

A report to the Health Improvement Board, November 2019

A matter arising from the notes of the meeting in Sept 2019

Health messaging – Oxfordshire’s councils

Oxfordshire’s six councils each undertake external and internal communications related to health and wellbeing. Public health returned to local government in 2013 having previously been part of the remit of councils up to 1974. When the Government made the decision to transfer public health back to local government it said it did so with a view to the ability of councils to shape services to meet local needs, to influence wider determinants of health and to tackle health inequalities. Local authorities are democratically elected stewards of their local populations’ wellbeing.

Oxfordshire County Council was the authority to take on responsibility for public health. Since 2013 the county council has undertaken public health communications formerly undertaken by the NHS on a wide range of subjects. Oxfordshire’s district councils have often linked in to this work – however this has been on an ad hoc basis. Districts – with their responsibilities in spheres such as leisure, community development and housing - have always undertaken wellbeing messaging particular to their geographical areas and their services.

During the Autumn, communications teams from Oxfordshire’s six councils shared with each their PR plans as regards health and wellbeing. The table below represents a list of such work – partners in the NHS are already involved in a large number of them.

The intention is to try to align this work better without creating undue bureaucracy and process. As a result it is hoped that such work will reach more people and be more powerful due to its joined up nature, particularly on social media.

Each campaign/round of communication is led by an identified organisation. The existence of the new table provides partner comms teams with an initial notification of what is coming up for their individual forward planning purposes. It will then be for the lead partner in any campaign to share materials (wording, images, graphics, branding) in good time ahead of “go live” for any campaign so that individual councils are ready to share/retweet at the designated moments and consider internal communications to reach staff reflecting the messaging. Councils would be free to change the geographical focus for messaging to instil local relevance without altering core messages. It is hoped that this will create greater consistency. The plan can be refreshed by communications teams every month via email and phone calls.

Graeme Kane
Cherwell District Council
On behalf of all Oxfordshire local authorities

Date	Subject/Campaign	Detail/channels	Lead organisation
November 11-15	Alcohol Awareness Week	Case study based news highlighting Turning Point's new wellbeing services. Digital FB/Instagram ads and Digital ads coming from DrinkCoach	OCC public health
November 18-24	HIV Testing Week	Digital advertising support for the Terence Higgins Trust (THT) campaign	Terence Higgins Trust (THT) lead with OCC public health /Oxford University Hospitals (OUH)
November throughout	Mouth Cancer Action Month	Oxfordshire Community Dental Services CIC – holding clinics/events around Oxfordshire. OCC public health plan to support with digital messages and quote for the news release	Community Dental Services supported by OCC public health
December 1	World Aids Day	As above with HIV Testing week	OCC PH/THT/OUH
January throughout	Winter warmth	Campaign plan/press release/case study helping to improve health related issues to do with the home. Grants for heating, insulation etc. Keeping homes in better condition especially for 75+ age and the vulnerable. This will help with delayed transfer of care	OCC PH team Fits in with Winter plan OCC PH and Adult Social Care (ASC)/Oxford Health (OH)/CCG

January until March Q4 NHS HC NHS Health Check programme is a year round campaign	Have a healthcheck	January, radio campaigns, case study, press release two events. One at Templars Square, Cowley one at Oxford United with lots of PR. Petrol pumps more digital adverts, myth busters	OCC PH team
September to December	Flu campaign	Part of the overall Winter Plan encouraging care home workers to get flu jabs	OCC PH and ASC/CCG/OH
March	Under my skin	Play going around schools in Oxfordshire talking to year 8 and 9 about self-harm. News release	OCC public health commissioned Pegasus Theatre
March 11	No smoking day	Support with digital messages, provide quote for their press release. Potential case study	Provider Led – SmokeFreeLife Oxfordshire
January – Feb	Wellbeing map – discover healthy activities near you	Social media	CDC
January – Feb	Get Fit for Free	Social media video campaign	CDC
Winter & 23 Feb	Fuel Poverty Awareness Day	Social media	CDC