

## Transcription of Sefton Council Public Health Annual Report 2021

- [00:30] Alena Petrie, Manager at Cambridge Court Care Home Challenging is probably the understatement - challenging eighteen months
- [00:33] Dr Niall Leonard, GP and Clinical Advisor Part of the thrust of what we were doing was actually to stop people becoming ill
- [00:37] Angela White OBE, Chief Executive at Sefton CVS Ten voluntary sector organisations - they undertook a quarter of a million interventions last year during COVID.
- [00:46] Margaret Jones, Director of Public Health Sefton Council Almost all aspects of public service have been working as part of a coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [00:54] Ann Irvine, Senior Infection and Prevention Control Nurse at Merseycare Everyone stepped up when it was needed so that was really really impressive
- [01:08] Margaret Jones, Director of Public Health Sefton Council For this year's Public Health Annual Report it was really important to hear the stories from different agencies about how they have met the challenge, how they have worked together and to look at the learning from how they have responded to COVID. The level of teamwork and cooperation across the council but also for the council working with its partners in the NHS, in care homes, in schools and businesses, and with the public as well. Because, obviously, we really needed everyone in Sefton to work with us; to wear face coverings when they were asked to do so; to come and get tested; to self-isolate if they tested positive. That cooperation I think was really really key to trying to drive down the rates of COVID and to help people live with the COVID pandemic
- [02:04] Dr Niall Leonard, GP and Clinical Advisor What the pandemic did to GPs was actually make them work more closely together and it accelerated some of the things that were already happening in primary care, such as a movement more towards remote consultations. At the beginning of the pandemic the government asked all GPs to stop seeing patients face-to-face unless it was absolutely necessary. This was to protect patients from catching viruses from other patients within the surgery and also to protect the surgery staff. So this meant we moved to something called triage, where you as a patient rang your doctor's surgery, you spoke to either doctor or a clinician and they helped decide what the best way forward was. That could result in a telephone consultation with you or a video consultation or if you did need a home-visit, we in Sefton already had a home visiting service for care homes patients and we extended this to all our patients.
- [03:03] Angela White OBE, Chief Executive at Sefton CVS Working with the council has been an ongoing role of the CVS, because we act as the conduit between council and voluntary sector. I think it was further enhanced because there were lots of opportunities for us to lead, [and] to present solutions from our

collective voluntary sector. People have been very isolated and alone and have needed befriending and support. It has been prescription collections. We've also had access to food so that might be through the food bank -it could be access to food parcels but also access to shopping. There is a strong track record of partnership working and I hope that continues.

[03:54] Ann Irvine,  
Senior Infection and  
Prevention Control  
Nurse at Merseycare

So we're the infection control team at Merseycare. One of our responsibilities was to support care homes during the COVID pandemic.

[04:08] Alena Petrie,  
Manager at Cambridge  
Court Care Home

I wouldn't say a nightmare because we still love our jobs, and we turn up every day. A lot of us got COVID ourselves as well.

[04:17] Ann Irvine,  
Senior Infection and  
Prevention Control  
Nurse at Merseycare

The care home managers were really scared because we had never faced this before. Personally they were scared – but they were scared for their staff, their residents within the care homes. Nobody had been faced with this before.

[04:34] Alena Petrie,  
Manager at Cambridge  
Court Care Home

The guidance sometimes changed several times a week; sometimes a couple of times during the day. On top of everything you do in a care home, which is quite an upbeat fast going day, this added extra pressure on myself and my staff.

[04:47] Ann Irvine,  
Senior Infection and  
Prevention Control  
Nurse at Merseycare

So when the guidance changes, the processes change, so we had to make sure that we were up to date so that we could give robust advice to our care home managers. There was a lot of emotional support given to care home managers and the staff. A lot of reassurance was needed because they had never been faced with anything like this before and they were losing residents.

[05:12] Alena Petrie,  
Manager at Cambridge  
Court Care Home

We had really good support from our local council like collaborative Zoom meetings or Teams meetings with representatives of the council, CCG, CHC, and different training providers as well. We want to carry on with this collaboration. We want to see how we can help each other better and help our residents.

[05:37] Terry Wood,  
Environmental Health  
and Licencing Manager  
at Sefton Council

Every single business was impacted by COVID. Every single person in the country was impacted by COVID. It was something brand new. There was a lot of fear around and there is still probably a lot of fear around. There was an incredible amount of fear around in the early days, for our officers as well as the businesses. It was a complete unknown and businesses responded really well.

We would like to think, and we hope that we played our part in assisting them to be able to comply with the legislation and so reduce the transmission rates or keep the transmission rates in Sefton as low as possible from that source. We had to work with a lot of different partners in COVID and I think everybody learned very quickly that this was everybody's problem and that the best way to tackle it was for everybody to work together and pull in the same direction. So we worked with the likes of, in the local authority, our colleagues in public health; our colleagues in the

economic regeneration services; and then wider, we dealt with Public Health England on a regular basis and obviously the business community themselves and their trade groups. The help that we got from them was incredible.

I'd like to think we always had a reasonably good relationship with businesses but I think now there's been an increased trust that has developed, whereby it carries over into the other areas of our work that because we have proved ourselves to them, we have tried to help them through this situation, they are more than happy to work with us in the other areas of our work, such as food safety [and] health and safety in work, and realise how important that is for their business as usual.

[07:49] Neil Moore,  
Headteacher at Stanley  
High School.

I think the key message really for everybody working in education was really to make sure that we were keeping families safe, we were keeping children safe, and we were looking after our staff in schools.

Certainly, I think school closures presented some unique challenges straight away with moving onto online learning that remove education, providing that pastoral support for students particularly for vulnerable families and free school meal students when schools closed and then really looking at reopening schools and how we could do that in a safe climate to make sure that staff and students, and particularly the wider community felt safe.

One of the real benefits that came out of the pandemic certainly from a school's perspective was that collaboration and support that we had not only with other head teachers, with other senior leader from right across the school body within sefton, but particularly with public health and sefton council.

[08:44] Margaret Jones,  
Director of Public  
Health at Sefton  
Council

I think people tried to do the right thing and we might not have got it right all the time, but people did try to do the right thing. That was really important.

[08:51] Dr Niall  
Leonard, GP and  
Clinical Advisor

Local authority do know their populations well. They know them when they are well in health and when they are ill.

[09:00] Ann Irvine,  
Senior Infection and  
Prevention Control  
Nurse at Merseycare

I think there's lots of lessons to be learnt from this experience. We have never been in this situation before and if this situation was to ever arise again, I think we have got robust processes in place now that would support us to manage this if this occurred in the future.

[09:20] Margaret Jones,  
Director of Public  
Health Sefton Council

There have been lots of really good examples of partnership working, of people coming together and helping each other and I would hope that we can build on that going forward.

[09:32] Alena Petrie,  
Manager at Cambridge  
Court Care Home

In my experience, if you can survive COVID as a manager with your team and your families, I think you can survive just about anything.

[09:44] Margaret Jones,  
Director of Public  
Health Sefton Council

We will need to work together and support people as we recover from the pandemic and as we go forward. We need to think about some of those what we often call the 'wider determinants of health' and how we build resilience to cope with problems like a pandemic.