

SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)

Review:

Scrutiny theme

A review of health inequalities in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic in Islington. Has Covid exacerbated inequalities? What can the council, the NHS, VCS and other partners do to reduce health inequalities?

Scrutiny Review Committee: Health and Care Scrutiny Committee

Director leading the review: Jonathan O'Sullivan

Lead Officers: Miriam Bullock with Public health leads for selected areas of focus

Overall aims:

To highlight the impacts of Covid19 on existing health inequalities in Islington, and how these have been further affected through the Covid19 pandemic.

To share how services/communities are responding to the challenges through the pandemic, including lessons learned and new ways of working.

To share how plans and approaches to recovery can best focus on addressing the health inequalities.

Objectives

- To provide an overview of health inequalities in the borough pre-pandemic.
- To provide an overview of what is known about further direct and indirect impacts on health inequalities since the start of the pandemic in 2020 for communities and residents, focused on selected issues.
- To explore local responses to health inequalities:
 - Through the pandemic period to date
 - Early recovery priorities and actions to date
 - Longer term priorities and actions
- To highlight organisational or resourcing implications for the council, NHS and partners to reduce health inequalities, and the interface between local and central government support.
- To recommend any actions that may need to be taken in light of the findings of the review so that the council, NHS and other local partners can best support reductions in health inequalities going forward.

How the review could be carried out?

Scope of the review

The topic needs to be completed by the end of 21/22, and carried out over five scrutiny sessions with witnesses. It is acknowledged that the theme is very broad and wide-ranging. It is not possible to exhaustively cover all possible aspects. Selected topics are important in their own right but additionally reflect different key dimensions of health inequalities. In the selection of themes for this Scrutiny, it is noted that the council's Challenging Inequalities Programme commenced with a focus on ethnicity.

The identified topics are: :

- Psychological health and wellbeing across the community – to take stock of the key impacts upon health and wellbeing through the Covid period, and ways in which these needs are being addressed
- Inequalities in Islington – who is affected, and where? What do we know about the direct and indirect impacts on inequalities of the Covid pandemic?
- Whittington Health's approach as a provider of integrated hospital and community services - How services are addressing health inequalities as part of their recovery and longer term plans
- How has Covid impacted on the lives, health and wellbeing of people with disabilities? How can long term health inequalities be better addressed in the future? [NB title/focus will be agreed with presenter – who may be an external academic]
- Long term conditions – what are the key successes, challenges and inequalities in the care of people with diabetes? What changes or interventions will make the most difference?

There could be a standard model for each session (with adjustment depending on the topic and presenter/s) to broadly cover –

- The extent of inequality, who is affected and how?
- What has been the impact of Covid on these inequalities?
- What has been the response to date since the start of the pandemic? What do we know of their effect?
- How will future recovery and plans understand/monitor, address and reduce these health inequalities?
 - What are the key strengths and challenges?
 - What are the resource implications (financial, workforce, community, etc)?

Types of evidence:

- Witness evidence to support the above could include:
 - LBI officers

- NHS commissioners/managers
- Clinicians
- VCS
- Academics
- Service users, or representatives of communities affected

Additional Information:

- Session one – themed Scrutiny meeting on subject of mental health and wellbeing – including social connectedness and isolation
- Session two – an overview of health inequalities in the borough; including the direct and indirect COVID impact
- Sessions three/four/five (timetabled to availability of speakers)
- Whittington Health
- People with disabilities, inequalities and Covid
- Diabetes and health inequalities – prevention, help-seeking and care management

In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.

Programme	
Key output:	To be submitted to Committee on:
1. Scrutiny Initiation Document	Agreed sign-off via Chair’s Action – to circulate ahead of, or for, the October committee
2. Draft Recommendations	It was agreed that an interim set of recommendations from the first three committee meetings on inequalities would be considered in February; the March meeting would receive an update
3. Final Report	The Scrutiny Ctte will need to finalise recommendations from the final session in order to complete the report to the available time.