

Report to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

23rd October 2013

Update on Infant Mortality



Report Author: Mark Bailey
Job Title: Head of Business improvement & Partnerships
Email: mark.bailey@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
Telephone: (01782) 742751

Introduction

To provide an update on the statistical picture regarding infant mortality as it applies to the borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme. A previous briefing note was provided for the Committee in August 2013 and this paper builds on the information provided in that note.

Background

Figures provided by the Department of Health over a period of years (2008 onwards) have shown that Newcastle under Lyme has a higher than average level of infant mortality, compared to the situation nationally.

As previously reported to the Committee, a Commissioners Working Group was set up to examine this position with a view to analysing the existing position and suggesting improvements.

The Working Group was also tasked with developing partnership-based interventions which would deliver these improvements, based on a holistic approach to the problem.

The Working Group is made up of representatives from: -

- Staffordshire County Council
- Newcastle Borough Council
- North Staffordshire CCG
- Newcastle North and Newcastle Central Localities

The Working Group identified three priority areas for further work: -

- Foetal Growth Restriction Detection

- Safe Sleep Campaign
- Proactive Smoking Cessation

The existing provision of services under each of these headings was mapped in 2012 and these services have been prioritised via the health commissioning process.

The current position with regard to infant mortality levels in Newcastle under Lyme show that whilst the position has improved, it still remains an issue for the borough: -

- The 2008-2010 data showed that the borough had the worst rates of infant mortality in England (11 deaths)
- This position has improved slightly between 2009-2011 (nine deaths)

Overall, the issue remains one of concern for the area, even though things have improved slightly.

Questions to be Addressed

- What is the latest in terms of the work being done by the Commissioners Working Group?
- Are the areas of priority the right ones?
- What can Borough Council services contribute to this work?
- Is there any qualitative data available, in terms of work being done with individual families which can be adopted for others?
- What is being done elsewhere in the area and the country as a whole which is not being done in Newcastle under Lyme?

Outcomes

- To understand the up to date picture with regard to infant mortality (including services/interventions being undertaken)
- To analyse whether the work being done by Commissioners is meeting the needs of people living in the borough and dealing with the issue
- To recommend other areas of work/intervention which could be pursued

Supporting Information

- Newcastle under Lyme Health Profiles 2012 and 2013
- UK figures on infant mortality 1981-present

Invited Partners/Stakeholders/Residents

Representatives from Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group will be present at the meeting.

Constraints

- Provision of statistical information – NBC does not collect this information itself
- Information on the impact of intervention/services designed to deal with the issue of infant mortality
- Involvement from key partners especially those in health

Conclusions

This report provides information on the current position with regard to levels of infant mortality in the borough.

Statistical information over a period of years from 2008 to the present show that infant mortality in the borough is higher than the national average.

Work is being done to address this, but Members are asked to request further information on the nature of this work and the impact it is having on families in the borough.

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)

Cllr John Williams, Stronger and Healthier Neighbourhoods

Local Ward Member (if applicable)

N/A

Background Materials

See 'supporting information'

Appendices

None