

NEWS RELEASE

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COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS PRIORITIES TO IMPROVE HEALTH OF THE NATION

City health chiefs have made seven recommendations to the Government about how it can improve the nation's health.

The suggestions are the Sheffield First for Health committee's contribution to the government's consultation on the public health White Paper 'Choosing Health' which is due to be published this summer.

The recommendations are:

- **Giving local authorities the power to ban smoking in public places if voluntary restrictions don't have the desired effect**
- **Encouraging more physical activity in daily life in a bid to prevent coronary heart disease, many cancers, and an obesity epidemic**
- **Regulating and restricting advertising of products that have an impact on health such as sweets and high fat foods**
- **Better coordination between agencies in the public sector**
- **Restricting marketing of alcohol and more cash for alcohol treatment facilities**
- **Implementing measures to reduce stress and boost mental health**
- **Ensuring a consistent approach to public health issues**

They were drawn up by Jeremy Wight, Director of Public Health for North Sheffield Primary Care Trust, on behalf of Sheffield First for Health's committee following an interactive consultation, which saw health workers and representatives from the voluntary and community sector from all over Yorkshire and Humberside gather in Sheffield to discuss public health priorities.

Andy Buck, co-chair of Sheffield First for Health, said: “We welcome the Government’s consultation on public health as this gives us the chance to influence future policy. The Committee’s view is that Government should not shy away from taking a robust stance on these issues.” **More/**

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He added: “We want to encourage significant changes in people’s behaviour – giving up smoking, being more active and eating healthier food will help people become healthier and in turn give them a better quality of life. We cannot do this without the support of the Government and we would urge ministers to send clear health messages to the public and back them up by implementing appropriate policies.”

The committee’s recommendations have been sent to the Secretary of State for Health, John Reid, along with a more detailed report of the issues raised at the Talking Our Health conference held in June.

The Government’s consultation on the public health White Paper closed this week. The paper is expected to be published later this year.

Notes to Editors

Sheffield First For Health

- Sheffield First for Health is a branch of the local strategic partnership, Sheffield First Partnership. SFfH is co-chaired by the Chief Executives of the City Council and North Sheffield Primary Care Trust. Sheffield First for Health is made up of representatives from agencies across the city including the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Sheffield Care Trust, the four city Primary Care Trusts, South Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority voluntary and community groups, the city’s universities and colleges and elected councillors.
- All the NHS Trust Chief Executives are members of the committee as are the directors of Sheffield City Council.
- The health of Sheffield’s residents is an important part of Sheffield First Partnership’s Strategy for the regeneration of the city. SFfH aims to improve health for all the city’s residents and tackle health inequalities.

Ends

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