

## **Cheshire & Merseyside Blood Pressure Annual Report 2018** **Cheshire West and Chester Council case study**

### **Blood Pressure Testing in Workplace Settings**

In Cheshire West and Chester Council there has been a focus on detection of high blood pressure by trialling opportunistic BP testing in the workplace.

The Stroke Association supported this initiative by delivering four testing events at Council workplaces in locations across the borough at Chester, Ellesmere Port and Winsford.



The Council Communications Team supported with internal promotion beforehand and a relaxed, drop-in format was used, that generated word of mouth interest and activity on the day.

Key messages about healthy choices for healthy blood pressure were a feature of every check, and staff members were also advised to make a GP appointment to discuss their result if needed. 470 blood pressure measurements were taken - almost one in six of all staff.

High blood pressure, the 'silent killer', usually has no symptoms and may go undiagnosed as a result. The range of results recorded in these workplace testing events gave a real-world sense of the level of unidentified high blood pressure. For example, in Ellesmere Port 111 BPs were taken with 35 individuals advised to arrange non-urgent follow-up with the GP and 4 requiring an urgent appointment.

The events were very well received and valued by staff, who welcomed the opportunity to have a BP measurement taken spur of the moment. Colleagues encouraged one another to take part and the presence of the Stroke Association team triggered lots of discussion about balancing working life and healthy choices.

The success of this model, inspired Cheshire West and Chester to deliver a Know Your Numbers event at Winsford Industrial Estate, working in partnership with Council Economic Development Officers and stakeholders based on the estate. Winsford Industrial is one of five Business Improvement Districts covering over 800 small to medium size businesses. Over half of the workers tested on-site had raised BP readings.

This initial work has led Cheshire West and Chester to develop further plans for sustainable opportunistic testing models within the Staff Health and Wellbeing Champion role and future work with BIDs, including the latest BHF bid, 'Reducing the Pressure at Work'.