



Medway Healthy Weight Network

Newsletter - Spring 2024

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Healthy Weight Network. It has been a little while since our last newsletter, but we have lots to share that has been happening and some great things to look forward to over the summer.

Annual Healthy Weight Summit, February 2024

We were delighted to see a record number of you join the annual summit. Over 90 people joined from across the public, voluntary, private and healthcare sectors along with our guest speaker professor Paul Gately from Leeds Beckett University.

Updates from the 3 sub-groups which consist of the Medway Food Partnership, Infant Feeding Strategy Group and the Medway Physical Activity Alliance, were shared outlining progress and calls for feedback on how to continue success into 2024.

Each year we send an evaluation form following our summit, below are some of the key elements that were shared:

- Encourage all in Medway to Increase their fruit and vegetable intake and reduce consumption of foods high in fat, salt and sugar
- To increase partnership working and recognise its importance and the impact it is already having across communities
- Healthy eating promotional material that includes oral health benefits into food choices

Advertising and Sponsorship policy changes



We are delighted to share that Medway Council have agreed changes to their advertising and sponsorship policy to restrict the advertising of foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS). Medway joins 15 other local authorities in the UK who have already made policy changes.

But what does this actually mean?

For Medway it will mean that all future contracts to advertise on council owned advertising space, for example bus shelters, roundabouts, reverse of parking tickets will need to meet a certain criteria. This is a simple process called the nutrient profiling (NP) model which many of our well know fast food and confectionary brands have been following for some years. The model was developed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in 2004-2005 as a tool to help Ofcom differentiate foods, and improve the balance of television advertising to children. This same model is now being applied across adverting spaces and in our case here in Medway, sponsorship of any council events. To learn more about the NP follow this link [Nutrient Profile Model \(NP\)](#). Going forward we would like businesses who both advertise or own advertising space across Medway to make the same changes and join us in our aim to normalise healthier food choices across Medway.



To support the development of the Medway Food Strategy, residents came together to discuss the future of food and nature in Medway. On the 18th of May 2024, Medway residents gathered at the University of Greenwich Medway campus to discuss and explore the food challenges that Medway residents experience, and developed some ideas of what our desired food futures might look like.



It was a fun and participatory programme; including a few short talks by inspiring speakers on potential food futures, feedback from community engagement activities and a food-related performance. A delicious sustainable lunch and refreshments were provided for everyone to enjoy.

This community learning event was one part of a set of 'Let's Talk About Food and Nature in Medway' activities including an online survey, artist-led food engagements, community food photography and a stakeholder workshop.

The survey is open until the end of May. Please help us by sharing this with your contacts and communities by using this link in emails and across social media [Lets talk about Food and Nature in Medway survey](#)

In other Medway Food Partnership news, the revised healthy vending guidance is now available. If you have vending in your setting, or work with a partner who does, and would like a copy of the guidance which encourages swaps to make vending healthier, please email foodpartnership@medway.gov.uk





Medway Physical Activity Alliance



Alliance members came together on 2nd May for a networking event hosted by Holcombe Hockey Club. The event saw over 80 members attend the event which had a focus on time to network with each other. There were some general physical activity updates as well as introductions from two of our members. In addition to regular correspondence the alliance now has a Facebook page where information between members can be shared. To join follow this link [Alliance Facebook group](#).

This month saw the return of the free Tai Chi sessions in Gillingham Park. Please do share these sessions with your contacts.

Stu is delivering 4 outdoor sessions in Gillingham Park:

Sunday 19th May 10am
Sunday 16th June 10am
Sunday 7th July 10am
Sunday 11th August 10am

For more details visit
<https://www.everydayactivekent.org.uk/activities/tai-chi-movements-for-wellbeing/>



MedwayGo



This Easter, MedwayGo provided activities to 1,882 children. these children attended 4,197 activities across four days of provision. 23 MedwayGo providers ran a variety of activities for these children, including swimming lessons, racquet sports, theatre workshops, soft play sessions, outdoor pursuits and more. Out of the 23 providers, 4 delivered SEND specific sessions.

During this programme we rolled out an oral health pilot. Four of our providers included oral promotion and activities in their provision. They also gave out toothbrushes to all children and documented how many children were cleaning their teeth at home on a daily basis. This pilot proved to be a success. Providers shared that children were engaged and interested in learning about oral health. This saw an increase in the number of children cleaning their teeth throughout the Easter holidays. Due to its success, this initiative will be rolled out for the summer to all providers.

The next MedwayGo programme will run during the summer holidays, from Monday 29th July to Friday 23rd August. There will be 4 weeks of varied activities for eligible children, aged 5 – 16 years. Families can view and book activities from Monday 1st July.

MedwayGo will also be hosting another Family Fun Day on Tuesday 23rd July. It will be a day of fun activities for Medway families, whilst learning more about MedwayGo, meeting providers who will be running activities in the summer. Bookings can be made on the day. The event details will be released on the [MedwayGo Facebook page](#).

Infant Feeding Strategy Group

Goal 1 – Provide parents with the best possible care to build close and loving relationships with their baby and to feed their baby in ways which will support optimum health and development

Goal 2 – Fully understand the target audience and how we can best encourage breastfeeding and responsive feeding in Medway

Goal 3 – Widely promote the benefits of breastfeeding, responsive feeding, introducing solid foods at six months and Healthy Start

Goal 4 – Ensure all residents and professionals know what in person and online infant feeding support services are available in Medway

Goal 5 – Normalise and promote the benefits of breastfeeding to children, young people, grandparents and the wider support group around the infant and mother

Goal 6 – Recruit more multi-sector partners to support the infant feeding agenda

The Medway Infant Feeding strategy group met this month. The group consists of colleagues and health professionals from Medway hospital maternity services, Medway Community Healthcare, council and Public Health colleagues. The groups work continues across the 6 goals of the strategy. These goals work towards providing a positive experience and high standard of care that families receive through pregnancy and beyond.

This meeting was perfectly timed with the release of the new family hubs app. For more information please visit <https://www.medwayfamilyhub.co.uk#>

Beside You are gearing up for a summer of events with a teddy bears' picnic in collaboration with Jasper's Cafe in Rochester, and fortnightly social breastfeeding drop-ins run by peer supporters already taking place. To keep up-to-date with Beside You events, please follow Beside You Medway on Facebook and Instagram.



**TEDDY BEAR'S
PICNIC
and breastfeeding
social
Tuesday 11 June**

Work for us!

Come and join our Medway public health team. We currently have a role as a Project Officer in our Supporting Healthy Weight Team, for more information follow this link to Medway Council jobs page.

[Job Description - Project Officer](#)

To become involved with any of the topics you have read about please email healthyweightnetwork@medway.gov.uk

For more information visit:

[Medway Food Partnership](#)

[Medway Physical Activity Alliance](#)

