Health and Wellbeing Outcome Theme Report

Report by: Dr Margaret Hannah, Director of Public Health

Wards Affected: Fife wide

Purpose

This paper provides a brief introduction to Fife’s strategic approach to improving the health of Fifers and reducing the health inequality gap. It highlights the wider context for the work and how it links with the publication of the Fairness Matters report.

The outcome lead report provides an overview of the range of work contributing to this outcome and highlights progress against established health and wellbeing indicators.

Recommendation(s)

Members of Fife Partnership are asked to:

1. support the new health inequalities strategy for Fife and note its relevance to all community planning partner organisations in Fife
2. note the synergy between the health inequalities strategy and Fairness Matters
3. promote the health inequalities strategy and the use of the health inequalities checklist within their own organisations

Resource Implications

Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance will fund some areas of work around reducing health inequalities through its partnership funding.

Legal & Risk Implications

There is a risk that health inequalities will widen without a proactive focus on tackling the health impacts of broader inequalities.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out for the new health inequalities strategy.

Consultation

A range of partnerships and partner organisations were involved in the consultation on the new health inequalities strategy, Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20.
1.0 Background to health inequalities in Fife

1.1 Health inequalities are the unjust differences in health experienced by different groups of people. They result from fundamental, unequal distribution of income, resources and power, which creates differences in living and working conditions, opportunities for education and employment.

1.2 Reducing health inequalities is an urgent task: people and communities are suffering in the face of austerity, low incomes, public sector cuts, changing demographics and loss of old identities, roles and relationships. Whilst deaths from CHD and stroke are falling, deaths from cancer and alcohol and obesity-related health problems are rising. People are living longer, but with an extended period of disability due to chronic health problems. People in the most deprived areas develop chronic conditions 10 to 15 years earlier than those in the least deprived areas.

1.3 In line with the rest of Scotland, health inequalities are not reducing across Fife. While fundamental causes lie in issues beyond our control, there are evidenced-based ways of working we can adopt locally, which can mitigate the health impact of wider inequalities within our communities.

1.4 Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance has the strategic lead for reducing inequalities and improving health in Fife. In the last year, the Alliance has developed, consulted on and launched a new health inequalities strategy for Fife. Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20 promotes evidence-based ways of working to reduce health inequalities across community planning organisations in Fife.

1.5 The Fairness Matters report, published in November 2015, sets out six recommendations for a healthier Fife. The first of these is that “Fife Partnership should continue to support the joined up approach provided by Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance, strengthening the understanding of what works in reducing health inequalities and scaling up and sustaining proven activities. The knowledge hub should provide a forum for the sharing of learning and good practice, and the use of health inequalities impact assessment.”

1.6 The Alliance’s strategic approach aligns with the Fairness Matters focus on ways of working that are: open and transparent; data driven and knowledge rich; citizen focused and that support all organisations and the people of Fife to work together to create a Fairer Fife (a mega-community response). Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20 also highlights the importance of building people’s strengths, skills and resources to make choices and use of opportunities and services that are available to them (capabilities approach).

1.7 Reducing Inequalities is one of the four strategic priorities of the new integrated Health and Social Care Partnership in Fife, although given the range of immediate challenges posed by integration, the Partnership’s role in this is still to be addressed.

1.8 These developments create an opportunity for a renewed focus on health inequalities in Fife across community planning partner organisations.
2.1 The last report to Fife Partnership Board in January 2015 highlighted the process of self-assessment undertaken by Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance, and the subsequent focus on increasing its leadership and influence around reducing health inequalities in Fife.

2.2 Since January 2015 Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance has:

- Supported positive endings for the 20 ongoing health inequalities projects funded in the Health Inequalities Funding Programme, which ended in March 2015. An evaluation of the programme drew on monitoring reports and interviews with projects, and set out learning from the programme and recommendations for Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance going forward.

  Amongst the achievements of the programme were a better understanding of the success factors and challenges for community-led health initiatives, and the decision by NHS Fife to mainstream midwife-led support for vulnerable pregnant women, tested through the Vulnerable in Pregnancy / Family Health projects.

- Developed, consulted on and launched a new health inequalities strategy, *Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20*. The strategy promotes evidence-based ways of working to reduce health inequalities across community planning organisations in Fife and sets out six outcomes we collectively need to achieve to narrow the gap between those experiencing the best and poorest health.

- Enhanced our communication tools and presented to a range of events, forums and meetings, to help build a shared understanding of health inequalities in Fife.

- Funded the Health Improvement Training programme which in 2015-16 delivered training to 1,656 workers, to increase competence in health and wellbeing issues and tackling health inequalities.

- Updated the Health Inequalities Checklist, a tool for organisations and teams to assess how their work contributes to reducing health inequalities. The checklist may be used as the basis for a health inequalities impact assessment, supporting the Fairness Matters recommendation.

- Developed and trialled the Health Inequalities Partner Programme, which takes a new innovative approach to supportive organisations in Fife to:
  
  o increase their understanding of how their work impacts on health inequalities
  o improve how they work with communities to reduce health inequalities
  o identify, develop and embed ways of working which are effective in reducing health inequalities
  o measure and demonstrate how their work contributes to tackling health inequalities.

- Awarded more than £200,000 to third sector organisations for initiatives aimed at reducing health inequalities in Fife.

2.3 Strengthening relationships with key organisations to ensure a health inequalities focus is applied to all key policy areas and delivery mechanisms in Fife continues to be a key priority for the Alliance. Membership and structures are currently being revised to ensure that maximum resources are available for this work.
3.0 Conclusions

3.1 The links between poverty, disadvantage and health are longstanding and persistent. Current changes in the way public services are delivered in Fife, along with the launch of Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20, and other key reports, mean the time is right for a renewed focus by community planning partners on changing the way organisations work to reduce health inequalities.

List of Appendices

1. 6 outcomes of Fife’s Health Inequalities Strategy, Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20
2. Fairness Matters – Update to Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance June 2016

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Outcomes of Fife’s Health Inequalities Strategy, **Fairer Health for Fife 2015-20**

1. Vulnerable pregnant women, children, young people and families have reduced risk of poor health outcomes.

2. People experiencing difficult life circumstances have more skills, strengths, opportunities and support to improve their health and wellbeing.

3. Older people have more opportunities and support to maintain their health and wellbeing and to take an active part in community life.

4. Communities develop local initiatives which create supportive social networks, increase participation in community activity and improve health and wellbeing.

5. Neighbourhoods have safe, accessible outdoor and community spaces which are used more by communities to enhance their health and wellbeing.

6. Organisations have an increased focus on creating equal opportunity for good health and provide services and support in ways most likely to reduce health inequalities.
**Introductory note**

The paper below provided the first regular update aimed at keeping FHWA members sighted on progress around Fairness Matters. These will be presented by Margaret Hannah, Director of Public Health and will focus on areas with particular relevance to the work of the Alliance and creating a healthier Fife.

The paper provided basic background information for further discussion with members of the Alliance.

1. **Fairness Matters Update For FHWA June 2016**

1.1 The healthier section of Fairness Matters states that *‘a Fairer Fife will be where public, private and voluntary sectors are strengthening the understanding of what works in reducing health inequalities and scaling up and sustaining proven activities’.*

1.2 There are six recommendations for a healthier Fife. At the end of May the Director of Public Health met with representatives from the Health and Social Care Partnership and senior managers from Fife Council to clarify the lead for each of these recommendations. The table at point 2 lists the lead for each recommendation and current work that is being progressed.

1.3 It should be noted that the only healthier recommendation prioritised for 2016-17 by the Fife Partnership is number 38, around health and employment. However several other priority recommendations around affordable, poverty-free, connected and empowered will have an impact on reducing health inequalities, although they are led by other partnerships or organisations.

1.4 Three additional priority recommendations have been set by Fife Partnership for 2016-17 around volunteering, reducing fuel poverty and considering what needs to be done to achieve the attitudinal and cultural challenges within mainstream workforces to deliver a Fairer Fife.

1.5 Margaret Hannah, DPH has agreed to lead a working group to progress new ways of working to deliver a Fairer Fife. This provides FHWA with an opportunity to show leadership on reducing health inequalities through the ways of working outlined within Fairer Health for Fife, including embedding use of the health inequalities checklist across organisations in Fife. FHWA’s strategic approach aligns with the Fairness Matters focus on ways of working that are: open and transparent; data driven and knowledge rich; citizen focused and that support all organisations and the people of Fife to work together to create a Fairer Fife (a mega-community response). Fairer Health for Fife also highlights the importance of building people’s strengths, skills and resources to make choices and use of opportunities and services that are available to them (capabilities approach).

2. **Fairness Matters - recommendations for a healthier Fife**
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<th><strong>Healthier recommendation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Lead</strong></th>
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| 35. Fife Partnership should continue to support the joined up approach provided by the Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance, strengthening the understanding of what works in reducing health inequalities and scaling up and sustaining proven activities. The knowledge hub should provide a forum for the sharing of learning and good practice, and the use of health inequalities impact assessment.  
**Current activity**  
Continuing work on Health Inequalities Partner Programme – including focus on evaluating impact on health inequalities of employability services and participatory budgeting.  
Input into the development of the Knowledge Hub, including part funding of Know Fife dataset co-ordinator (currently advertised). | FHWA |
| 36. Fife Partnership should invest further in the local voluntary health sector to support their work on reducing health inequalities and in co-producing community-based services.  
**Current activity**  
One-off funding to range of voluntary organisations  
Training and workshops for third sector orgs. | FHWA/ HSCP |
| 37. Fife Partnership should consider establishing a pilot project on reducing stress and supporting resilience for those of working age who are living alone.  
**Current activity**  
Focusing this recommendation around people who have experienced trauma and the impact this has on their lives and access to services. Fife seminar around trauma informed approach planned for 16th June. | FHWA/ HSCP |
| 38. Fife Partnership should develop a clear focus on health and employment, to increase employability capacity and sustain employment for people with health problems.  
**Current activity**  
Partnership working with Fife Council Economy, Planning & Employability Services to increase focus on employability for people with physical or mental health issues.  
A half day event to realign employability provision in Fife to better meet the needs of people with mental health issues to help them secure healthy, paid employment is planned for 23rd June. | Opportunities Fife |
| 39. Fife NHS Board should contribute to a reduction in inequalities over and above the obvious provision of public health services and integration agenda (e.g. as an employer, a procurer of goods and services and strong partner).  
**Proposed activity -**  
FHWA to lobby Fife Partnership to consider broadening this recommendation to include all community planning partner organisations. | Fife Partnership Board |
| 40. Fife Partnership should maximise the potential impact of its collective (and skilled) workforce to carry out simple interventions (e.g. income maximisation) | Fife Council Communities |
when interacting with citizens and not only focus on the issue at hand, but to seek to understand household circumstances.

**Current activity**

Training for front line staff in welfare reform and poverty awareness being rolled out across community planning organisations. Organisation of this is being supported through Health Promotion Fife.

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