

Bristol Health and Wellbeing Board

Title of Paper:	ICS System-wide, population-level approach to weight
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Date of Board meeting:	23/05/2024
Purpose:	Information and discussion

1. Executive Summary

Being overweight or obese significantly affects health and is a leading risk factor in BNSSG for disability and premature death. Obesity is a complex issue with multiple causes, none of which can be resolved by a single intervention. Instead, a system-wide approach to preventing and reducing obesity is needed. The BNSSG Integrated Care Strategy has committed to develop a whole-system programmes healthy weight, which will build on work already undertaken by Bristol City Council.

2. Purpose of the Paper

We are aiming to update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the BNSSG Joint Forward plan prevention deliverables that are focused on obesity. We will present the planned approach to reduce the prevalence of obesity in BNSSG.

3. Background, evidence base, and what needs to happen

Whilst obesity is linked to an increased risk of many noncommunicable diseases, there is also a large social impact with individuals experiencing stigmatisation. The impact of obesity on health is not being felt equally across society, with data showing that childhood obesity rates are increasing among children living in the poorest areas. The cost of living crisis is effecting access to healthy and nutritious food and opportunities to be physically active, and this is likely to be impacting on healthy weight in a range of different ways.

For the vast majority of people, dieting or restricting food for weight loss only works in the short term, potentially leading to harmful weight cycling and disordered eating patterns. We recognise that many people may have little control over the environmental and socioeconomic factors that influence their behaviours.

“We want current and future generations to live in a local environment that promotes a healthier weight and wellbeing as the norm. This makes it easier for everyone, regardless of age, background, circumstance or where they live, to access healthier food, eat healthier diets and live active lifestyles, and ensures support available for people with excess weight. We achieve this through collective action across the system, in partnership with local communities¹”

In 2020, Bristol City Council signed a **Local Government Declaration on Healthy Weight**, which aimed to achieve a commitment to promoting healthy weight and improving the health

¹ *What Good Healthy Weight for all ages Looks Like (2019)* Available [here](#)

and wellbeing of the local population; recognising the need for Local Authorities to exercise their responsibility in developing and implementing policies which promote healthy weight. This whole systems approach to healthy weight is embedded in multiple policies and priorities in the city. Bristol has committed to working collaboratively with each of our Locality Partnerships to support system level change - bringing together public health, healthcare providers, acute trusts, voluntary and community organisations, and the public to re-think how Bristol provides health and social care services with a focus on prevention and place-based solutions.

BNSSG are now aiming to be the first to develop an ICS Declaration (*name to be confirmed*). Engaging our BNSSG partnership will act as a system enabler to align strategies and policies that can work together to have a greater impact on prevention and the health and wellbeing of local communities.

4. Community/stakeholder engagement

We are forming a Steering Group with representatives from ICS partner organisations to co-produce our ICS declaration. The development of an overarching statement with supporting commitments by the ICP organisations would enable a high-level focus on the impact of overweight and obesity across the sub-region.

The previous Local Authority declarations have included 16 commitments divided into five sections: strategic/system leadership; commercial determinants; health promoting infrastructures/environments; organisational change/cultural shift; monitoring and evaluation.

As this would be the first HWD of its kind, the process of developing commitments will involve workshops and consultation mechanisms led by Food Active with the support of the BNSSG ICS Healthy Weight Steering Group.

5. Recommendations

We would like the HWBB to commit to supporting a system-wide approach across the ICS to preventing and reducing obesity.

6. City Benefits

According to the latest JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profiles, over half the adult Bristol population are living with overweight or obesity (55.7%) with prevalence in all three areas strongly associated with the most economically-disadvantaged populations².



The One City Plan includes several relevant outcomes:

By 2025: Halt the rise in levels of childhood obesity

By 2050: There is virtually no childhood obesity in the city

² Bristol. JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2022/23. Available [here](#)