

# LONDON HEALTH STRATEGY

## CONTEXT

The white paper on public health 'Our Healthier Nation' is expected to be published in May 1999. The development of a London RO offers an opportunity to develop a London-wide health strategy in partnership with other London-wide bodies.

The aim of the London Health Strategy has been set out as fivefold:

- To raise awareness of public health issues in London and of the complex actions and interactions needed to address them.
- To develop a vision of improved health for Londoners, which is outcome orientated
- To identify clear priorities and specified targets for the improvement of health and wellbeing of Londoners, including reducing inequalities and addressing the needs of diverse minority ethnic communities.
- To identify indicators appropriate to measuring success, both in the short and longer term
- To build on the considerable activity already being undertaken across London to improve the health of people living in London and to identify what further action should be taken and by whom to achieve health improvement, and the timescale for actions. This aim covers action not only within the NHS, but aims to ensure appropriate partnership working without duplication. It will also need to address what action needs to be undertaken at what level, pan-London/sectors/local/PCG, within the NHS.

To achieve these aims it is clear that the processes of developing the strategy are as important as the content coverage. For this reason and given the potential complexity of such a strategy it is important that the processes allow for incremental delivery of the aims of the strategy.

The early stages of the processes will need to develop partnerships, engagement, participation and ownership which will provide a secure basis for developing action programmes, where appropriate, across the capital. The strategy is potentially enormous and, recognising this, it is important to have clear milestones and specific outcomes leading up to what is in reality a four year goal.

Early ideas about the potential content coverage of the strategy are shown at Appendix 1.

## KEY STAGES OF THE PROCESS

A six stage process for developing the strategy is proposed, as shown in the table below:

<b>Stage</b>		<b>Timing</b>
1.	Engaging London wide partner organisations	Jan – March 1999
2.	Development of processes (through brainstorming)	Feb – May 1999
3.	Launch Event	May 1999
4.	Series of workshops	Ongoing
5.	Development of key areas of London Health Strategy	June – Sept 1999 and ongoing
6.	Impact of London Health Strategy on people's and organisation's action	Ongoing and to inform Mayor & GLA from 2000

### ***Stage 1 – Engagement***

Key partner organisations being identified and their engagement in the development of the London Health Strategy secured. At the time of writing the following have been identified:

- London Health Authority Chairs, Chief Executives and Directors of Public Health
- London NHS Trusts and Primary Care Group Chairs and Chief Executives
- London CHCs
- London Local Authorities
- London NHS Executive Regional Office
- Social Care Region London
- Government Office for London
- Association of London Government
- King's Fund
- London Research Centre
- Metropolitan Police Service
- Health of Londoners Project
- Housing Corporation (London)

The processes of engagement are shaping the way forward for developing the health strategy. Many London wide groups meet with members from the above organisations. Existing groups are being used as a vehicle and being supplemented by ad hoc groups and one to one discussions.

## ***Stage 2 – Development of processes***

The processes of iterative dialogue are shaping the framework

A multi-agency **Steering Group** is proposed, which will:

- co-ordinate the strategy development
- commission and oversee work streams
- make recommendations

The establishment of this group has been postponed until after the Launch Event (see below).

An important part of the processes will be to integrate the work of the Strategy with the mainstream work of organisations across London. To this end a review of the first year Health Improvement Programmes is nearing completion. It provides an analysis of the processes as well as the content coverage across London. Both aspects are being considered in terms of their relevance to the London Health Strategy.

We have contacted all Local Authorities in London and have had 25 responses from people wishing to work with us on Inequalities in London. Additionally, we have work progressing on the environment, housing and health impact and inequalities impact assessment as well as on TB and HIV/AIDs.

The King's Fund are developing proposals on values and social ethics which will be an underpinning component of the Strategy. Discussions are also ongoing with R&D and academic colleagues about developing complementary programmes to support the Strategy, to ensure a robust evidence-base.

## ***Stage 3 – Launch Event***

A London Health Strategy Launch Event is being planned for May (most likely 19 May). This will adopt a similar format in many respects to the London Mental Health Strategy Launch. We have secured two Ministers to make key note addresses. In total there will be a maximum of 4-5 speakers during the day with a lot of the emphasis being on engagement of the participants through round table group discussion and facilitated plenary discussions.

Given the broad nature of the launch, one of the most challenging tasks is to identify the participants appropriately (and go beyond “usual suspects”). We are developing an invitation list with partners in GoL, ALG and London Social Care.

The discussions from the Launch will form the basis of firming up the work programme for the Strategy over the next 6 –12 months. As stated above, the need for a Strategy Steering Group will be reviewed and its potential membership. The main areas for development will also be confirmed. This will form the basis of developing the Strategic Outline for autumn 1999.

## ***Stage 4 – Workshops***

A key way of working across the workstreams will be workshops. Possible topics for early workshops are:

- determinants of health in London
- inequalities in London
- specific health needs in London
- values and ethics
- health impact and inequalities impact assessment of policies and implementation
- environment and health

Later workshops may be targeted at specific priorities which emerge in developing the strategy.

The focus of the workshops will be to develop practical actions and outcomes.

A wide range of organisations, groups and individuals have already expressed an interest in being involved in workshops. It will be important to ensure that the events are inclusive, well planned and organised. It is also important to ensure that the participants cover the broad range of interests, perspectives, professions, etc. that influence health in London.

### ***Stage 5 – Development of key areas of the Strategy***

The vast majority of actions to improve health and reduce inequalities across London are at a very local level and the principle of managed subsidiarity is accepted. Criteria will be developed to identify those issues that will be addressed in a London Strategy and will consider:

- issues that can only be addressed effectively at a London-wide level;
- issues that are critically important to London's health and which have components at a local and London wide level;
- issues that need to be tackled at a local level but where London wide facilitation would help e.g. sharing good practice; supporting partnerships at a local level around common issues.

It is anticipated that the process of working together to develop the strategy itself will realise many other benefits, in terms of a vision of improved health for Londoners, clear priorities and targets for improving health and reducing inequalities and indicators for measuring success.

The first major product of the Strategy will be the Strategic Outline in the autumn. The timing of this is important as we would wish to make it available in advance of the Mayoral elections and the creation of the GLA (early summer 2000).

### ***Stage 6 – Impact on Action***

A critical aim of the strategy is to build on the already considerable energy working across London to improve health, but also to be clear what action is expected of whom.

The specific actions at local and London-wide levels will need to be built into the various planning and resource identification mechanisms of both the health service and other organisations to ensure action is taken to improve health. For example they will need to be built into the HImPs (Health Improvement Plans) and into Educational Consortia plans for developing public health capacity etc.

The Strategic Outline and early stages of the strategy will need to be inbedded into the mayor's political imperatives for improving the health and wellbeing of Londoners.

SA/HSB

16<sup>th</sup> April 1999

## **APPENDIX 1**

### ***Outline of the Strategic Framework***

In practical terms the complexity and range of public health issues in London is such that within the overall framework there will be a series of topic based strategies. These will need to be grouped. Possible groupings may be:

- Values and social ethics
  - to underpin the framework
- Health Improvement
  - disease specific (e.g. CHD/Cancer) - population groups(e.g.children/refugees)
- Health protection
  - pollution and environment
  - infectious diseases (e.g. TB/AIDS)
  - smoking and tobacco
  - substance misuse
- Wider health issues
  - housing
  - transport
  - regeneration and employment
- Addressing Inequalities
  - in health needs (e.g. ethnicity)
  - in access
  - social exclusion (e.g.homeless)
- Development of methodologies
  - health impact assessment
  - community development
  - EU comparisons (Megapoles)
  - WHO healthy cities
- Information
  - health information
  - indices /measures of progress
- Research and Development - including evidence base
- Workforce and Education and training - PH capacity/capability