

Knowsley Public Health Annual Report 2025/26

The table below provides an update on the recommendations listed within the 2024/25 Public Health Annual Report 2024/25 - [How stigma affects the health and wellbeing of our communities](#)

Recommendation	Update
1. Collect areas of good practice from partners to consider socioeconomic factors in developing and monitoring impact of services.	In the past 12 months, the Health Equity Assessment Tool (HEAT) has been trialled when recommissioning key health services across the borough. This is following best practice demonstrated by Sefton Council. This tool supports services to consider how their work may reduce or unintentionally increase inequality and how they could adapt service provision to ensure equal access. This also considers socioeconomic factors for accessing the service as well as the ability for residents to follow advice and guidance.
2. Explore what more could be done to highlight and strengthen considerations under the Socioeconomic Duty in preparation for the duty being enacted in England.	Knowsley Council have socioeconomic duty as a mandatory consideration within the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) framework. All policy decisions and strategies must go through an EIA. National Government have not announced the date the Socioeconomic Duty may be enacted; however, council officers are prepared for the potential change.
3. System-wide roll-out of anti-stigma training across Knowsley to identified partner organisations, including evaluation of impact on reducing stigma.	The National Challenging Stigma Indicators Pilot is testing two new tools designed to measure and reduce stigma related to alcohol and other drug use. The Professional Stigma Indicator,

	embedded within the NCSPP training programme across seven pilot areas including Liverpool, Knowsley, and Wirral, measures professionals' attitudes, confidence and organisational influences relating to people affected by substance use. To date, 1,150 professionals from a wide range of sectors have completed the baseline assessment, with follow-up data collection continuing. Alongside this, the Lived Experience Indicator has been implemented within treatment services across five pilot areas and has already generated 14,704 responses from people accessing treatment between September 2025 and February 2026. Together, these indicators aim to establish the first routine measures of professional and lived-experience stigma relating to alcohol and other drug use in England, providing evidence to inform workforce development, service improvement, policy and stigma-reduction activities. Further data collection, stakeholder interviews and analysis are underway, with a final evaluation report due in December 2026.
4. Develop a place-based Anti-Stigma Organisation Charter which includes; a commitment to challenging stigma, ensuring all communications are following the Anti-Stigma Network's language guide and providing staff with annual anti-stigma training.	Knowsley Council Communications Team utilise the anti-stigma network's language guide to reduce stigma in all communications. In addition, the Combating Drugs Partnership is ensuring this is embedded into partner agencies by producing communications packs when the subject matter is drugs and/or alcohol. It is anticipated that both an Anti-Stigma Charter for Knowsley and a commitment to annual anti-stigma training will be a recommendation following the publishing of the anti-stigma indicator research. We await the findings before agreeing to the content of a Knowsley charter and the training offer.

5. Continue to develop and implement the local suicide prevention action plan for 2025/26 which includes working with partners to address stigma.	Work continues to implement the suicide prevention action plan. • A campaign co-produced with partners and those with lived experience is in development which reduces stigma associated with people reaching out for mental health support. • Engagement continues with Council colleagues and partners from across the community and voluntary sector to ensure suicide prevention is everyone's business. • Taxi drivers licensed with Knowsley Council have been encouraged to complete the Zero Suicide Alliance free online suicide prevention training aimed at taxi-drivers to help them understand, support others and reduce stigma. • Annual suicide audit has been completed which gathered insight with a view to further understanding possible actions which could be implemented to address stigma and reaching out to services.
6. Continue to use non-stigmatising language in all public health campaigns and communications to foster an open and inclusive stigma free environment which encourages people to seek support for their health and wellbeing.	All public health campaigns and communications continue to use non-stigmatising language, are inclusive and easy to understand. A recent example has been the re-design of the Public Health Healthy Knowsley website. The website uses non-stigmatising language, is easy to navigate, does not contain large amounts of text and most importantly supports people to seek support in a stigma free safe environment. This helps to reduce any barriers to access and/or engagement with services.
7. Promote healthy workplace practice to support employee wellbeing and address stigma through the working well programme and other local employers.	The Working Well programme delivered by Knowsley Chamber, now has over 300 business members who are signed up to receive regular updates on matters relating to the

	promotion of staff health and wellbeing, which also includes reducing stigma. Members have access to training and events to help them meet the nine working well standards. Training sessions on offer include; deaf awareness, neurodiversity awareness, healthy living and cooking on a budget and managing debt. The programme works with numerous local partners to facilitate health promoting and inclusive workplaces including creating job opportunities for people with long-term conditions. The programme also brings services and interventions such as the Living Well Bus into workplaces to reduce barriers to accessing healthcare.
8. Knowsley Partnership Boards, led by Healthwatch, to continue to foster an environment where individuals feel able to share their experiences of stigma.	Partnership Boards have continued to meet and foster positive inclusive environments taking into account individual needs. Sharing of experiences, including of stigma continues to take place, raising awareness of challenges and is used to influence practice change. Examples can be demonstrated across the individual partnership boards related to disabilities, age and through mental health coffee mornings.
9. Support the development and implementation of the Council's Domestic Abuse Strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.	A Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been in development and will be published in the autumn 2026. The draft needs assessment is already being utilised to inform the development of a new draft Knowsley Domestic Abuse Strategy, which is being co-produced with individuals with lived experience. This is scheduled to be published in November 2026 subject to approval.

10. Continue to deliver the Council's Healthier Weight Strategy action plan for 2025-2030 which includes working with partners to understand the issue of weight stigma.	Year one of the Healthier Weight Strategy has been delivered with 61 actions identified and agreed by partners. 82% have commenced with over half completed (54%). Examples include: Frontline staff who work with residents are offered Making Every Contact Count training (MECC). This is to help ensure they take a holistic view to health and wellbeing and gain a better understanding of their role in relation to healthier weight. For example, understanding and considering that for some people, making healthy choices is not high up on their priority list if they are dealing with substance misuse or have problems with debt. Through training, staff and partners are educated on the need to be mindful of their choice of language, actions or activities that may influence an individual's behaviour or choices. For example, by not using stigmatising language or by saying a person is lacking in willpower. Other actions completed include: • Places – Amendments made to the Healthier Advertising Policy adopted by the Council in 2024 to now include alcohol and gambling. • Settings – All primary and special schools have improved their food environments as part of the Healthy Schools Programme. • Services - Redesign and commission of Healthy Weight services offer for Children and Young People, Adults and Pregnancy commenced delivery in July 2026. The new services will consider how to reduce stigma and barriers to accessing services.
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