

HEALTHY START



Healthy Start vitamins distribution case study June 2010

Devon PCT

Who can get Healthy Start vitamins in your area?

They are available to beneficiaries on the scheme at the moment.

We don't have funding to make them available to women and children not on the scheme at no cost and we felt it would be difficult for us to develop an appropriate procedure for handling and monitoring small amounts of money if we went down the route of selling the vitamins.

Where are they available?

All 43 Children Centre's across Devon provide distribution of vitamins.

Who orders the vitamins?

Children's centre's order through NHS locality bases who in turn order through supply chain.

What was the main driver for getting your distribution organised?

The South West was an early implementation site for the HS scheme and we feel quite engaged with the scheme – although the vitamins have been a massive challenge.

Who coordinates the distribution of the vitamins in your area?

The public health lead manages the overall programme along with finance support. A procedure underpins the programme that runs across Devon County Council for children centres and ourselves.

Are you collecting the green vitamin coupon? How are you handling monitoring what vitamins are distributed?

We have a monitoring form that provides an audit trail.

Did you train staff and others who are giving out the vitamins?

We developed an implementation programme that was supported by our community dietician.

A child nutrition update was delivered for public health nurse teams and children's centre staff. This was given as a multi-agency training two hour workshop by Community Practice Teachers. At the end of training children's centre's were provided with a locked box and start up vitamins (both women's and children) and paperwork along with a copy of the procedure.

In light of your experience what do you feel has worked particularly well?

Engaging Children's Centre's as the key distribution point has been really good – until we had this set up we had no consistent distribution.

Ensuring that Healthy Start sits with public health rather than health visiting has worked well for us.

What has been a challenge?

Managing supplies from NHS supply chain and ensuring there is sufficient shelf life.

When new staff start at the children's centres we have had to repeat the training. Encouraging children's centres to see this as a positive addition to their offer to young families can sometimes be a challenge

What are your next steps?

We are going to evaluate the programme to see how effective distribution has been.

