people go to, like work, schools,

community centres and doctors surgeries are very positive about good health.

When people make healthy choices, like not smoking, it helps to make others lives healthier such as their families and people in their communities.

Having a health condition can make it more difficult for people to find a suitable job, so we will offer extra help where necessary.

We will work to:

- Make it easier for people to cycle, walk or use public transport by making it safe and easy to use
- Make houses dry and warm so that people have less breathing problems and are happier
- Help people make health choices, like '5 a day' around eating fruit and vegetables, and exercising more.

## **Ageing Well**

The number of older people living in County Durham is growing every year.

As people get older, they are more likely to become ill, sometimes with more than one thing. So, we will continue to help people make changes that help them to stay healthy, so they do not get conditions such as cancer, heart disease and respiratory conditions.

Older people are more likely to have dementia and large numbers of older people suffer from depression and can become lonely or not feel part of their community.

The good news is that many of these conditions are preventable or at least can be delayed, through delivering on the priorities set out in this strategy, and by better shaping care and support around people and what matters to them.

We will help our older people to remain independent and to lead lives with meaning and purpose and when the time comes, we will make sure they receive good quality end of life care and have a good death.

We will work together to make sure that our health and social care services work well together to benefit older people.

We will work to:

- Help people to live at home for longer
- Identify dementia as early as possible
- Make sure people have choices at the end of their life and have a good death

## **We want to make sure that by 2025:**

- More people living in County Durham are living healthier lives for longer, like in other parts of England.
- We have a smoke free environment with over 95% of our residents not smoking and no child will be born to a mother who smokes.
- More people with long-term health conditions, learning disabilities or mental health issues are able to get a job they want, so they are more like the rest of the community.
- 9 in every 10 children aged 4-5 years and 8 in every 10 children aged 10-11 have a healthy weight.
- More residents will be telling us they feel well.
- More employers help their staff to be healthier by doing what the Better Health at Work Award says.

# What will be in place to make this happen

- Make health and wellbeing everyone's business
- Promote key health messages
- Agencies working together efficiently to get the best results for our communities
- Provide high quality and safe health and wellbeing services
- Excellent communications and information sharing across partners and communities
- Move resources towards helping people to remain as independent as possible
- Work with the whole family including carers and not just the person who needs help
- Use the best information and evidence when deciding what is a priority
- Target resources to improve health and wellbeing at those who are most in need
- Work with local communities, patients, service users, carers and the public to plan how health and wellbeing services should be delivered
- Encourage people and communities to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing
- Use local services and buildings where possible
- Train staff so they have the right knowledge, skills and competencies
- Everyone has the same opportunities to access health and social care services