Rotherham Public Health Annual Report

This is the seventh of a 12 part series from Rotherham’s Director of Public Health, and the first time the Public Health report has been produced directly for the public. For more information, or if you have any comments, please contact the Rotherham Director of Public Health, Dr John Radford, on john.radford@rotherham.nhs.uk

NHS Health Checks – It’s serious!

Every week five people in Rotherham die early from heart disease, stroke, diabetes or kidney disease.

Did you know?
Over 35,000 people are already receiving treatment for high blood pressure and 23,000 people in Rotherham are already receiving treatment for heart disease or diabetes – some people have all these conditions. The risk of developing these conditions increases with age but there are other factors which put people at even greater risk:
• If you are over 40
• Are you overweight?
• Do you take enough exercise?
• Do you smoke?
• Have you had your blood pressure checked?
• Have you had your cholesterol checked?

Everybody can develop cardiovascular disease, and having one condition, for example high blood pressure or diabetes, can lead to increased risk of developing another in the future. Family history or genetic make-up can also be a factor – people from Rotherham’s South Asian community have a much higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

Who ate all the pies?
Rotherham has higher levels of obesity than the national average, with almost two thirds of adults being overweight or obese. We know too that local people are not as physically active as they could be and that by increasing levels of activity and eating more healthily, more people could reduce their risk. We also have high levels of smoking in Rotherham – in some neighbourhoods almost 50% of adults are smokers.

Making even small changes to your lifestyle can really make a difference to the chance of developing heart disease, but it can also slow down the progression of disease if people are diagnosed early and receive care and support from their GP.

Treating high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes saves hundreds of lives each year in Rotherham.

What are we doing in Rotherham?
We have put in place a comprehensive heart disease risk screening programme for people aged 40 to 74. This is called the “NHS Health Check”.

What is an NHS health check?
The purpose of the health check is to identify individual risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease and to explain what treatment may be required now or what changes you can make to your lifestyle to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in the future.

What do you get?
The check involves a visit to your General Practice where you will receive a thorough check, including blood tests (just a small sample of venous blood), height and weight to calculate your Body Mass Index, questions about your health and lifestyle including whether you smoke and your family’s health history. Everyone who is screened will be given personalised lifestyle advice and referred to appropriate services, including physical activity, weight management and smoking cessation. Some people will also be prescribed tablets to reduce their blood pressure or cholesterol. Some people will be found who have early diabetes and need treatment.

The programme will prevent deaths from coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease, and help people remain well for longer. Diabetes is a growing public health concern – it is increasing and there are now 11,000 people in Rotherham with diabetes. People don’t always realise that diabetes is a serious condition which can lead to complications such as kidney disease, loss of sight and even amputation of a limb.

GPs are carrying out NHS Health Checks on behalf of the NHS in Rotherham. They are calling in all those on their practice list aged between 40-74 who have not already been checked to carry out the NHS Health Check. You can find out more about the NHS Health Check at your GP Practice or via the link below:

More information can be found at www.nhs.uk/nhshealthcheck or call the NHS Health Check help line on 0845 850 9850.