
Report to Health Scrutiny Committee

A Health Inequalities Plan for Oldham

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Brownridge Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care

Officer Contact:

Katrina Stephens, Director of Public Health

Report Author: Katrina Stephens, Director of Public Health

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Purpose of the Report

This Health Inequalities Plan has been developed through the Health and Wellbeing Board and sets out the actions that Health and Wellbeing Board partners will take over the next 2 years to reduce the gap in life expectancy within Oldham and between Oldham and England.

Summary of the issue:

Like many other areas in England, Oldham saw health and health inequalities worsen in the decade between 2010 and 2020. Life expectancy stopped increasing, inequalities between groups widened, and for the poorest people in the borough life expectancy declined¹. Since 2020 the pandemic has further exposed and amplified inequalities in health and the social determinants of health in Oldham, Greater Manchester, as in the rest of England

The persistent inequalities in health in Oldham, and the missed opportunities this generates for all our residents, particularly the most disadvantaged, are well recognised. Improving health outcomes, but also wider economic and social outcomes, cannot be achieved without concerted effort to address health inequalities and inequalities in the social determinants of health.

¹ [Main-report-GM-report_final.pdf \(gmhsc.org.uk\)](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/main-report-gm-report_final.pdf)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Like many other areas in England, Oldham saw health and health inequalities worsen in the decade between 2010 and 2020. Life expectancy stopped increasing, inequalities between groups widened, and for the poorest people in the borough life expectancy declined. Since 2020 the pandemic has further exposed and amplified inequalities in health and the social determinants of health in Oldham, Greater Manchester, as in the rest of England
- 1.2 The persistent inequalities in health in Oldham, and the missed opportunities this generates for all our residents, and particularly the most disadvantaged are well recognised. Improving health outcomes, but also wider economic and social outcomes, cannot be achieved without concerted effort to address health inequalities and inequalities in the social determinants of health.

2. Health Inequalities Plan (Appendix 1)

- 2.1 In November 2021, Health and Wellbeing Board members agreed to develop a Health Inequalities plan for Oldham, which would set out the key actions which will be taken by the Oldham system in response to the stark challenges the borough faces in health inequalities, and drawing on the recommendations of the GM Build Back Fairer report into health inequalities in the City region and the Oldham Public Health Annual Report 2021.

Over the last six months a working group has met to develop the plan, reviewing key themes highlighted in the GM Marmot Build Back Fairer report and the learning from a wide range of engagement activity undertaken in the borough over the last two years.

- 2.2 A final plan has now been produced and was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 21st June 2022.
- 2.3 The plan is intended to be action focused as opposed to a long strategy document. A lot of the pre-work has been done through the Marmot and Independent Inequalities Commission reviews of Health Inequalities in Greater Manchester. Level of need and the scale of the health inequality challenge and opportunity to improve are documented in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the forthcoming Public Health Annual Report 2021.

The scope of the plan is necessarily broad, and as such this plan aims to reflect and amplify actions already included within other related plans, as well as identify new actions which could impact on reducing health inequalities. The focus of the plan is on actions which can be delivered within in 2 years or less given the pace with which health inequalities need to be acted upon and the ever-changing environment within which the system operates. It is however recognised that reducing health inequalities will need to be a priority for the borough for the long term is progress is to be made.

- 2.4 The primary outcomes which the plan is aiming to achieve is to reduce the gap in life expectancy and health life expectancy within Oldham, and between Oldham and the national average, ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to experience the best possible health and wellbeing throughout their lives. The GM Build Back Fairer report proposes a series of indicators which can be used to monitor progress in addressing health inequalities. It is proposed that these are adopted to monitor

progress in Oldham. Developing a dashboard which tracks these indicators and provides an overview of progress in achieving the actions outlined in the plan is now a priority as we move from plan development into delivery.

- 2.5 Overseeing delivery of the plan will be a primary focus for the Health and Wellbeing Board, with board members sponsoring each theme, and supporting delivery leads. Future Health and Wellbeing Board meetings will be themed to allow deep dives into the plan themes to be undertaken as part of the Board's work programme. Work has commenced to identify other Boards which have a substantial role in delivering the plan's actions. This work will need to be further refined as new governance structures and ways of working continue to develop.
- 2.6 Council teams and departments are the delivery lead for a high proportion of actions in the plan. This reflects the significant role of the Council across the wider determinants of health (and was the reason behind the move of Public Health teams from the NHS into local authorities in 2013). As such, whilst this is a system plan which includes actions across all anchor institutions, the Council's system leadership role in the delivery of this plan is vital.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Health Scrutiny Committee are asked to note this report, provide feedback on the content of the health inequalities plan.