Every third person in Warwickshire has a chronic health condition. How can we support them and how can you minimise your chances of being one of them?

For a full copy of the Annual Report or to find out more about how you can live a healthier life visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/publichealth
Welcome to the summary of my Annual Report for 2012 which looks at the effect our lifestyle has on our health and wellbeing.

The report looks particularly at long term conditions, the effects of having more than one long-term condition, how we can have a health promoting workforce and the wider factors which impact on our health.

A long term or chronic condition is one which cannot be cured but can be controlled by medication or treatment. Examples include high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma and heart disease.

Long term conditions are increasing, partly because of our ageing population and unhealthy lifestyle choices.

The World Health Organisation has illustrated how lifestyle (behavioural) risk factors give rise to the biological risk factors such as high blood pressure, high blood glucose, high blood sugar, and obesity, and are in turn caused by social determinants like globalization, urbanization and poverty.

In Warwickshire an estimated 147,000 adults (around 1 in 3) live with at least one long term condition.

People can have some long term conditions such as diabetes for many years and not have any symptoms. This means that whilst they think they are healthy, the condition is not being treated and causing damage. It is important that we take appropriate opportunities to test people.

People can live with these conditions for many years but they can have an enormous impact on their quality of life. People living with long term conditions account for:

- 50% of all GP appointments.
- 60% of outpatient appointments.
- 70% of all inpatient bed days.
- Around 70% of the total health and care spend
Many people have more than one long term condition and as these develop their care becomes more complex and difficult for them, and the health and social care system, to manage. If you have more than one long term condition you are likely to have a poorer quality of life, be admitted to hospital more frequently and have an increased risk of an early death.

To help reduce long term conditions we are encouraging workers across the public and voluntary sector to engage in promoting healthy living. We know a few minutes of personalised feedback can be as effective as longer interventions and we want every public sector worker who engages with the public to take the time to make every contact count by including promoting health messages as part of their normal work when appropriate. Our aim is to Make Every Contact Count.

We know that poor health and wellbeing is a result of many different factors. Many of these are related to people's surroundings and their communities. It is important the health impacts of these factors are considered when decisions are made. One way to do this is to have Health Impact Assessments which assess the likely positive and negative consequences for health and wellbeing of every major decision, whether it is for a new housing estate, major industrial and commercial developments or significant changes to public services or infrastructure.

My annual report also outlines what we have done to improve public health across Warwickshire in the last year and provides a health profile for Warwickshire. The full report is available on our website www.warwickshire.gov.uk/publichealth.

Progress will be monitored in future reports and your comments and feedback are as always welcome. Please direct any comments to publichealthintelligence@warwickshire.nhs.uk.

I look forward to hearing your views.

In order to improve the effects of chronic ill health in Warwickshire, the report makes a number of recommendations, these include:

- Roll out NHS Health Checks out across the whole of Warwickshire.
- Ensure GP practices provide recommended levels of treatment for patients with long term conditions.
- Increase the availability of expert patient and rehabilitation programmes.
- Improve the coordination of services for people with several different long term conditions.
- Increase the availability of services to help with mental wellbeing in people with long term conditions.
- Create integrated neighbourhood care teams based around a locality to provide joined up and personalised services.
- Encourage patients to take responsibility for their own care by giving them the knowledge and power they need to maximise self-management and choice.
- We are recommending that all public sector organisations in Warwickshire commit to carrying out Health Impact Assessments on all new major plans and policies and health and wellbeing should be included as a core consideration in every planning and transport policy.

What you can do

We've put together 12 top health tips to help you improve your own health and reduce your chances of developing a long term condition.

Please see leaflet on the next page for what you can do.

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Warwickshire’s Top 12: HEALTH TIPS

- **Stop smoking**
  Stopping smoking is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health. You are up to 4 times more likely to quit if you get help from the NHS Stop Smoking Service. To find your local service call 0800 085 2917 or text LIFE to 80800.

- **Keep a healthy weight**
  Maintain, or aim for, a healthy weight (BMI 20-25). BMI can be calculated by weight (kg) divided by height (m) squared (i.e. kg/m²).

- **Be physically active**
  Adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more – one way to approach this is to do 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week.

- **Eat a healthy diet**
  Eat at least 5 portions of fruit & vegetables each day and cut down on fat, salt and added sugar.

- **If you drink, keep within sensible limits**
  If you drink alcohol, have no more than 2-3 units a day (women) or 3-4 units a day (men), with at least 2 alcohol free days per week. Use this website to calculate your units and keep track of your drinking: http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholtracker.aspx

- **Look after your sexual health**
  This means enjoying the sexual activity you want, without causing yourself or anyone else any suffering, or physical or mental harm. Sexual health is not just about avoiding unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections - but using a condom will help with both.

- **Use NHS screening services**
  Take up opportunities for screening when you are invited to participate in NHS screening programmes.

- **Take up opportunities for flu immunisation**
  If you are over 65, or if you are under 65 and in an at-risk group, have your annual flu immunisation.

- **Maintain your dental health**
  Brush teeth twice a day with a fluoridated toothpaste. Attend routine check-ups at your dentist at recommended intervals.

- **Protect yourself from sunburn**
  Enjoy the sun safely. Protect yourself by using shade, clothing (including a hat, t-shirt and UV protective sunglasses) and high SPF (sun protection factor) sunscreen, and by avoiding the sun during the middle of the day. Avoid artificial ultraviolet radiation too – don’t use sunbeds or sunlamps.

- **Manage your stress levels**
  Talking things through, relaxation and physical activity can help.

- **Have a good work/life balance**
  Developing interests outside of work can help reduce stress and improve productivity.

*Source: Public Health Warwickshire*

For more information visit: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/publichealth