

Health focus

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Blooming marvellous!

GARDENERS are being urged to do their bit to help patients at West Park Rehabilitation Hospital by donating cuttings for a special garden there.

Staff at the hospital are planting up in The Retreat therapy garden to get patients out in the open air.

Occupational therapy technical instructor Sharon Parkes said: "It's that time of the year when people are starting to garden again and perhaps they might have too many seeds. Donations of any seedlings or plants will be gratefully received."

"The garden is cared for by four volunteers, who are former patients who have recovered from head injury or stroke and want to give something back. The patients love it. It's gardening as therapy. Patients and their families are also encouraged to use the garden to relax and socialise."

The Retreat garden was opened two years ago and now plays a key role in helping patients recover from falls, illness and neurological problems including strokes.

The garden incorporates different walking surfaces such as cobbles and paving and has wheelchair access.

There are different themed areas with a small bridge, wind chimes and water features.

To donate plants or seedlings contact occupational therapy on 01902 444286.



Jonathon Sadler, a former patient at West Park Rehabilitation Hospital and now a member of the hospital's gardening group, with occupational therapy technical instructor Sharon Parkes.

Stakeholders have say on transforming healthcare

CHANGES are on the way to transform the management of community healthcare services across the city.

Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust has agreed preferred options for seven groups of services after listening to local stakeholders including GPs, the city council, trade unions and more than 700 PCT employees.

It is proposed long-term conditions, urgent care in the community, rehabilitation, end-of-life and children and family services are integrated with an acute provider with the preferred organisation being the Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust.

Health and wellbeing services may be integrated with another community-based provider, the preferred organisation being Wolverhampton City Council, while the proposal for mental health is for services to be integrated with a mental health provider with the preferred organisation being Sandwell Mental Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust.

The learning disability service has yet to be allocated to a provider although in Wolverhampton there is already an integrated health and social care service hosted by the city council with PCT learning disability staff seconded to the council.

Jon Crockett, chief executive of Wolverhampton City PCT, said: "Transforming community services will help us to make sure we can meet the demands of the future – patients' expectations and patient choice and on delivering the best possible patient care. It will also mean we can create strong and sustainable arrangements for care services for people in Wolverhampton."

The proposals will be subject to a formal three month consultation in the spring.

Teen pregnancy down by a fifth

TEENAGE pregnancy rates for under 18s in Wolverhampton have fallen by a fifth in 12 years.

The under-18 conception rate has dropped 21.9 per cent since 1998, according to figures for 2008 just released by the Office for National Statistics. In comparison, the national rate fell by only 13.3 per cent for the same

period. It means the city is now on track to achieve a 55 per cent reduction in teen pregnancy rates.

The conception rate for under-18s now stands at 51.8 per 1000 young women aged 15-17, a rate of 5.18 per cent. In 2008, 245 teenagers got pregnant, compared to 301 the previous year.

Wolverhampton, from having the 13th highest rate in the country in 2007, has now dropped to 35th.

The city has had a greater reduction since 1998 than any other area in the West Midlands and a greater reduction than its statistical neighbours.

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Art projects boost therapy in link up with city museum



Glasswork helps to promote key health messages



Trainers help residents learn healthy lifestyle lessons

Helpline on teen pregnancy

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 Dr Adrian Philips, director of public health for Wolverhampton, said: "We are pleased that the number of teenage pregnancies has fallen in the city for the first time in nearly two decades."
 "Unwanted teenage parenthood affects the health of both the baby and parents for many years. We want every young person in the city to make well-informed choices especially about life changing events."
 "We are cautiously optimistic about the future as we have listened to young people and changed our relationship education in schools and improved sexual health services."
 "We are also encouraging the use of more effective long-acting reversible contraception such as implants and injections which do not rely on people having to remember to take a pill every day as do the more commonly used contraceptive pills."
 The drop in figures comes as a teenage pregnancy helpline has been launched in the city to provide a one-stop shop of services. The "Think Helpline" has been launched by Wolverhampton City Council and brings together a host of services provided by the council and its partners.
 Kush Patel, teenage pregnancy strategy officer at the city council, said: "As well as assisting youngsters who are pregnant, this initiative is also about providing education and informing young people of the health and lifestyle choices they can make."
 "Callers to the helpline will be put directly in touch with the support and information services they need. These services include contraception, termination, antenatal and postnatal care."
 "Advice will also be given on matters such as housing, education, training and employment and childcare support," she said.
The Think Helpline on 01902 551122 is open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 2pm on Saturdays. For more information visit www.think-helpline.info or text CYP THINK and your name to 60006.

Health Focus spotlights creative projects which are brightening the city and boosting health services



Betty Ford, centre, takes part in an art reminiscence group at Wolverhampton Art Gallery.

Art is important part of therapy

ART is playing a growing role in helping patients at Penn Hospital thanks to an exciting new collaboration with Wolverhampton Art Gallery.
 Occupational therapists at the hospital already stage weekly art and reminiscence sessions for the over-65s. But they have now joined forces with the gallery to expand those sessions with a ward visit by a sessional artist and a trip out to the gallery itself.
 Julie Grainger, clinical lead occupational therapist for older adult in-patient services, said: "The idea is for patients to build their self esteem and confidence. It's given them an

opportunity to do something they might not have done in their past. It keeps skills alive and reminiscence is good for long-term memory. It's also been another way of challenging the stigma surrounding mental health by having inclusive activities for our patients."
 The events have been an expansion of the PCT's existing Arts for Health and Wellbeing programme and the visiting artist used a variety of objects from the museum as prompts for the patients who created objects inspired by them from clay and other art media.
 Handling objects, like old weighing scales, were also used for the gallery visit, which helped patients share their memories.

The gallery has also loaned the hospital some everyday artefacts connected to Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club for display in a reception area to continue the work of helping to promote memories. Patients have already been to see items like football rattles, a match-day programme and cartoons of matches in progress.
 Occupational therapists at Penn Hospital are now evaluating the sessions before deciding whether to make them a more permanent feature.
 For more information on the PCT's Arts for Health and Wellbeing programme visit www.wolvespct.nhs.uk



Ted Doughty, aged 71, with Fiona Kolontari, freelance animator with the education and outreach team at Wolverhampton Art Gallery.



Colton Hills pupils, top, Tasmin Patel and Kirandeep Kullar, both aged 17, with glass artwork produced for Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust's HealthTec education centre.

Pupils' glasswork promotes important health messages

GLASS artwork created by pupils at a Wolverhampton secondary school to depict important health messages has been unveiled.
 'A' level students from Colton Hills School produced the glasswork for Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust's HealthTec education centre.
 They worked with local artist Susan Purser Hope to make three, metre-long glass panels, each with three panes, to reflect the themes of healthy eating,

drunk and dangerous, first aid, no smoking, health and safety, privacy and dignity, joints and the effects of ageing, hand hygiene and dental health.
 Stephanie Harris, director of workforce for Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust, said: "The work with Colton Hills supports pupils' understanding of health and wellbeing and how it applies to the national curriculum."
 "The glasswork produced by the pupils is

absolutely amazing and we are delighted with the results."
 HealthTec was launched in 2007 to work with local schools and includes an IT suite along with space for 14 to 19-year-olds to experience a range of family scenarios aimed at making them more aware of issues like drugs and teenage pregnancy.
 There are also facilities to encourage students to learn more about the wide variety of employment opportunities in the NHS.

Use NSPCC helpline to report any concerns

PEOPLE who have any concerns about the welfare of children and young people are being encouraged to call the NSPCC helpline.
 Trained advisors are on hand at the national charity to listen to any worries callers might have about a child's safety or wellbeing.
 Callers can remain anonymous and the helpline never passes on details that could identify a caller to the family concerned.
 The charity, set up to prevent cruelty to children, operates the helpline 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.
 People with concerns can contact the NSPCC helpline on 0800 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Stroke buddies help patients with concerns

FORMER stroke patients will be able to use their experiences to help those who have recently suffered a stroke, thanks to a project being developed by Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust.
 A team of stroke buddies who are coping well with their new way of life after suffering a stroke will be assigned to new patients who may be concerned about how they will cope.
 Stroke buddies, set up with £8,800 funding from the NHS West Midlands Regional Innovation Fund, is aimed at stroke patients reluctant to take part in a rehabilitation programme after they leave hospital.
 A total of 10 buddies will be trained during the summer and visit patients at home to listen to their concerns, encourage them to look at life in a more positive way and recognise the benefits of the rehabilitation programme.
 By showing how others have recovered, the stroke buddies project aims to improve the confidence and ability of new stroke patients, while providing the buddies with new skills they may be able to use in future.
 Jane Bisiker, clinical specialist occupational therapist for stroke services for the PCT, said: "Arranging for stroke patients to be visited by someone who has had a stroke and now leads a full and active life will show them how they can adapt to their condition."

Kicking off for the World Cup

AGENCIES across the city are kicking off their third Keep It Safe campaign to coincide with this summer's World Cup tournament.
 Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust, West Midlands Police, Wolverhampton City Council and other agencies are working up plans to tackle alcohol-related violence and anti-social behaviour.
 Campaign director Ros Jervis, consultant in public health for the PCT, said: "It is particularly important to run a Keep It Safe campaign during the World Cup as traditionally these types of events – at which emotions run extremely high – see an increase in alcohol consumption."
 "We know a combination of football and alcohol can lead to public order problems such as fights and anti-social behavior and most worryingly rises in

domestic assaults. However, this is not the fault of football – but of violent people using any excuse to be violent."
 Home Office figures reveal that during the World Cup in 2006 domestic assaults rose nationally by an average of 25 per cent on the five days when England played.
 The new campaign will raise awareness of domestic abuse and signpost victims to support and protection services, work with repeat offenders through a self-referral programme and give a strong zero tolerance message to perpetrators who will be prosecuted for offences.
 Anti-social behaviour in parks and public spaces will also be tackled and it is anticipated teams of youth workers will work with young people to encourage them to watch games in safe environments such as youth centres.

Champions spread oral health message

Wolverhampton has developed a team of oral health champions to help boost dental care for adults and children with learning disabilities.
 Around 30 parents, carers, school nurses and healthcare assistants in day centres and care homes have been trained on topics such as tooth decay, gum disease, brushing techniques and the effect sugar can have. Some of the champions will also be able to use this knowledge to promote and improve the oral health of the clients they work with.
 Pat Gutteridge, oral health promotion specialist for the PCT and who runs the training sessions, said: "It's been a very successful project so far. We want to get a lot more parents and carers involved, increase the number of people who are being trained as champions and spread the word about the importance of good oral hygiene."

The oral health champions are just one part of a wide-ranging action plan introduced following a review into why people with learning disabilities sometimes have difficulty accessing dental services. The plan includes producing information in a suitable format for clients, their parents and carers; checklists for people to identify and plan their oral health needs and dental care; information for dentists on how to reassure and communicate with people with learning disabilities; and the production of good practice guidelines for residential homes and day centres with five key messages to ensure good dental hygiene including encouraging people to brush their teeth and gums twice a day, eating a healthy diet and visiting the dentist regularly.
 People with learning disabilities can visit their own family dentist or see a special care dentist at a PCT dental clinic. They can also access dental care when a mobile treatment unit visits adult day centres and schools in the city, while the oral health promotion team can advise on keeping teeth and gums healthy.

Innovative housing scheme opens in the city to support young people with autism and learning disabilities

A SUPPORTED living scheme designed to promote independence for people with autism and learning disabilities has been opened in the city.
 Six flats have been provided for 17 to 21-year-olds as part of the joint project developed over three years by Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust, Wolverhampton City Council and Bromford Support, the housing provider.
 A seventh flat is being used for communal and group activities while there are also facilities for carers to stay over and a guest room for friends and family. Each young person has their own home with their own front door, kitchen, bathroom and a bedroom and they

can decorate and furnish as they want.
 Parents, families, carers and professionals have all been involved with each young person to help design the scheme to meet their individual needs. There is a unique door entry system, under-floor heating, switches to isolate appliances, landscaped communal garden and different kitchen and bathroom options.
 Bromford Support is being funded to provide housing support while a company called Dimensions is providing personal care services for each resident 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
 An audit was carried out of all people with autism from

Wolverhampton who were living in out of area placements or residential schools to try and find people suitable for the scheme and a short list was drawn up. As well as promoting independence, the scheme is already providing savings for the city council in comparison with the cost of funding places for people out of the area.
 Ivan Burchess, consultant clinical psychologist who led the scheme for the PCT, said: "It's an extremely exciting development which will make a significant difference to the lives of the people who live there."
 "It is going well. The residents there are happy, their parents are reassured and the staff are doing a really good job."

The scheme is already a big hit with those young people and their families who have moved in. One young person said, when viewing a flat: "It's wicked. When can I move in?"
 One parent said: "I never imagined it would look like this, I can't believe it. It is such a relief to know he will have a wonderful home and proper care that develops his potential!"
 The last word goes to another relieved parent who said: "I have always worried about what will happen to my son after I die but now I have seen this place you have built, I can rest in peace knowing it's such a wonderful home for him."



Ivan Burchess, consultant clinical psychologist.



Wolverhampton's new team of health visiting support workers line up to deliver baby clinics and routine health visitor duties.

Flu jab alert for World Cup fans

FOOTBALL fans travelling to South Africa for the World Cup this summer are being encouraged to get a swine flu vaccination before they go.

Ros Jervis, consultant in public health for Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust, said: "Southern hemisphere countries are just entering their flu season so the swine flu vaccine is now available as a travel jab."

"Being vaccinated against swine flu will reduce the risk of travellers, including football fans going to the World Cup, catching the virus whilst abroad and bringing it back to the UK which could cause localised outbreaks.

"It is even more important for travellers to have the vaccine if they are in an at-risk group – such as people with underlying medical problems like heart disease or respiratory conditions – as they could be more susceptible to the effects of the virus."

People who want to have the swine flu travel vaccine should contact their GP.

- The swine flu vaccine is still available for people aged six months to 65 and over in the current seasonal at-risk group, pregnant women, people who have household contact with those who have reduced immune systems like cancer sufferers or people with HIV/AIDS as well as frontline health and social care workers.

People should contact their GP to make an appointment.

Food Dudes shortlisted for award

WOLVERHAMPTON'S pioneering Food Dudes initiative, which aims to tackle childhood obesity, has been shortlisted for a national Chief Medical Officer's Award. The winner will be announced at an awards ceremony in London on May 12.

Food Dudes was developed by Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust and partners including Bangor University in Wales. The initiative is city-wide and benefits 20,000 four to 11-year-olds over three years by increasing their fruit and vegetable consumption – and sustaining this improvement.

The project launched in January 2009 and includes Food Dudes heroes as role models, repeated tasting of produce and rewards for eating it.

Food Dudes' nomination follows last year's shortlisting of the city's innovative Keep It Safe campaign for the same award.

Cash boost for health visiting

HEALTH visiting services in the city are getting a **£250,000** boost with additional staff recruited to give extra support to families with babies and pre-school children.

A new team of 12 health visitor support workers have been recruited by Wolverhampton City Primary Care Trust to complement its existing early support and intervention services.

Health visitors will continue to carry out initial visits to new babies and, with appropriate guidance, support workers will take over some routine follow up visits. The idea is to free up the time of health visitors to enable them to use their specialist skills in a more targeted way.

The new support workers, based in 11 of the city's health centres, will help run baby clinics, support mums with breast

feeding, help parents who want to give up smoking, give advice on weaning and immunisation and offer general support on baby development.

Margaret McNeill, health visiting service manager, said: "I am delighted with this massive investment and very excited about the prospect of developing the new role.

"Our new support workers are going through robust training and development to ensure families get the best possible care. These posts will improve and enhance an already excellent service," she added.

The new posts have been created after the PCT ran a successful pilot scheme following increased demands on the 60 health visitors and eight nursery nurses already working for the service.

A similar scheme supporting midwives is in place in the maternity unit at New Cross Hospital.

Training for a healthier lifestyle

A NEW service has been launched in the city aimed at helping people make lifestyle changes.

Health Trainers offer a free and confidential service for people who want to make lifestyle changes and tackle issues like giving up smoking, cutting down on alcohol, increasing physical activity or just losing weight in small achievable goals.

One-to-one guidance and support is offered as trainers help people create their own personal health plan that incorporates healthy choices.

For details on the service or to book an appointment people should call 0800 073 4242.

- Pictured are some of the health trainers, front to back, Dave Mitchell, Matt Leak, Andy Boote, John Russell and Adam Williams. There are also four women members of the team.



“ These posts will improve and enhance an already excellent service. ”