

Draft Terms of Reference for Oxfordshire's Health Protection Forum.

Purpose

Prior to 1st April 2013, Health services were involved in a number of critical health improvement tasks known collectively as 'health protection'. These were managed by NHS Primary Care Trusts working with the Health Protection Agency.

These included:

- Immunisation programmes
- Cancer screening programmes
- Non-cancer screening programmes (eg newborn screening for sickle-cell anaemia)
- Responding to health emergencies (eg outbreaks of infectious disease)
- Health aspects of planning issues to issue 'environmental permits'.
- Management of tuberculosis.

The responsibility for these services has now been distributed between a number of different agencies as follows:

- The NHS England Thames Valley Area Team will be responsible for immunisation programmes, screening programmes, responding to health emergencies and health visiting.
- The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group will be responsible for tuberculosis services and responding to some health emergencies.
- Public Health England will be responsible for surveillance of communicable diseases and responding to public health emergencies alongside Local Authority Public Health teams and will also 'embed' its staff within the NHS Area Team to deliver screening and immunisation services.
- Local Authority Public Health teams will be responsible for sexual health services and local aspects of environmental permitting, working with Public Health England.

At the same time, the Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire has a statutory duty to ensure that these services are effective, coordinated and of high quality.

The Statutory Role of the Director of Public Health is summarised as:

- The Director of Public Health (DPH) must be assured that there are integrated services for the prevention and treatment of Tuberculosis, for reducing harm caused by injecting drug use (such as the spread of blood borne infections such as Hepatitis B/C or HIV) and to reduce and manage incidents and outbreaks of Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- The DPH has a critical role in preventing and ensuring an appropriate response to emergencies. The scope and scale of the work will be driven by the health risks in a given area.
- The DPH must work with partners to ensure threats are understood and properly addressed.
- The DPH will provide advice, challenge and advocacy to protect the local population within a defined geographical boundary (Oxfordshire).
- He or she will be a champion for health across the Local Authority business will provide professional advice to officers, elected members and the public

- The DPH will lead strong partnership working, with a number of legal and other levers to help

The purpose of the Health Protection Forum is ensure that these tasks are done systematically within a transparent governance system.

In addition, the contribution of District Councils to these topics is acknowledged and appreciated (especially through environmental health departments), and so these proposals also include an evolving liaison role with District Councils.

Accountability

The aim of the Oxfordshire Health Protection Forum is thus to improve the health of Oxfordshire by:

- Ensuring that local screening programmes deliver against performance targets
- Ensuring that local immunisation programmes deliver against performance targets
- Ensuring that Infectious Disease prevention and control programmes are effective
- Ensuring there are sufficient plans in place for major outbreaks such as Pandemic Flu
- Ensuring health issues relating to the environment are given adequate consideration
- Ensure there is effective liaison with District Councils on relevant issues.
- Agreeing plans to rectify performance as required and agree escalation routes for problematic issues.

Proposed Core Membership

- Director of Public Health, Oxfordshire County Council (Chair)
- Director of Public Health England Centre – Thames Valley (or nominated deputy)
- District Council representative
- Consultant in Health Protection/Consultant in Communicable Disease Control with responsibility for Health Protection in Oxfordshire – Public Health England
- Consultant in Public Health/Public Health Medicine with responsibility for Public Health Protection/Emergency Planning – Oxfordshire (Deputy Chair)

Specialist advisors to be invited as necessary In attendance

- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Health protection lead
- NHS England Area Team screening programme lead
- NHS England Area Team immunisation programme lead

Frequency of meetings

Three times a year with an option to run ad hoc meetings as required.

Accountability

Accountable to Oxfordshire's Health Improvement Board and thus to the Health and Wellbeing Board. A written report will be produced for the Health Improvement Board three times a year.

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