Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Lothian's Children and Young People

NHS Lothian strategy for children and young people 2014 – 2020

Executive Summary
Introduction

The overarching vision of the NHS Lothian Children and Young People’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy is that ‘every child should have the best start in life and grow up being healthy, confident and resilient.’

When we consulted children and young people on developing this strategy, the three key issues they highlighted were:

• How we engage children and young people in their care and treatment
• Recognise how children and young people feel
• Access to health Information and health services.

This strategy sets out a clear vision, principles and approach for how NHS Lothian will work with children and young people, their families, the public, the voluntary sector and the four local authorities across Lothian to improve the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people across Lothian between 2014 and 2020.

Improvements in these areas are what we want to achieve and are at the heart of the strategy.

This vision will be achieved through the following outcomes:

• Every child and young person will have access to high quality healthcare that is accessible and appropriate to all children and their families, delivered proportionately to need and at the earliest opportunity (Article 24 UNCRC)
• Disabled children and young people will have their additional needs met (Article 23 UNCRC)
• Children, young people and their families will be involved in decisions that affect their health and wellbeing (Article 12 UNCRC)
• NHS Lothian staff will have an increased understanding of the needs of the younger population and will use this understanding to inform the planning and delivery of services (Article 3 UNCRC)
• To improve health and resilience in those more vulnerable to poor health, NHS Lothian and its partners will work to reduce the impact of social circumstances on health by strengthening universal provision and targeted interventions (Article 24 UNCRC)
• The range and quality of healthcare services for children and young people will be improved through the reprovision of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, the integration of children’s services, and the development of services at St John’s Hospital (Articles 24 and 42 UNCRC)
• NHS Lothian will have an effective and efficient workforce that is fit to meet the demands of a growing population of children and young people (Article 42 UNCRC)
• Robust governance and performance improvement arrangements will be in place for overseeing implementation of this strategy (Articles 43 -54 UNCRC).

In addition to what children and young people told us, the strategy is based around the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to ensure that children’s needs and rights are met. Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), the national policy which underpins this strategy and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, have evidenced that to improve the life chances and wellbeing of all children and young people in Scotland, we must focus on keeping children Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (also known as the wellbeing indicators).

The Policy Context

The Strategy compliments documents on various NHS Lothian services - Refreshed Maternity Framework, A Sense of Belonging: A Joint Strategy for Improving the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Lothian’s population, the 2011 – 2016 Lothian Sexual Health Strategy and the (draft) NHS Lothian Strategic Plan – Our Health, Our Care, Our Future, which proposes a radical shift away from a ‘traditional’ approach to a patient-centred, whole-system approach, which will focus much more explicitly on the needs of people who use NHS Lothian’s services.

The strategy takes a life stages approach, Early Years: Conception to 5; School Age: 5 to 18 years and Young People in Transition:16 to 25 years. Each outcome has life stage specific indicators and indicators that are relevant for all age ranges and are linked to Articles in the UNCRC.

Governance and Performance Monitoring

The Implementation plan to deliver the outcomes of the strategy will include indicators, baseline data and targets for each life stage. Monitoring of progress against these targets will be overseen and signed off by the Children and Young People’s Health and Wellbeing Programme Board.