

## 8.1. Conclusions

Haringey has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in the country. It also has one of the largest populations from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. In 2001, 45% of the population were of White British background compared to 60% for London and 85% for England. Because the young population of Haringey is more ethnically diverse than the older population, it is likely that the percentage of the population from Black and Minority Ethnic groups may increase over the next generation.

It is essential that services to promote and sustain health and well-being meet the needs of all Haringey's people equally. The relationship between health, ethnicity and migration is complicated. However, we know that many minority ethnic groups are more likely to experience poorer health outcomes than the general population. But data collection and analysis on health, ethnicity and migration need to be improved so that we can better understand the extent of unmet need and how best to meet this.

Experiences in early childhood are crucial to health outcomes in later life. Prenatal and antenatal care is an important first step in health. However, some Black and Minority Ethnic groups are more likely to present late for antenatal care. There is also a strong link between deprivation and poor child health, leading to worse health in adulthood. For example, the number of low birth weight babies, a proxy indicator for infant mortality, is higher in the deprived wards in the east of the borough. There is also a strong link between educational achievement and health. Pupils from some Black and Minority Ethnic groups continue to have lower educational attainment than White British pupils. New integrated service models, such as children's centres, are proving effective at offering services to hard-to-reach communities. More needs to be done to ensure that all children have the healthy start they need to build the foundations for a healthy adulthood.

Some Black and Minority Ethnic communities have higher levels of health needs than others. But data suggests that they are not always accessing the services they need. Mental health needs are high in Haringey and people from some Black and Minority Ethnic groups are more likely than others to suffer from mental health problems. Screening for breast and cervical cancers reduces mortality, but women from some ethnic groups are less likely than others to use screening services. Cultural issues such as stigma and language can act as barriers to health services. More work is needed to understand the extent of unmet health need and to ensure that our services are accessible to everyone.

Lifestyle risk factors are a major determinant of health. Alcohol misuse is damaging to the health of both the individual and society. Smoking is the single biggest cause of preventable death. Participation in regular physical activity can help to prevent and treat over 20 long-term conditions or disorders, but too few people in Haringey do enough physical activity. It is important to avoid generalisations about unhealthy lifestyles and ethnicity that can result in stigmatisation, but we know that some minority ethnic groups and migrants are more likely to experience the stress that contributes to unhealthy behaviours. This includes stress resulting from deprivation. Understanding the prevalence and distribution of lifestyle risk factors for chronic diseases, particularly smoking, diet and physical inactivity, continues to be a challenge in Haringey, as it is across England. Prevention of these risk factors will be key to reducing premature mortality in the medium and longer term.

Although data on migration status is inadequate, we know that asylum seekers and refugees experience worse health outcomes than the general population. Their health may be affected by the trauma they have suffered in their home countries, pre-existing health conditions, a sense of alienation and loss, poverty, homelessness and the uncertainties of their legal status in the UK. They are more likely to have unhealthy lifestyles and less likely to use health services. We need to better understand the health needs of this group and develop more targeted services.

Improving health and well-being cannot be done by NHS Haringey acting alone. Effective action requires a partnership approach involving all organisations with a role in service delivery. Most importantly, communities themselves need to be empowered to define their own needs and to develop community-based approaches to meeting these needs with support from statutory agencies. Although there have been some successful examples of this approach, more needs to be done. This will involve a radical shift in the way in which service providers, including NHS Haringey, work.



## 8.2. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions above, a number of recommendations for NHS Haringey and other organisations have been developed. These recommendations build on the evidence of successful new approaches to health and well-being that this report has highlighted, and on broader evidence-based research. They recognise the progress that has already been achieved in many areas and are intended to highlight priorities where further effort is now needed.

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### Improving understanding:

- Improve the collection and analysis of information on migration status with a view to understanding how this impacts on health outcomes and needs.
- Undertake further investigation of ethnicity as a factor in determination of child obesity, particularly how ethnicity may affect growth patterns.
- Improve the collection and analysis of data on immunisation rates.
- Identify Black and Minority Ethnic groups with the highest infant mortality rates.
- Utilise information from the Child Death Overview Panel to identify any wider public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or pattern of deaths in the area.

### Overcoming language and cultural barriers:

- Remove the language barrier that prevents many people from accessing services. It is important to have a culturally competent workforce with language skills to match the diversity of Haringey's population.
- Provide health services in a culturally sensitive and welcoming way. Services that have been identified in this report as needing particular consideration to ensure cultural sensitivity include antenatal services, screening services, mental health services, drug and alcohol services, immunisation and teenage pregnancy services.
- Engage sensitively with women from countries where female genital mutilation or cutting is prevalent during pregnancy and develop management plans for delivery agreed during the antenatal period.
- Ensure that schools provide a welcoming and safe environment, and a positive school ethos.
- Engage positively with service provider partners, including the local authority, to improve the patient's whole experience during the period of care.
- Be mindful of the variety of factors that affect immunisation uptake and be able to act on these for local client groups.

### Engaging with local communities:

- Ensure that services are culturally appropriate by engaging with recently arrived and Black and Minority Ethnic communities as key partners in promoting access to services.
- Develop a communications strategy to promote early access to antenatal services – for example, information at key venues in Haringey.
- Promote the use of self-referral forms in maternity services and promote direct access to a midwife via children's centres.

### Empowering people to improve their own health:

- Develop information resources to challenge attitudes and misconceptions about nutritional value of foods, portion sizes for children and the importance of exercise.

- Ensure that behaviour change interventions are a key component of the strategic commissioning priorities for screening services.
- Raise awareness of TB in communities and within primary and secondary healthcare in order to destigmatise TB.
- Work with local communities to raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity and to better promote opportunities for physical activity across the borough.

### Integrating service delivery across agencies:

- Engage positively with service provider partners, including the local authority, to improve the patient's whole experience during the period of care for TB.
- Continue to build on the children's centre model.

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