



Royal Borough of Greenwich: Health Check Programme

NHS Health Check is a national programme which aims to help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and certain types of dementia. Everyone between the ages of 40 and 74 who has not already been diagnosed with one of these conditions is invited every five years for a check to assess their risk. They are then given support and advice to help them reduce or manage this risk.

A huge burden is associated with conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease. There is significant evidence to suggest that such conditions can be avoided through modifications in people's behaviour and lifestyles - which is what the NHS Health Check programme aims to do.

The Greenwich Public Health and Wellbeing department, recognising that one size does not fit all, has adopted an innovative, multi-pronged approach to Health Check delivery. This aims to improve uptake, ensuring as many people as possible have opportunities to keep well, including the Greenwich workforce and those who are most disadvantaged. As a result, the service supports the delivery of two key priorities of the borough, namely economic growth and poverty reduction.

Checks are carried out at places of worship (temples and mosques), Charlton Athletic Football Club (on match days), local libraries and supermarkets, GP practices, local pharmacies, and in the workplace.

Activity has involved significant cross-agency working, including developing the Greenwich workforce programme and more recently with the housing department. This has resulted in a profile of needs in housing estates that enabled better targeting of activities.

Local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have embraced the programme and, following an audit into the care of those identified with a risk rate of more than 20 per cent, are working with Greenwich to help implement findings. Greenwich has worked with Public Health England (PHE) both on influencing their national support offer and becoming a part of the induction programme to relevant PHE teams.

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In April 2013, responsibility for public health was transferred to local authorities. This case study is part of a series highlighting the innovative work London local authorities have done to promote healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities since taking on this new role. For more information, email addicus.cort@londoncouncils.gov.uk





Activity initially involved strong clinical engagement, including with GPs, who had piloted “outreach” health checks in supermarkets - resulting in the practice receiving a national award. While the programme has been led by public health, it has been supported by a range of people including primary care, local council employees and the CCG. Different aspects are delivered through a range of providers including GPs, pharmacies, the local authority and private providers.

A significant outcome has been the reduction in Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) mortality and a reduction in the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas in the borough. The offer and take-up of health checks have made a clear contribution into this.

A significant number of achievements have been made in the development of this programme, including:

- moving from being an area of “least readiness” to one of the top 10 areas nationally
- raising the awareness of the existence of the NHS Health Checks service
- understanding the barriers, motivators, and enablers for increasing the engagement of local people with the programme.

The programme has been identified by the Health Service Journal as a model of good practice and has appeared regularly in the local Greenwich newspapers. An evaluation by service users indicated a 95 per cent positive experience rating, with patients confirming they would return. Greenwich has showcased its social marketing work at a national level and with the London-wide Health Check network.

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