

NHS LANARKSHIRE
NORTH COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP
NORTH EAST UNIT

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Subject: Update Report to the Local Area Partnership

**BELLSHILL AND VIEWPARK STAFF ARE LEADING THE WAY IN
INCREASING THE UPTAKE OF HEALTHY START IN LANARKSHIRE**

Background to Healthy Start

Healthy Start was launched nationally in 2006, replacing the Welfare Food Scheme and is a key national strategy to improve the nutrition of pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and children under 4 years, living in low income households (CEL 21, 2008). All pregnant women under 18 years also qualify for Healthy Start.

Beneficiaries receive free vouchers worth £3.10 per week that can be exchanged at registered retailers for milk, fresh fruit and vegetables and infant formula milk. Healthy Start vitamins for pregnant women and Healthy Start vitamin drops for children aged six months to four years are free to all beneficiaries of the scheme. A vitamin coupon is attached to the vouchers, which can be exchanged for vitamins at distribution centres across Lanarkshire.

Uptake of Healthy Start in Lanarkshire

Uptake is reported by individual NHS Boards and Lanarkshire, until recently, had one of the poorest uptakes of vitamin supplements in Scotland. Between April and June 2010, NHS Lanarkshire distributed 94 vitamin supplements (63 bottles of children's vitamin drops and 31 packets of vitamin supplements for women). Compared with 495 for the most recent quarter we have figures for (Oct-Dec 2012), a 5-fold increase.

Bellshill and Viewpark Leading the Way

Through a concerted effort and hard work the Bellshill and Viewpark Public Health Nurses, Community Midwives and Health Centre Administrators have continued to increase their distribution figures from 65 in the first quarter (April – June 2012) to 90 in the 2nd quarter (July to September 2012) and 148 in the 3rd quarter (Oct – Dec 2012). When compared with the total vitamin distribution figure of 495 for the whole of Lanarkshire in the third quarter, Bellshill has distributed 30% of the total Lanarkshire figure and 47% of the North Lanarkshire figures. A considerable achievement considering the Bellshill population is only 9% of the total Lanarkshire population.

This turn around has been achieved by the following, in line with national guidelines, carried out by Public Health Nurses, Community Midwives and Health Centre Administrators

Providing women with correct and consistent information about vitamin supplementation to educate them about the importance of;

- ❖ Taking vitamin D supplement during pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding
- ❖ The importance of giving children a vitamin D supplement until age four.
- ❖ The importance of taking a folic acid supplement prior to pregnancy.
- ❖ Admin staff within vitamin distribution centres were responsible for
 - Ensuring application forms are available to all eligible women and families.
 - Providing details of vitamin distribution points to women and families
 - Displaying Healthy Start Point of Sale kits in distribution centres
 - Ordering and displaying Healthy Start leaflets and posters
 - Ordering, managing, distributing and reporting on uptake of Healthy Start vitamins.

With Lanarkshire uptake rates at around 75% there is still room for improvement so the hard work continues.

Lanarkshire Healthy Start Uptake Figures

LOCALITY	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3	
	Apr - Jun 2012		Jul - Sep 2012		Oct - Dec 2012	
	Childrens	Womens	Childrens	Womens	Childrens	Womens
Airdrie	36	11	32	20	17	17
	47		52		34	
Coatbridge	15	14	19	18	19	17
	29		37		36	
North	31	25	27	17	24	14
	56		44		38	
Bellshill	35	30	42	48	64	84
	65		90		148	
Motherwell	15	8	10	6	22	8
	23		16		30	
Wishaw	24	6	26	18	19	11
	30		44		30	
East Kilbride	22	14	36	22	32	12
	36		58		44	
Cambuslang & Rutherglen	11	4	16	11	17	16
	15		27		33	
Hamilton	27	20	32	18	42	46
	47		50		88	
Clydesdale	16	4	10	9	8	6
	20		19		14	
Lanarkshire Total	232	136	250	187	264	231
	368		437		495	