

Councillors' Briefing Note
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Department: Public Health

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Community health trainers

The health trainer programme was initially identified in the Department of Health's 'Choosing Health' White Paper in 2004. Wiltshire's health trainer programme started in 2009 with services being delivered at HMP Erlestoke and then extended to support army families in the Tidworth area, Wiltshire Probationary Trust and Wiltshire addiction support project.

Health trainer services support adults who want to have a healthier lifestyle, but are unlikely to make and maintain the required changes without one-to-one support. Health trainers are recruited from local communities and reach out to people who are at a greater risk of poor health. Trainers aim to work with some of our most vulnerable adults who often live in more deprived areas to assess health and lifestyle risks and empower clients to make behaviour changes.

Health trainers work in each of Wiltshire's Community Areas. The programme helps people to have healthy, active and high-quality lives by taking more responsibility for their own physical and mental wellbeing by:

- Improving their general wellbeing
- Building self confidence and motivation
- Becoming more active
- Eating healthier food and attaining a healthy weight
- Reducing or stopping smoking
- Drinking less alcohol

Health trainers have a clear understanding of safeguarding and their training includes building relationships with staff, services and activities in the community area in which they work. Adults with low confidence often find it hard to engage with services and a health trainer may help them to register with a GP, join a local walking group or access support for a mental or emotional health need.

The programme is being rolled out in two phases starting with the northern Community Areas and health trainers are currently taking referrals and seeing clients in Bradford on Avon, Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Devizes, Malmesbury, Melksham, Trowbridge and Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade community areas. In June 2014, Health trainers will start work in Amesbury, Downton, Mere, Pewsey, Salisbury, Tidworth, Tisbury, Warminster, Westbury and Wilton community areas.

The health trainer service will be officially launched on 15 May 2014 at County Hall at 10 a.m.

To contact the health trainer programme email health.trainers@wiltshire.gov.uk or phone 0300 003 4566. For further details contact margaret.winskill@wiltshire.gov.uk

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