

An economy that functions effectively for everyone is better for health and wellbeing and, a population with better health and wellbeing is better for an effective and fair economy.

Introduction

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Wealth and Wellbeing Programme created a public health agenda on economic planning and health in the Liverpool City Region system. Activity relevant to this agenda had, of course, been in place across the six boroughs of LCR. This included work on inclusive economies, health in the workplace, fair employment strategies, anchor institutions and others. The Wealth and Wellbeing Programme established, in the mindset of the Combined Authority, that population health should be considered, not just as a by-product of wealth generation, but should be seen as a driver of shared wealth and that good health is a valid economic goal. The route to that achievement lay in data analysis, wide engagement and advocacy.

The LCR Wealth and Wellbeing Programme in was supported with additional capacity and funding from Public Health England (PHE) for a period of three years from January 2018 to end December 2020. This report covers the developments in the programme for that period and suggests ways of taking the work further in LCR. Suggestions are also made for the further development of a public health agenda on economics and health.

The report also reflects on the approach taken to developing the work, the form of system leadership used in the work, its effectiveness and the potential of that approach as a model for support to regional programmes from national agents such as PHE. Finally, the impact of Covid 19 was significant in the final year of the reporting period and the implications of the pandemic are considered.

Four themes emerged from engagement with stakeholders, data gathering and analysis to take forward the Wealth and Wellbeing programme:

- Employee support programmes should be taken forward by LCRCA, working with the Growth Directors in each of the local authorities and in partnership with the Cheshire and Mersey Health and Care Partnership.
- Work already underway to transform the workplace through the development of the fair employment charter should be further extended by LCRCA to more explicitly include and lead good health in the workplace, to include a real focus on mental health and wellbeing, with the Growth Directors in each of the local authorities, the Chambers and the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Action on developing the concept of wellbeing economics in the City Region should be taken forward by LCRCA, working with each local authority, with a strong community engagement element and with other interested parties. Networking across the country is also an opportunity and should be taken.
- Development of an approach to economic planning that unifies wellbeing, environmental and economic goals.

Summary of Progress of the Wealth and Wellbeing Programme

Appendix one is a timeline of the main events and developments in the Wealth and Wellbeing Programme from initiation of the programme in March 2018 up to the final recommendations on further development made in October 2021.

At initiation in March 2018 the prime focus points of the LCR programme were on putting population health and wellbeing at the heart of the economic and industrial strategy for the region; establishing the link between productivity and better health outcomes; engaging the LEP as a key partner. Agreement was to a programme, rather than a plan, to bring together a activity that draws on what is currently in place, adds to it and then is flexible to take advantage of opportunities as they emerge and to be refreshed regularly.

By September 2018 it was agreed that the LCR Wealth and Wellbeing programme will best add value by functioning as a system connector – building bridges across the health and employment and skills agendas, linking portfolios in boroughs, translating relevant policy across the portfolios and linking to funding opportunities. In addition, the programme will lead the development of the system wide and local narrative on work, health and wealth that is necessary to drive large scale change.

The milestone developments in the progress of the programme were

- Making the link between poor health and lower economic productivity
- Identifying mental ill health as the key feature of poor health
- Engaging widely across the six boroughs using a systems leadership approach
- Reviewing the evidence base on what works to produce recommendations for action
- Gathering qualitative evidence on the impact of worklessness on health and of poor health on employment to contribute to a compelling narrative for the programme
- Gaining agreement on recommendations and actions for future work.

January 2019 Linking Poor Health and Economic Productivity

A key development in engagement with the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) came in two parts at the end of 2018 and beginning 2019. First, in discussion with economic policy leads in the Combined Authority there was agreement on the challenge for input to the LIS on health and wellbeing as:

what part does poor health play in explaining the economic output gap in LCR and what can be done to resolve the health problems and so improve productivity?

The first part of this challenge was met through application of the Health for Wealth analysis first to the LCR population. Key data was presented in the January workshop linking poor health to lower economic productivity specifically in the LCR area.



When considering the gap in productivity between the economy of LCR and the rest of the country, this analysis found that 33 per cent of the gap can be attributed to ill health. That equated to £3.2bn in lost GVA and about 10 per cent of the total economic output of the LCR economy on an annual basis at that time. This was a significant development in establishing the interest of the LIS development team in health as an economic development issue.

Spring 2019 Work and Health Profiles

A work and health profile was produced for the City Region and for each of its six constituent councils. Each profile included a review of employment and population health statistics, and support allowance applications. Analysis by Public Health England indicated that the major impact of ill health on the economy is specifically through mental ill health.

Spring 2019 to January 2020 Connecting Across the System

Early in the programme the council leadership advised that the work should engage with communities and bring together parts of the system that might not usually have much interaction. The emphasis was on a system leadership approach that invited views from as wide a range of perspectives as possible. This approach took its most tangible form in six workshops, one in each of the six LCR boroughs, on a different aspect of the Wealth and Wellbeing programme.

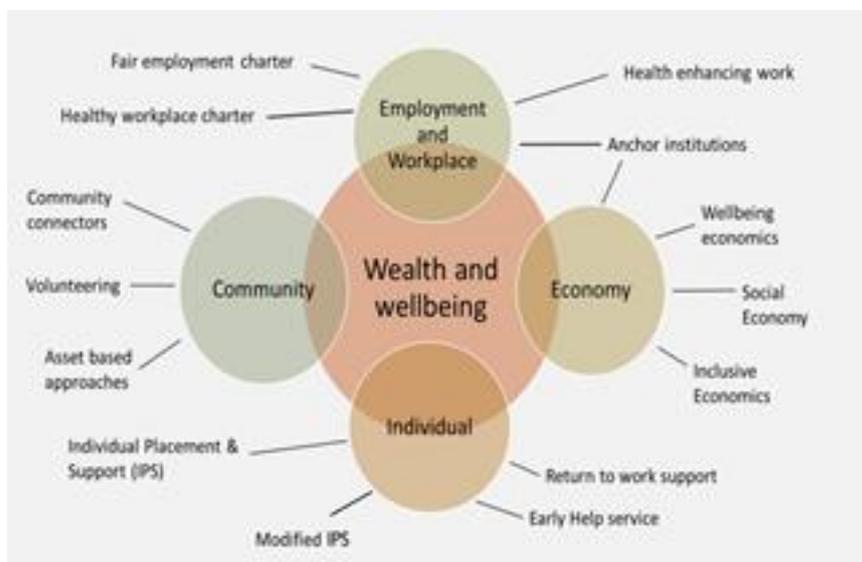
The intention was to place less emphasis on the presentation of good practice and to provoke discussion by posing questions. Workshop themes included links to the environmental agenda and asked whether it was more important to have a good job for everyone or a good quality environment for everyone. The workshops helped to engage people in discussion on work, health and the economy that would not otherwise have happened. A series of six workshops were

launched in January 2019, one in each borough focussing on different aspects of the wealth and wellbeing programme and ended in Sefton in November 2019.



May 2019 Closing the health-related productivity gap: Evidence for interventions

The evidence for interventions to reduce health-related productivity loss were summarised along with relevant current interventions and clinical trials. After review of the evidence and agreement on areas of interest the report identified four key areas of evidence-based practice.



In summary, the review showed good evidence for employee support programmes – particularly individual placement and support schemes (IPS) for people with severe mental illness (and others) – as a sound investment to support people with health problems to engage with work again. Building on the good practice in the region in this area is important but the activity should be broadened in scope, while taking account of research, into a modified version of IPS that is appropriate for a larger population of people with less severe, but still significant, mental health problems.

Summer 2019 to February 2020

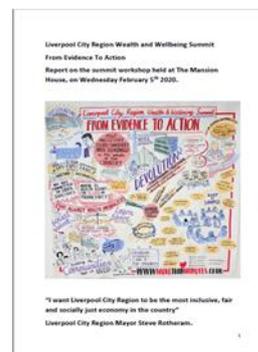
Creating a Compelling Narrative

It is important in any programme that is considering large scale change, to have a good understandable story at the core. It is crucial that, in this case, the story is built upon the views of the people most affected by the current state of work and health. The Liverpool based organisation Capacity was commissioned to gather the views of around 40 people across the region who are experiencing the impact of ill health on employment. The findings of this commission were written up in a report and presented in a video. The findings were the basis for the development of a compelling narrative about work, health and the economy in LCR.



February 2020 Programme Summit Workshop

The work of the programme over 18 months was brought together in a summit workshop that joined the various elements of the programme into a set of recommendations and actions that were endorsed by the City Region Mayor.



Post Workshop Developments

The summit workshop took place as the Covid pandemic was taking hold in the country. Six weeks after the workshop the first national lockdown was put in place. Two workshops to develop the links between the work of JobCentre Plus and primary care services in Liverpool City Region were cancelled. As services closed and before the method of running meetings online had been fully established, the Wealth and Wellbeing programme became dormant. There were a number of further developments in the next 12-18 months.

Sept 2020; Proposal for economic renewal through a single framework of economic, social and environmental issues. After several months of working with LCR Climate Partnership a recommendation was made for the LCR Combined Authority to develop a strong strategic approach to economic renewal across the city region that explicitly brings together economic, social and environmental issues into a single framework. The Combined Authority is asked to set up a task and finish group to develop a detailed plan for application of a single framework that brings together economic, social and environmental issues to the Combined Authority for consideration and recommendation to implement. The proposal was discussed over several months but was ultimately unsuccessful.

September 2021; Integrating health and employment in Liverpool City Region.

A loose association had been developed with The Health Foundation over the course of the programme. A successful bid was made to The Health Foundation as part of the Economies for

Health funding programme. This three-year project is focused on the redesign of employment services and evolution of an enhanced approach to labour market programme delivery with public health more intentionally at its core, building upon the Wealth and Wellbeing Programme's report.

Oct. 2021; Proposal to establish a Liverpool City Region workstream on Economies for Healthier Lives. It was proposed that a Liverpool City Region workstream is established on Economies for Healthier Lives. This would be a development from the LCR Wealth and Wellbeing Programme. The purpose of the programme would be to combine and concentrate capacity and will to create a health enhancing, inclusive and sustainable economy across LCR. The proposal was discussed over several months but was not taken forward at this time.

March 2022; Cities Inequalities Project. An ongoing partnership with the West Midlands Combined Authority and Greater London Authority to establish public health work on inequalities in health in Combined Authorities. The LCR interest is a further development from the Wealth and Wellbeing Programme.

Reflections on the LCR Wealth and Wellbeing Programme

A number of features are worth noting in reflecting on the progress made in the Wealth and Wellbeing programme.

Leadership and Capacity

Initial leadership for the Wealth and Wellbeing programme was provided by the Chief Executive of Sefton Council and by the Director of Public Health (DPH) with lead responsibility in the Cheshire and Mersey DPH network for partnership working particularly in the LCR system. Leadership from PHE was provided through the PHE director and deputy director for the NW Region.

Council Chief Executive leadership was crucial in the first 12 months of the programme in linking the work to political leadership in each of the six councils of LCR and to driving the direction of development along a route that favoured wide engagement and learning over objective assessment and report writing. The approach was described as organic and akin to development of a social movement. This led to the development of a system leadership theme to the way in which the work was developed.

Leadership by the Director of Public Health was essential to provide a link to the public health leaders in each of the constituent boroughs and guide the development of the work relative to other public health programmes.

PHE input, in the form of additional management and leadership capacity, was key to the development of the Wealth and Wellbeing Programme. A senior member of staff was appointed at programme director level to develop and coordinate the core activity of the programme. The appointment was made for six months initially to explore the potential in developing a wealth and wellbeing programme and, when the case was made, funding for a further 18 months from July 2018 to 31st December 2019 was allocated by PHE for the main component of programme development. As a result of rapid and successful development of the programme over that period the LCR Metro Mayor successfully lobbied the PHE Chief Executive for an extension of PHE's input to the programme for a further 12 months to the end of December 2020.

System Leadership Approach

The programme was initiated with a broad intention to build on previous work on wealth and health. The earlier work had established the link through data analysis and evidence review and summarised the case in reports. The Wealth and Wellbeing Programme intended to take this further by

prioritising interaction through conversations and discussion that would develop the economy and health link further as a more widely accepted idea that should be taken into the practice of economic development planning.

The concept of systems leadership is widely known. There are several definitions and explorations of what systems leadership is and how it can be applied. For this programme, a paper published by the Kings Fund in 2012 by David Welbourn and colleagues titled Leadership of Whole Systems provided seven characteristics of successful leadership in whole systems working as follows.

- Go out of your way to make new connections
- Adopt an open, enquiring mindset, refusing to be constrained by current horizons
- Embrace uncertainty and be positive about change – adopt an entrepreneurial attitude
- Draw on as many different perspectives as possible; diversity is non-optional
- Ensure leadership and decision-making are distributed throughout all levels and functions
- Establish a compelling vision which is shared by all partners in the whole system
- Promote the importance of values – invest as much energy into relationships and behaviours as into delivery tasks.

The wealth and Wellbeing programme developed around a model of system leadership that emphasises making connections, drawing on many different perspectives, promoting distribution of leadership and establishing a compelling vision. The workshops in each borough are the most tangible example of this approach in the this programme but the idea of continually seeking a wide range of input, of the work never being finished but asking for views on how to take it further forward informed how the presentations in every forum were made and how responses were made to anyone interested enough to engage with the programme.

Data Provision and Analysis

Partnership with the universities in LCR was essential to provide the quantitative and qualitative data and analysis that was crucial to showing the local link between health and productivity. This was the key to accessing the thinking behind the Local Industrial Strategy.

Qualitative Data and Compelling Vision

It was important to include the experiences of people living in the city region with worklessness through ill health or having to leave work through ill health. This was provided initially through a review of the evidence by the Public Health Institute at LJMU. Secondly, the commission of work to engage with communities in each of the six boroughs across LCR brought this insight up to date. The intention was to develop a compelling vision and narrative for the programme from this insight. This development was limited by the pandemic lockdown. However, the insight gathered contributed to grounding of the recommendations in a local context.

COVID-19's impact on The Wealth and Wellbeing Programme

Arguably, the impact of COVID-19 forced one of the goals of the programme – to put health and wellbeing at the centre of economic planning – into the limelight. The economic lockdown was a deliberate government attempt to deal with the threat of the virus on health.

It has been a theme of the development of the programme that investment in health is an economic imperative. If we want to close the productivity gap between LCR and the rest of the country, then we have to pay attention to the significant contribution made by poor health to that gap. Again, the experience of dealing with the pandemic has highlighted the need to invest in a health system that

can deal with such a crisis as a health goal, but also because the close connection between sustaining population health and sustaining the economy has been brought into sharper focus. The pandemic compels us to consider how to take the three themes of the Wealth and Wellbeing programme forward.

However, there is no doubt that the three themes – employee support, wellbeing economics, and transforming the workplace – are still the right ones. Indeed, employee support is ever more relevant, especially for people in sectors where employment has been precarious. Furthermore, the need, and possibility, of placing health, wellbeing and environmental sustainability to the fore in economic planning has become a far less radical proposition than it might have been previously.

A negative impact of the pandemic was to make further progress on the recommendations agreed at the summit workshop in February 2020 almost impossible. The public health leadership in the councils and in PHE was overwhelmed by the need to respond to the pandemic. Outside public health, service capacity that was previously committed to taking forward work on the Individual Placement and Support pilot was diverted onto the Covid response. Several attempts were made to restart the programme but successive waves of the pandemic severely restricted what progress could be made.

Further Developments

Within LCR the theme of health and economic development is being progressed through two routes. The established Integrating Health and Employment in Liverpool City Region programme is funded for three years. In addition to the primary goal it includes an objective to better link public health and economic development staff in the city region. As the work is funded through The Health Foundation it is also linked to two other projects across the country working in the same field. This is a great opportunity to not only deliver the objectives of the funded programme but also to have the work recognised in national forums and to share and link with the other two funded projects and then more widely.

Secondly, the engagement with the Cities Inequalities Project is a direct spin off from the work on the Wealth and Wellbeing programme. It looks likely that the bid to The Health Foundation to extend the project will succeed. Also, the Combined Authority has agreed to part fund a policy officer level post to work on public health as part of the Cities Inequalities work. The brief leans more towards health inequalities in general but the opportunity is available to link with the Integrating Health and Employment programme.

More widely, there is a semi formed network of Combined Authorities with an interest in health and wealth across the UK. This is emerging in West Midlands, South Yorkshire, the NE and in Glasgow. There is an opportunity to better establish this network to develop the understanding of the range of activity underway, the different approaches being taken, the obstacles to overcome and successes achieved.

Finally, for NW OHID there is some learning to take from the impact of placing senior public health support into a sub-regional system. The capacity in this case was three days per week but crucially, once the subject of the work had been focussed, without any other responsibilities. Having the ability to focus on one theme was significant in allowing time for a wide range of connections to be made and for progress to happen more quickly than would otherwise have been the case.

The transition to OHID from PHE, and the focus on pandemic response, has broken up some of the network that was developing with the national PHE programme on inclusive economies and health but that is reforming. The previous capacity and expertise is now in the DHSC Work and Health Unit

and other OHID regions, such as in Yorkshire and Humber, are still funding posts dedicated to the health and wealth agenda. A growing public health theme like this needs to find allies and it would be a good priority for NW OHID to lead the further development of those connections.

Finally, there has been growing interest across policy development thinktanks in the field of health, wealth and economic development that is turning into funding programmes and a desire to demonstrate what activity in this area looks like. That connection too is an opportunity for further development of the public health interest in economy and health.

Summary and Conclusion

Four themes emerged from engagement with stakeholders, data gathering and analysis to take forward the Wealth and Wellbeing programme:

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The programme tapped into the national and international interest in wellbeing economics. Furthermore, it is the coming together of the climate change and ecological emergencies, the ongoing challenge to public health of pandemic Covid19 and the challenge of rebuilding the economy that calls for a strategic approach that brings economic, social and environmental issues together.

The LCR Wealth and Wellbeing Programme went some way towards establishing the belief that an economy that functions effectively for everyone is better for health and wellbeing, and that a population with better health and wellbeing is better for an effective and fair economy. And, that economic planning is a legitimate interest of anyone interested in a healthier population.

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March 2022.¹

Many thanks to the following individuals who were key contributors to the Wealth and Wellbeing Programme:

- Ben Barr, University of Liverpool
- Hannah Timpson, Liverpool John Moores University
- Andrew Turner, CPH Cheshire East Council.
- Andrew Rose, The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust.
- Sally Yeoman, Halton and St Helens VCA
- Lynn Collins, TUC.
- Adrian Nolan, LCR Combined Authority.
- Rob Green, Consultant in Public Health.
- Ian Stenton, Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospital NHS Trust.

¹ Key documents referred are filed in the NW OHID under P:\B CORPORATE MANAGEMENT\Senior Leadership Team\Local

Authorities\LCR\LCR Wealth and Wellbeing Programme\Legacy Documents\Key Reports and Presentations.

