

Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS

Tel: 020 7210 3000
mb-sofs@dh.gsi.gov.uk

New Colleague,

30 NOV 2010

Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England

Today the Government has published a White Paper on public health – *Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England*.

Healthy Lives, Healthy People sets out a new approach to public health that puts localism at the heart of a new system, with responsibilities, freedoms and funding devolved wherever possible, and enhanced central powers taken where absolutely necessary, for example in areas such as emergency preparedness and health protection. Within this system:

- Local authorities will lead action on public health, playing an important new role in promoting people's health and wellbeing, with new freedoms to make a major impact on health improvement and to tackle health inequalities;
- a new, dedicated, professional public health service – Public Health England – will be created as part of the Department of Health to strengthen the national response on emergency preparedness and health protection, be a centre of public health advice and expertise, and support local health improvement efforts;
- there will be ring-fenced public health funding from within the overall NHS budget to ensure that it is not squeezed by other pressures, for example NHS finances, although this will still be subject to the running-cost reductions and efficiency gains that will be required across the system. Early estimates suggest that current spend on areas that are likely to be the responsibility of Public Health England could be over £4 billion;
- Directors of Public Health will be the strategic leaders for public health and health inequalities in local communities, working in partnership with the local NHS and across the public, private and voluntary sectors;

- there will be ring-fenced budgets for upper-tier and unitary local authorities and a new health premium to reward progress made against elements of a proposed public health outcomes framework, taking into account health inequalities;
- we will shortly put forward detailed proposals for the establishment of health and wellbeing boards in every upper-tier local authority to bring together the NHS, public health, social care and children's services to support joined-up local decisions on health and wellbeing; and
- the NHS continues to have a crucial role. Public health will be part of the NHS Commissioning Board's (NHSCB) mandate, with public health support for NHS commissioning nationally and locally. There will be stronger incentives for GPs so that they play an active role in public health.

The core elements of the new system will be set out in the forthcoming Health and Social Care Bill and will therefore be subject to Parliament's approval. The transition will be developed in alignment with changes to PCTs and SHAs, and the creation of the NHS Commissioning Board.

To get the details of the new system right and ensure that it delivers significant improvements to the health of the population, we will be consulting on some elements of it. A number of consultation questions are set out in Chapter 4 and summarised in Chapter 5 of *Healthy Lives, Healthy People*, and we would welcome your views. The consultation on these questions closes on 8 March 2011. Full details can be found on the Department of Health website: www.dh.gov.uk/healthypeople

Forthcoming consultation documents will set out the proposed public health outcomes framework, and funding and commissioning arrangements for public health and we look forward to working with local government to develop these proposals further.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Lansley', is written over a horizontal line.

ANDREW LANSLEY CBE