Further to your Information request FOI66815 please find your questions and our responses below:

1. As part of your responsibility to deliver a local health and wellbeing strategy, can you tell us whether you have a programme to address vitamin D deficiency and raise awareness amongst groups at higher risk and those who care for them in the case of infants and young children under 5 years?

If Yes:
• What is your approach to increase the availability and uptake of vitamin D supplements and improve awareness of the importance of vitamin D amongst at-risk groups and those who care for them in the case of infants and young children under 5 years?
• Which health and social care professionals are responsible for implementing vitamin D awareness and at-risk prevention programme?

2. Guidance was issued by the four UK Chief Medical Officers in February 2012 recommending:

“All infants and young children aged 6 months to 5 years should take a daily supplement containing vitamin D in the form of vitamin drops, to help them meet the requirement set for this age group of 7-8.5 micrograms of vitamin D per day. However, those infants who are fed infant formula will not need vitamin drops until they are receiving less than 500ml of infant formula a day, as these products are fortified with vitamin D. Breastfed infants may need to receive drops containing vitamin D from one month of age if their mother has not taken vitamin supplements throughout pregnancy.”

Are you aware of this advice and have you acted upon the CMO recommendation?

Please answer: Yes/No

If Yes:
• Based on the above CMO advice, what have you done to ensure vitamin D supplements are widely available for all at-risk groups including infants and children under 5 years?
• What plans do you have in place to ensure health and social care professionals in contact with at-risk groups including infants and children under 5 years are made aware of the following:
  a) local policies and procedures in relation to vitamin D
  b) local sources of vitamin D supplements
  c) local sources of Healthy Start supplements
  d) Are you monitoring uptake of Healthy Start supplements?
Please answer Yes/No

If Yes:
• What is the uptake of free vitamin D supplements for infants and children who are eligible for the Government’s Healthy Start scheme?

If No:
• What future plans do you have to monitor uptake of vitamin D supplements?

3. Do you currently conduct a vitamin D awareness programme?

Please answer Yes/No

If Yes:
• What plans do you have in place to ensure messages and information about the importance of vitamin D for good health, are disseminated locally to groups at higher risk, and those who care for them in the case of infants and young children under 5 years? This includes addressing any misconceptions parents may have about the risk of vitamin D insufficiency among infants and children and sources of vitamin D in the UK (from safe sun exposure, supplements and limited dietary sources)

If No:
• What are the barriers to implementing your local vitamin D awareness programme e.g. budget/knowledge of at-risk groups and solutions/other public health priorities/health and social care professionals’ training, other (please state)?

4. Are you aware of the draft guidance published by NICE in May 2014: Vitamin D: Implementation of Existing Guidance to Prevent Deficiency?

Please answer Yes/No

Response

1. Yes. Free access to vitamin drops for at risk children in Slough, RBWM and Bracknell Forest was first established in 2009. We have operated a free collection programme for Vitamin D drops since then. We have targeted ‘at risk’ mothers antenatally and their children. The pathways for this programme have recently been reviewed and all GPs and practice nurses trained in their use.

The antenatal pathway starts with recommendations from midwives for all at risk groups and they are encouraged to collect drops from local childrens centres. The drops
are ordered through the HV service. If newcomers move into the area they are also identified and recommended to register with CCs and collect from these sources.

This is over and above the work the health visitors and childrens centres do to promote the Healthy Start programme.

2. This is in accordance with the CMO’s advice and all uptake is reported back annually via the health visiting service. There are separate pathways for children and for adults.

3. Yes. The vitamin D awareness ‘campaign’ is integrated into all new birth advice and all GPs promote the programme.

4. Yes fully aware of the NICE guidance.

If you are unhappy with the information we have provided in response to your request please write to:

Information Management Team Manager
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Town Hall, St Ives Road
Maidenhead
SL6 1RF

or send an e-mail to martin.tubbs@rbwm.gov.uk

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We are keen to hear about your experience with the Information Management Team here at the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and look forward to receiving any comments you have about the way your information request was processed.

Please send any feedback to the Information Management Team Manager either by e-mail martin.tubbs@rbwm.gov.uk or in writing to the address above.

Yours sincerely

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