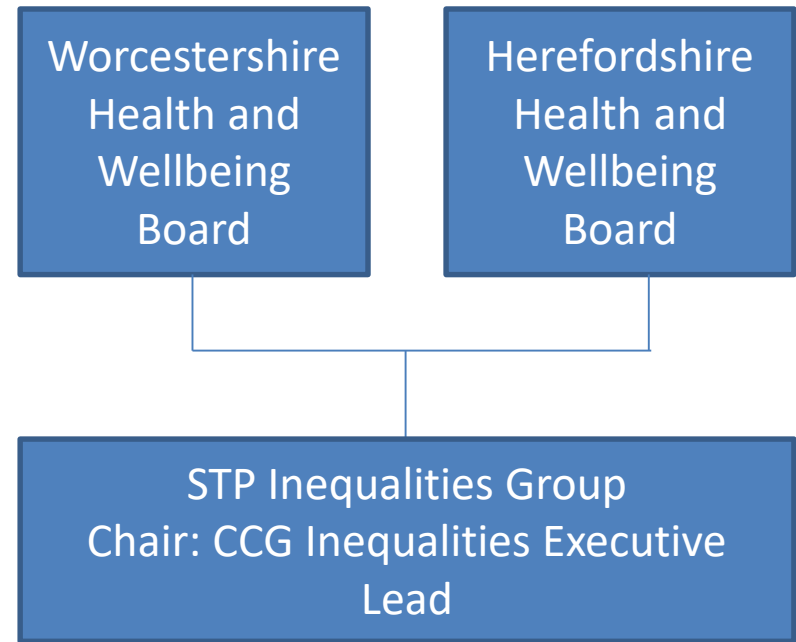# Inequalities in COVID Restoration and Recovery Plans

Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP

Infrastructure supporting Inequalities

A collaborative approach to tackling inequalities is being taken as we restore and recover our services in Herefordshire and Worcestershire (H&W). The STP group will drive the system-wide approach tackling health inequalities as services are recovered and restored. The STP executive lead for inequalities will chair our STP Inequalities Group which will also be supported by both of our Directors of Public Health. The STP Inequalities Group will support the work of the Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBB) in each county. The HWBBs are currently refreshing their strategies and will align these to focus on inequalities through the restoration and recovery period. Our STP Outcomes Framework is being developed to support a focus on inequalities.

Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Board

STP Inequalities Group
Chair: CCG Inequalities Executive Lead

System plans on inequalities

Addressing health inequalities was a key priority across for Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP (H&W) prior to the Covid-19 outbreak. It is widely known that COVID-19 has amplified existing inequalities, with the impact of COVID-19 being disproportionate and therefore a refreshed focus is required.

The three areas of focus are:

- Ensuring those at greatest risk from COVID-19 are protected and supported in the way that is needed.
- Ensuring restoration plans have a focus on inequalities, resulting in services being accessible to those in greatest need.
- Longer term focus, ensuring health inequalities become a key system wide focus when developing plans and services in the future.

Some of the key actions that we are putting in place to underpin these areas of focus through restoration and recovery are:

- Robust mechanisms to record accurate data regarding inequalities across the system.
- Organisation and system leadership with a focus on inequalities (Via our STP Executive, Health Inequalities group and HWBB's).
- Developing the role of anchor organisations to support our staff, linked to our approach to the People Plan.
- Building on existing community development approaches - Talk Communities and Here2Help.
- Ensuring that we seek views that are representative of our population though our system wide engagement work, targeting resources at those facing the greatest inequalities.
- Building on our established STP population health management approach to identify and proactively support vulnerable groups.
- Ensuring a focus on inequalities through restoration and recovery workstreams, through the embedded approach to equality impact and risk assessments and awareness raising.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, H&W STP recognised the need to address health inequalities and this was reflected in the Long Term Plan (LTP). The LTP highlighted priorities for addressing inequalities across many work programmes, detailed on the next slide.

Key inequalities priorities within the LTP

Work programme	Priorities and actions relevant to inequalities
Elective Care	Strengthening Public Health contribution across all work programmes: this will help to address inequalities and target resources.
Cancer	Undertaking a mapping exercise against each cancer screening programme to understand the impact deprivation has on screening uptake. Implementation of a project to increase bowel screening uptake in the 20 most deprived practices across the LTP. *Increasing our focus through PCN's in increasing access to effective support for reducing obesity, alcohol consumption and smoking. Increase uptake of NHS and other health checks, including the focus on earlier of excessive alcohol consumption.*
Mental Health	Development of an integrated wellbeing model, to be embedded within communities and primary care. The successful development and system wide use of this will mean the alignment and integration of social prescribing, lifestyle support and information and advice on wider determinants of mental health.
Children and Young People	Ensuring model of effective Early Help in place across STP. Targeted provision and early intervention for vulnerable groups. Working as an STP to address poverty and deprivation through whole population management approach. Support a local place-based approach to improving health and wellbeing of families. Implement public health approach to reduce the exploitation of young people. *Catch up programmes for imms and vacs.*
Learning Disabilities and Autism	Tackling the underlying factors that increase risk of aspiration pneumonia. More effective use of health and social care provision. Improved care coordination for those with complex or multiple long-term health conditions. Tackle the prevalence of lifestyle factors that increase cancer and obesity. Timely learning of factors that may influence avoidable or amenable deaths and development of plans to address any specific themes. *Prioritise access to flu vaccination and promotion of uptake of annual checks.*

Collaborative approach

Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP are taking a system-wide collaborative approach to tackling inequalities during restoration and recovery, including:

- Promoting the importance of <u>data collection</u> to all health and care professionals and VCS partners. Ensuring that datasets are complete and timely will underpin an understanding of and response to inequalities across the system, as referenced in the Phase 3 letter. Population health profiles for PCNs will raise awareness in Primary Care, in preparation for the expected health inequalities DES in April 2021.

- Developing the role of <u>anchor organisations</u> to act as exemplars in promoting staff health and wellbeing, with our STP workforce being at the vanguard of this. Work will focus around equitable approaches to procurement practices, creating local employment, understanding and overcoming barriers to employment of local people/ use of estate of anchor organisations by local communities.

- Taking a strengths based approach to our <u>community development and engagement</u> work through local initiatives such as Here2Help in Worcestershire and Talk Communities in Herefordshire, working with our VCS.

- Strengthening <u>equality impact and risk assessments (EIRA)</u> on service changes and service redesign. Undertaking impact assessments is helping us to identify key risks to the groups identified when accessing services post-COVID. We now have an agreed STP wide EIRA approach and these are being routinely completed for all work programmes.

- Developing our <u>PHM</u> approach- infrastructure, intelligence and intervention. Better utilising the skills of our BI workforce and developing PHM capability through PHM training for our analysts, enabling better identification of, and proactive support for, vulnerable individuals or groups.

Short-term inequalities priority areas

Utilising the collaborative approach described previously and reflecting on the learning to date during COVID, H&W STP have identified the following short-term priority focus areas:

- **BAME -** All providers are working to identify inequalities and support their staff in these groups. For example, WAHT have developed an occupational risk assessment form for all staff members with priority given to those in high risk groups including BAME colleagues. The form was developed in conjunction with staffside and each form is quality assured by the occupational health department. The Trust has also focused on BAME representation in the Trust and have been successful in establishing a BAME network.

- **Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) -** Several outbreaks in H&W have been on farms, which has emphasised the need to focus on HMOs and our Eastern European communities supporting our agricultural sector. A proactive response is being taken to understand where these communities are and to ensuring they have access to information on social distancing, hygiene and access to all services. The response will build on the learning from engaging with other seldom heard communities e.g. the collaborative approach to supporting rough sleepers and homeless people during COVID-19.

- **Preventative programmes –** plans to accelerate preventative programmes which proactively engage those at greatest risk of poor health outcomes; including more accessible flu vaccinations, better targeting of long-term condition prevention and management programmes such as obesity reduction programmes and health checks for people with learning disabilities. General practice to use the capacity released through modified QOF requirements to develop priority lists for preventative support & longer term conditions management e.g. health checks, obesity & hypertension, smoking cessation, diabetes, respiratory, alcohol misuse.

- **Wider determinants** – consolidate learning from before and during COVID to inform our approach to addressing the wider determinants of health across H&W; employment, housing, fuel poverty, food poverty, unstable employment, vulnerable families, mental heath and wellbeing and children development/education.

Risks and challenges

There are risks and challenges associated with progressing the plans and priorities as identified in the previous slides. These risks are outlined in the table below:

Risk	Mitigation against the risk
Limited resource and capacity across the system.	• Identification of an Inequalities Executive Lead for each organisation. • Focus on inequalities through the Health and Wellbeing Boards and STP Inequalities Group. This will provide infrastructure to support and enable delivery and actions will be prioritised through this route. • Leadership from Health and Wellbeing Boards, with refreshed strategic approach, will provide strategic focus across the system.
Specialist nature of the work around inequalities.	• System-wide focus through restoration plans and ongoing development and delivery. • Our STP Equality Impact Assessment process facilitate consideration of inequalities in service redesign, supported by our established STP Equalities Advisory Group. Building a PHM approach including BI PHM training and development to ensure analysts utilise and promote this way of working.
Restoration and recovery of services exacerbates inequalities.	• Our focussed leadership and system wide EIRA process will be alert to this risk. • We have recently received a specially commissioned report from MLCSU on Digital Exclusion, enabling us to highlight our population most at risk and an evidence review with recommendations on how to promote a digitally inclusive approach.
Further outbreaks of COVID-19.	• Building awareness of the importance of proactive identification of inequalities and tailoring of interventions to ensure inequalities are not further exacerbated and risk factors mitigated.