

## Relaunch of MECC Link London

OHID London and ADPH London are pleased to announce the relaunch of [MECC Link London](#) on **Thursday 4 May**.

[MECC Link London](#) is an online resource providing a directory of health and wellbeing services localised to all 33 London boroughs, as well as information on key healthy lifestyle topics, suggested open questions using the *Ask, Assist, Act* model and information on a range of primary self-care tools and resources. The platform is intended for use by health and social care professionals, GPs, nurses, police, social prescribers, and anyone offering frontline help and support in communities across London. The contents have been refreshed following extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.

Making Every Contact Count or 'MECC' is an effective and evidence-based approach to improving people's health and wellbeing by helping them change their behaviour. MECC encourages public facing professionals to use opportunities arising during their routine interactions with members of the public, to engage in conversations about improving their health, addressing risk factors such as alcohol, diet, physical activity, smoking and mental wellbeing. Supporting people to make these behaviour changes can help reduce premature deaths and disability, helping achieve long-term health, social care, and public sector savings.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) estimates that the annual cost to the NHS of physical inactivity is £1,067 million, of smoking £2,872 million, of alcohol misuse £3,614 million, and of obesity and being overweight £6,048 million.<sup>1</sup>

Many long-term conditions are closely linked to behavioural factors - 40% of the UK's disability adjusted life years lost are attributable to tobacco, hypertension, alcohol, being overweight or being physically inactive.<sup>2</sup> Making changes such as stopping smoking, improving diet, increasing physical activity, losing weight, and reducing alcohol consumption can help people significantly reduce their risk of disease or of disease progression for those with existing long-term conditions.

Kevin Fenton, Regional Director of Public Health, OHID London and NHSE London said:

"The size of the public health, NHS and public sector workforce means that there are many opportunities, every day, to engage Londoners in healthy conversations. Signposting by frontline professionals has been shown by NICE to be highly effective in supporting people to reduce their tobacco and alcohol use and improving their physical activity levels and diet.

"We all have a role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of our population and reducing health inequalities. The MECC Link London website provides the tools and resources to enable those vital brief interventions that collectively can really drive positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Londoners. I would strongly urge anyone engaging with the public to familiarise themselves with the resource and use it to really make a difference."

Ruth Hutt Co Chair of ADPH London said:

"As Directors of Public Health, we have a statutory responsibility to promote the health and wellbeing of our communities. The impact of COVID-19, along with the current cost of living

---

<sup>1</sup> Making Every Contact Count: Consensus Statement, PHE, April 2016 [Main heading \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> Buck, D, Frosini, F (2012) Clustering of unhealthy behaviours over time Implications for policy and practice, The King's Fund

crisis is disproportionately affecting the most disadvantaged across our communities and the strain of budgetary pressures is making addressing those inequalities more and more challenging.

“MECC approaches can help us tackle these challenges by supporting individual behaviour change in a holistic and person-centred way. We know that information provided by a trusted professional is far more likely to influence positive behaviour change and MECC Link London provides the tools and resources to really make those interactions count. We strongly encourage collective adoption of the resource for professionals right across the public health system as well as public services. MECC represents the low-hanging fruit opportunity towards achieving better public health and reducing pervasive health inequalities within our communities.”

ENDS