

Public Meeting Record

London Health Board meeting 16 June 2015 at City Hall

Childhood obesity

The London Health Board received a paper on childhood obesity presented by the public health physician, Professor Harry Rutter, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. The paper highlighted the following issues:

- Childhood obesity is a major and growing problem
- The fundamentals of human biology have not changed. It is the physical and food environment that had changed radically over the last few decades
- Best evidence comes from the National Child Measurement Programme and shows a very high prevalence but with a gradual levelling off
- The overall trend masks significant inequalities issues
- There is a large socio-economic component with the poorest children having double the prevalence rate of the richest
- In these deprived populations, which already have high levels of obesity, rates are still rising with rates falling in more affluent areas.

The Board agreed to explore how the planning system could be further utilised to address this major and growing problem. The Board partners also discussed ways to support health and wellbeing boards to make progress on childhood obesity, including through further engagement with schools about food and activity.

Health and care devolution

The Board members also discussed health and care devolution for London and how to progress the dialogue and develop the proposition with NHS partners.

The Board agreed that the other key areas of focus (mental health, NHS estates and improving primary care) would be brought to subsequent meetings.