

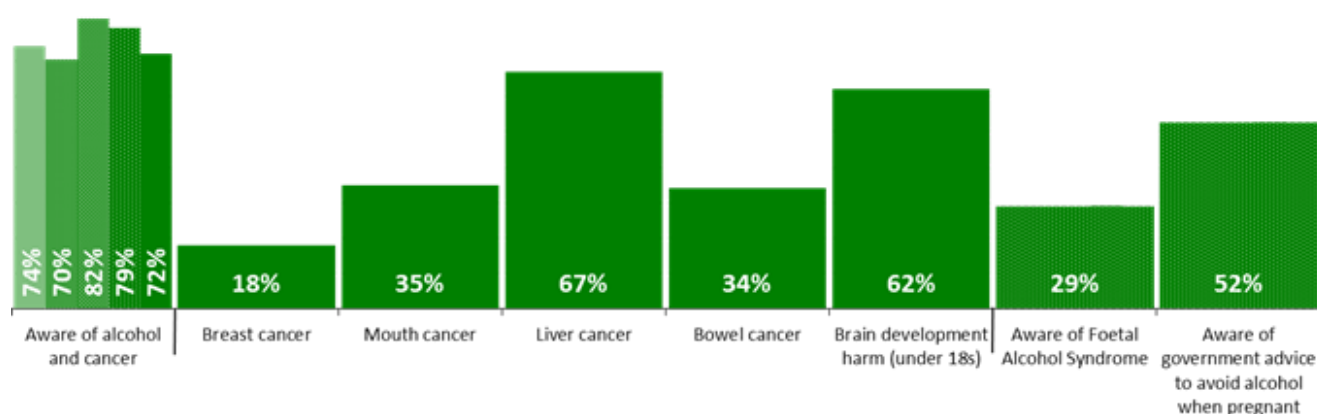
Brief to People Select Committee Review of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to inform members of the People Select Committee about the Public Health approach to FASD prevention, and the partnership work that has been taking place across the Borough to raise public and professional awareness about the potential harm of drinking alcohol in pregnancy.

National and Local Context

2. FASD (Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) is a term given for a range of permanent disabilities that can be caused when a developing baby in the womb is exposed to alcohol, this can include physical disabilities, learning difficulties and behavioural problems.
3. Research on FASD has been carried out primarily in the USA and Canada, limited work in the UK means that currently the incidence of FASD in the UK is not accurately known. There is currently no reliable evidence on the incidence of FASD across the UK. International studies estimate that at least 1% (with some prevalence studies estimating up to 5%) of the population are affected by FASD. When applying the 1% rate to Stockton-on-Tees this means that at least 476 children could be affected by FASD, and 25 babies born each year with FASD.
4. International evidence and prevalence data means that FASD can be considered the leading cause of preventable non genetic learning disability in the UK. FASD is completely preventable through not drinking alcohol during pregnancy (BMA, 2007)
5. Each year Balance (NE alcohol office) carry out a survey of public perceptions towards alcohol. The alcohol dashboard for Stockton which includes public survey information indicates that public awareness of FASD remains low for Stockton:



Public Health and FASD Prevention

6. The Stockton Director of Public Health report for 2013 identified no alcohol in pregnancy as a key public health challenge that has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the population. This challenge has been carried through subsequent reports and remains a focus for the Public Health team.

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7. The Stockton Public Health message is no alcohol during pregnancy. Training, public awareness raising campaigns and educational materials have been developed to raise awareness of the Stockton Public Health messages about alcohol and pregnancy, and the potential impact of alcohol throughout all stages of pregnancy.
8. Stockton Public Health team has worked in partnership with North Tees & Hartlepool Foundation Trust, Lifeline Alcohol Support Service and the Stockton based FASD network UK to:
 - Increase public and professional of FASD awareness across Stockton-on-Tees
 - Support a reducing in pregnancies where alcohol consumption is a risk factor
 - Promote strategies for supporting and working with young people with FASD to practitioners across education, health and social care.

Current Preventative Work

9. During the development of the Stockton multiagency alcohol action plan in 2013 partners identified there was lack of both public and professional awareness of FASD and the risks associated with drinking alcohol in pregnancy. Work that has taken place around FASD to date includes the following:
10. A Multiagency FASD briefing and FASD training programme (full day, half day and bitesize training offered). Professionals from key groups that have participated in the training include:
 - Youth Offending and Youth Direction
 - Primary Schools
 - Secondary Schools
 - Voluntary Sector Organisations
 - Children's Centres
 - Family Support Team
 - Social Work
 - Health Centres
 - a) Approximately 200 practitioners have taken part in FASD training, with FASD training now being offered through the LSCB multiagency training programme for practitioners across Stockton Borough.
11. Production of infographic poster and information leaflet
 - a) A public information leaflet and A5 postcard has been produced to cascade key messages about FASD including:
 - Stockton-on-Tees Public Health Team recommend no alcohol during pregnancy or when thinking about starting a family
 - If a mother has consumed small amounts of alcohol before she knew she was pregnant the risk the baby is low
 - It is never too late to stop drinking alcohol during pregnancy
 - Signposting information to midwife, GP and alcohol support services
 - b) The information leaflet has been cascaded to services including GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, children's centres, voluntary sector services, community midwife clinics and libraries.
 - c) An infographic poster sharing key statistics about alcohol in pregnancy and information about FASD has been distributed to local licenced premises through the PubWatch scheme for local pubs to display in female toilets, to businesses

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involved in the Better Health at Work Scheme and organisations who also received the information leaflet.

12. Production of a FASD animation for young people

- a) In 2015 Stockton Public Health Team, the Stockton based FASD network UK and Teesside University, supported by Chapel Road Youth Club developed a 2 minute animation aimed at 13-19 year olds. The animation shares key messages about FASD and alcohol in pregnancy, promoting the Stockton Public Health and international message of no alcohol during pregnancy. By watching the animation and learning about the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy young people will be able to make informed choices later in life to help ensure every baby in Stockton is helped to have the best start in life.
- b) A session plan has been developed to be used alongside the animation and is free for all services working across Stockton Borough to use. The animation is currently being delivered through youth direction activities, youth offending teams, Harbour service, school nursing, young people's substance misuse services. A FASD lesson plan is currently being developed by Education Improvement Services which will be used with the animation as part of the Risk Taking Behaviour PSHE toolkit for secondary schools.

13. FASD Awareness Day

- a) FASD awareness day takes place on September 9th every year and each year the Public Health team work with partner services to carry out press and public facing activities to raise the profile of FASD awareness day and key messages of alcohol in pregnancy.
- b) Activities for FASD Awareness Day 2015 include:
 - FASD awareness raising materials distributed through Stockton Borough midwife clinics
 - FASD Awareness Stands during week of 9th supported by lifeline service and midwifery services at North Tees Hospital, Stockton Central Library and Thornaby ASDA.
 - FASD banner on internet during week of 7-11 September (1,440 banner clicks)
 - FASD article on KYIT (2,995 views of article)
 - Distribution of FASD infographic through Stockton Pub Watch for licensed premises to display on toilet doors
 - FASD infographic sent to businesses taking part in the Better Health at Work Scheme to display in public staff areas

Next Steps

14. To continue to offer FASD training to multiagency partners across the borough
15. To monitor the use and impact of the FASD animation loop across services working with children and young people in the borough
16. To continue to work with partners to increase public awareness of FASD and not drinking alcohol in pregnancy. As demonstrated through the results of the Balance Perceptions Survey for both Stockton and the North East although people are aware of government guidelines for drinking alcohol in pregnancy, awareness of the impact of drinking alcohol during pregnancy remains low.