

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Public Health: Oral Health - Good oral health is an important part of overall health. Oral health issues such as tooth decay and gum disease impact health and wellbeing in many ways and at all stages of life.

More than one in three 5-year-olds in Oldham have tooth decay (36.3%) and this is more common in our more deprived areas. Tooth decay is preventable, but can cause pain, school absence and difficulty with eating, drinking, speaking, and playing. Tooth extraction due to tooth decay is the most common reason for hospital admission among 5–9-year-old children.

Gum disease can increase the risk of heart disease and dementia. In pregnancy, gum disease can increase the risk of pre-term birth. Tooth decay and tooth loss can also make people self-conscious about their appearance, reducing confidence and self-esteem. Poor oral health in older adults can cause malnutrition, dehydration, and urinary tract infections (UTIs). It can also lead to pneumonia. Around 1 in 10 deaths from pneumonia among older adults in hospitals or care facilities can be prevented by improving oral hygiene.

The previous Oral Health Strategy in Oldham focused specifically on 0–5-year-olds. The proposed approach for the future is to shift to a life course oral health approach based around four priority areas – early years, targeted groups, oral health/food environment, and oral health system. Maintaining good standards of oral health into old age can reduce the risks of pain, dehydration, malnutrition, sepsis and aspiration pneumonia, as well as loss of dignity and quality of life. It is well recognised that people who are dependent on others especially those in Care Homes and those admitted to hospital rely heavily upon the carer's provision of oral care and the perception of need for access to dental services. In Oldham, a provider is in place to deliver comprehensive oral health improvement training and to develop oral health champions within health and social care and within the community.

In 2025/2026, Oldham residents will benefit from enhanced local Public Health initiatives, as well as new initiatives supported by Greater Manchester and National funding to support the oral health of our residents. Our Integrated Children and Families Service continues to provide evidence-based oral health promotion. In the last 6 months, 4525 oral health packs have been distributed through health visitors and 64 early years work force have received training in oral health. Currently 75% of Early Years settings, including Family Hubs, hold our 'Healthy Eating Award'. In the next 12 months, Oldham aims to implement the following enhanced oral health provision:

- A universal supervised toothbrushing programme for 3–5-year-olds in Early Years settings and primary school reception classes in Oldham.
- Re-establish distribution of toothbrushes and toothpastes to reception and year 6 children within the National Child Measurement Programme
- Distribute toothbrushes and toothpastes to all 3- and 4-year-old children in early years settings twice per year.
- Increase investment into targeted, community-based oral health promotion and establish oral health buddies/ champions in community groups serving families with children at higher risk of dental decay.

These initiatives will be supported by additional public health investment, as well as funding from national government as well as resources donated from Colgate Palmolive and from NHS Greater Manchester.

Additional aims for 2025/2026 include:

- Establishing an oral health steering group
- Developing an oral health communication plan
- Developing on oral health monitoring and evaluation plan

Adult Social Care:

CQC Information Return Submission

Adult Social Care received the Information Request from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on Monday 9th June and with a three-week submission deadline of Friday 27th June. The CQC assessments of Local Authorities were introduced two years ago, to independently appraise adult social care departments of how they meet their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act (2014).

A considerable amount of work has gone into providing CQC with evidence against each of the following domains:

- Safe
- Effective
- Caring
- Responsive
- Well-led

Market Position Statement (MPS)

A key responsibility under the Care Act is market development and shaping, ensuring that the locality has a sustainable, diverse, stable and quality provision in place to meet the needs of its population; this is presented through a Market Position Statement. Oldham's MPS has recently been refreshed and has been published on the council's website as a suite of documents. The documents are primarily intended to advise care providers about the current adult social care provider market in Oldham, where we are looking to develop new provisions, what plans we have in place and our commissioning pipeline. It is intended to talk to both our existing care market and also to new providers who are either looking to establish here or broaden their current provision into new areas. It will also be useful to our partners, including residents and their families, to understand our current position and future plans. [Adult Social Care Market Position Statement | Adult Social Care Market Position Statement | Oldham Council](#)

Care at Home framework

A major component of how we support people to live independently at home is our commissioned care at home services. The current contracts and commissioned framework come to an end March 2026. The current cluster-based model of delivery has worked well for Oldham as unlike other local authorities we do not have a waiting list, and to fully appraise and consider the commissioning approach for April 2026 we are engaging with stakeholders, including residents and their family members and current providers and providers who are interested in working with us. Support, advice and guidance will be available through the market engagement events on how to complete submissions once the tender is released on The Chest.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.