

KIRKLEES HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD
MEETING DATE: 27/06/24
TITLE OF PAPER: Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023/24: Inequalities in the experience of death and dying
<p>1. Purpose of paper</p> <p>This paper highlights to the Board the Kirklees Director of Public Health (DPH) Annual Report 2023/24, entitled ‘Inequalities in the experience of death and dying: What are the assets and opportunities within Kirklees communities?’</p> <p>Directors of Public Health have a statutory requirement to write an annual report on the health of their population. The focus of the report is chosen by the DPH and its aim is to inform local people about the health of their community as well as inform decision-makers on health gaps and priorities that need to be addressed.</p> <p>This paper outlines the purpose and content of the 2023/24 DPH report, which the Board can use to support the promotion of the report findings and the implementation of its recommendations.</p>
<p>2. Background</p> <p>Over 3,800 people in Kirklees die every year. For three quarters of these people, death is a gradual process which happens over days, weeks, months, or years. In these cases, dying becomes an evolving part of life that may lead to rising administrative and financial burdens, complex conversations with family and friends, and increasing contact with health and social care.</p> <p>Death and dying is experienced uniquely; Kirklees has a wealth of diverse communities who all have different customs and rituals in relationship to death. Some people are able to plan for and experience a death which is within their control, in a setting of their choosing and with the people who they love. Sadly, evidence shows us that some groups of people are more likely to experience a traumatic, stressful or unplanned death.</p> <p>This report comprehensively explores these inequalities at a local level, through examination of existing evidence and through direct conversations with representatives from a range of organisations across the Kirklees system, working with population groups known to experience greater inequalities.</p> <p>The 2023/24 DPH report is presented as a series of web pages, including national and local contextual information, alongside case studies and recommendations. The report also includes a short animated summary, and an Executive Summary and Plain English Summary in accessible PDF format.</p> <p>By reading the report and recommendations, people and organisations will gain an improved understanding of the inequalities experienced around death and dying. By listening to the stories and experiences of our partners and by working together, we can help to reduce these inequalities and reduce the impact on individuals, families and communities. Finally, by talking about this report to family, friends, colleagues, and partners, we can all help to normalise these challenging conversations.</p>

<p>3. Proposal</p> <p>The Board is asked to endorse the findings and recommendations in the DPH Annual Report, to instigate actions within their own organisations and to support partnership working to address issues relating to inequalities in the experience of death and dying across Kirklees.</p>
<p>4. Financial Implications</p> <p>None</p>
<p>5. Sign off</p> <p>Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director – Corporate Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health</p>
<p>6. Next Steps</p> <p>The report will be published on the Council’s web site and will be promoted by the Council’s Comms Team via the usual channels.</p> <p>The Health and Care Partnership’s Dying Well Programme Board is arranging a dedicated session to focus on the findings from this report.</p> <p>A slide deck will also be made available to help support partners to disseminate the findings across organisations.</p>
<p>7. Recommendations</p> <p>It is intended that Board members will make use of and disseminate the DPH report, to support the reduction in inequalities at end of life through adoption of report recommendations. Overarching system recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage conversations about death and managing a life-limiting condition, to better understand people’s wishes and help them put plans in place; focus on what matters most to them. • Educate staff in how to have death-positive conversations, and raise awareness of services and options amongst patients, carers, relatives and staff. • Enable people to make decisions that suit their individual needs, by using a person-centred approach and developing improved support mechanisms. • Expand the support currently offered and provided, by building on existing community assets and examples of good practice. • Evolve services as population demographics and generational attitudes change, co-designing with communities to ensure language and support are inclusive and equitable; recognise how good palliative and end-of-life care can have a positive impact on every part of the health and care system. Primary health care and community services could consider developing and piloting new pathways into palliative care. • Read this report in conjunction with other local and regional evidence. <p>The full report includes more detailed recommendations and will be available via the Kirklees Council web site: https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/public-health-annual-reports.aspx</p>
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