

Health Trainer programme rolls out across Wiltshire

A one-to-one programme to support adults become and stay healthy with the help of qualified health trainers, is being rolled out across Wiltshire.

Health trainers will be in libraries and children's centres across the county working with people to encourage them to adopt healthier habits and stick to them.

The Wiltshire Council scheme will encourage adults to:

- Improve general wellbeing
- Build self confidence and motivation
- Be more active
- Eat healthier food and be a healthy weight
- Reduce or stop smoking
- Drink less alcohol

The health trainers work on a one-to-one confidential basis with people for six sessions, up to an hour at a time. The scheme began in March in the north of the county and following its success, is now being rolled out across the rest of the county.

Dave Payne, who is a senior health trainer, commented: “

We have a good team of health trainers who have all received training to enable them to support adults to become healthier and happier.

“Before I became a senior health trainer for Wiltshire Council, I worked with the Wiltshire Addiction Support Project. I was working with clients in second phase recovery from drug or alcohol misuse. I supported them to take small steps to reduce their alcohol, eat more healthily or get back into physical activity. Small steps often meant big changes and often resulted in them getting back into work, paid or voluntary, and becoming a productive member of society again.

“With this programme we are also looking at healthy weight. When people understand they don't need to go on a diet but just eat healthily and move around a little bit more, it seems to work. People know what to do. They just need that extra encouragement. Building motivation and confidence is key. We also help clients access different groups and activities. As we are community based we know what our area has to offer.”

Keith Humphries, cabinet member for public health said:

“This is an excellent scheme which already has a proven track record in other areas. We have a team of trained people who can really help make a difference to people's lives.”

Maggie Rae, corporate director said:

“The health trainers will help people set achievable goals, for example, getting off a bus one stop early, cutting down on alcohol, eating more fruit and vegetables. If you have someone to help you, working as your mentor, it can make such a difference and I’m delighted we will be able to help more and more people with this programme.”

To contact the health trainer programme email health.trainers@wiltshire.gov.uk or phone 0300 003 4566. For further details contact Margaret Winskill who leads and oversees the community health trainers at margaret.winskill@wiltshire.gov.