

EAST AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP
FORUM- 27 OCTOBER
UPDATE REPORT ON EQUALLY WELL 2010 REVIEW

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a summary of a review of the Scottish Government social policy framework, Equally Well (2010), highlight changes to the policy direction and implications for local implementation.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During 2008 and 2009 the Scottish Government and COSLA published jointly three linked social policy frameworks:

- Equally Well;
- Early Years Framework; and
- Achieving Our Potential.

- 2.2 Each of these addresses the underlying causes of Scotland's health and other inequalities. The policy frameworks identify that there are strong positive links between having the best start in life, having enough money to provide for yourself and your family and enjoying good health. The three frameworks are mutually reinforcing, requiring a joint approach to implementation nationally, across the Scottish Government, and locally, across community planning partners.

- 2.3 The Ministerial Task Force which developed Equally Well reconvened in 2010 to review progress with implementing the three frameworks, especially in the current and future tight public financial climate. The purpose of the review was to check progress to date and identify whether any additional statements or recommendations would be required to give full effect to the vision for tackling inequalities, set out in Equally Well and the related social policy frameworks.

3. TACKLING INEQUALITIES

- 3.1 Traditional approaches to improving the population's health have tended to focus on health problems and deficits by promoting health-related behaviours, such as stopping smoking, reduced alcohol consumption, regular exercise,

balanced diet and maintaining a healthy weight. Whilst this continues to represent the “magic formula” for healthy life expectancy, it is clear that the availability and willingness of people to adopt these healthy behaviours depend significantly on their wider life circumstances.

3.2 Therefore, the focus of implementing Equally Well will continue to be directed at areas which represent the underlying causes of health inequalities (as opposed to lifestyle factors), for example:

- Opportunity; decent housing; social networks; self esteem and sense of control.
- Consistent parenting; safe, nurturing early years; and supportive education.

3.3 This relies on a collaborative approach across different public services, including active engagement of service users and the communities they live in. The Single Outcome Agreement will also continue to be important as outcomes-based planning and delivery of services continue to develop.

4. IMPLEMENTING EQUALLY WELL

4.1 Several existing recommendations/key statements have been further highlighted by the Task Force to assist with the ongoing implementation of Equally Well. These relate to:

- General Implementation of Equally Well - action should continue at national and local level to implement the framework.
- Community Planning - resources will be developed to support CPPs to deliver shared local outcomes and emphasis will be placed on third sector involvement in CPPs.
- Equally Well Test Sites - funding for test sites will continue.
- Shifting Resources - nationally and locally, there is an expectation that resources will be shifted towards early intervention.
- Engaging Communities - central resources will continue to support community-led/capacity building approaches locally and new ways of involving communities will be built into national policy-making.

4.2 The Task Force also identified a number of areas where it wishes to build on the Equally Well recommendations. Key additional recommendations are set out to give added impetus to the vision for tackling inequalities in the following areas:

- Early years - an early years pathfinder approach will be established to promote the integration of front-line services.
- Health of looked after children - the importance of NHS healthcare and health improvement services is being stressed and a new programme

of work to build greater co-operation between partners is being endorsed.

- Curriculum for Excellence - CfE is being endorsed as a key vehicle for improving the life chances of children and young people.
- The impact of the recession on persistent poverty and long-term unemployment - the Task Force has agreed the need to sustain public services for the most vulnerable and that the public sector should mainstream successful approaches to income maximisation and financial inclusion.
- Offenders' health - efforts will be supported to address alcohol, drugs and violence, improve community re-integration and develop community payback orders tailored to women's needs.
- Climate change - actions will be developed to protect the most vulnerable groups of people and avoid widening health and other inequalities.

4.3 East Ayrshire is well advanced in establishing the right partnerships and progressing with work to address the recommendations outlined in Equally Well, for example:

- The CHP Officer Locality Group for Children and Young People has a dedicated sub-group for early years;
- NHS and Local Authority are working closely together to address Corporate Parenting and improve the health of Looked After Children;
- Within the CHP, clear links are being made between the financial inclusion and improving health and wellbeing agendas, with the merger in 2009 of these two strands of the Community Plan;
- A multi-agency group is looking at how health improvement and healthcare should be provided within the local prison setting; and
- Engagement of third sector and public partners through a range of fora within NHS and Local Authority Structures.

4.4 Whilst we have made progress in East Ayrshire by engaging in partnership working and addressing many of the circumstances that lead to inequalities in health, we know that some of the persistent problems facing our communities remain a challenge.

4.5 Therefore, we must be able to tackle these challenges head on in East Ayrshire by improving partnerships even further and create opportunities for all partners to tackle the inequalities in health agenda.

4.6 The four-yearly review of the Community Plan will offer further opportunities to focus on the delivery of shared outcomes in this agenda. In addition it is envisaged that the feedback from the Collaborating for Outcomes event will

serve to enhance our thinking and approaches around addressing the inequalities agenda as a cross-cutting issue.

5. FUTURE REVIEWS

- 5.1 The Task Force will reconvene in the first half of 2012 to review national and local progress against its recommendations. This further review will continue to take an integrated approach across the three social policy frameworks.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 The review has confirmed that the three social policy frameworks remain the best approach to deliver long term improvements in outcomes for people. The Task Force recommends that action should therefore continue at Scottish Government and local level on all of the frameworks' recommendations, while at the same time recognising the need to identify local priorities to maximise the impact of available resources.

- 6.2 The Community Planning Partnership and Community Health Partnership structures remain the most effective places locally to plan and deliver against the new and existing recommendations from Equally Well.

- 6.3 In order to ensure that local actions continue to be consistent with the direction of travel put forward by the Task Force there requires to be some local consideration about how to strengthen our work around inequalities through the CHP and wider Community Planning Partnership. Some early discussion around the development of a crosscutting Equally Well Sub Group has taken place with a remit to broaden the health inequalities agenda to other areas of Community Planning including Community Safety, Regeneration and Learning.

- 6.4 This paper was considered by the CHP Committee on 4 October and they remitted the Officer Locality Groups and wider Community Planning groups to establish a crosscutting Equally Well sub group to coincide with the four yearly review of Community Planning.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The CHP Forum is asked to:

- i.) note that the inequalities agenda remains a priority for Scottish Government and that local partners are expected to continue to improve partnership working with the shared aim of tackling inequalities

Updated and amended by CHP Facilitator September and October 2010

