

NHS Update - May 2010

Pioneering role for Wiltshire's Director of Public Health

Wiltshire's Joint Director of Public Health, Maggie Rae, has taken on new responsibilities at Wiltshire Council that came into effect in April 2010.

In addition to her existing responsibilities, Maggie will manage the Public Protection Unit including community safety and anti-social behaviour, environmental protection and licensing, commercial and consumer protection, joint-intelligence research and emergency planning.

The new role demonstrates an innovative evolution of the existing role of Joint Director of Public Health and puts Wiltshire at the forefront of the Government's ambitious and wide-ranging programme of reform to deliver a multi-agency approach to community safety across policing, health, justice, antisocial behaviour and problem families.

Early screening for Down's Syndrome

A new service is now being offered to all pregnant women screening for Down's syndrome in early pregnancy. All women are now being offered a screening test for Down's syndrome that involves a scan and blood test- known as the combined first trimester screening test. This test can be performed from 11 weeks and up to 13 weeks and 6 days. The ultrasound scan measures the nuchal area (a thin film of fluid under the skin at the back of the baby's neck) and the blood test measures the amount of 2 hormones that are found naturally in the mother's blood, in pregnancy.

Referral to the first trimester screening clinic is generated by the midwife, at the booking appointment (usually between 8-10weeks). Women will be offered an appointment for the first trimester screening clinic when they are 12 weeks pregnant and will be able to choose to have first trimester screening for Down's syndrome or a dating scan.

Women who book after 13 weeks and 6 days will be offered the triple test- a second trimester screen- for Down's syndrome screening. This test is available from 15 weeks and up to 20 weeks and 6 days of pregnancy. Again a high risk result will be followed up with the offer of a diagnostic test.

The next Board meeting will be held on **26 May 2010, in the Conference Room at Southgate House, Devizes**

Papers are published a week before the meeting on www.wiltshire.nhs.uk or on request from Maggie Goodman, NHS Wiltshire (tel: 01380 733827, email: maggie.goodman@wiltshire.nhs.uk)

For further information or copies of documents referred to above, please contact Jo Howes, Community Engagement Manager, 01380 733929 or jo.howes@wiltshire.nhs