

HEALTHY  
START



## **Healthy Start Vitamins Distribution Case Study September 2011**

### **NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde**

#### **Who can get Healthy Start Vitamins in your area?**

These are available to beneficiaries who are on the scheme and also to asylum seekers from at risk groups, including those with darker skin (as in many cases their levels of vitamin D are extremely low due to the lack of sunlight in this country) . These vitamins are also available to be purchased.

#### **Where are they available?**

There are 52 Community Pharmacies throughout GG&C providing these vitamins.

#### **Who orders the Vitamins?**

Community Pharmacies order them through Public Health Pharmacy who, in turn, order them from the TPS Healthcare Group.

#### **What was the main driver for getting your distribution organised?**

GG&C were one of the first areas to implement the HS scheme in Scotland and introduced this in January 2010. We are fully engaged with the scheme and overall this has been a very straightforward process.

#### **Who co-ordinates the distribution of the vitamins in your area?**

Public Health Pharmacy manages the overall programme. A procedure underpins the programme that runs across the entire GG&C.

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

We have a monitoring form that every participating pharmacy completes and returns on a monthly basis. The pharmacies collect and return the green vitamin coupons.

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

We developed a training programme for all participating pharmacies. This was delivered to every pharmacy as and when they joined the programme. At the end of the training, initial stocks of the vitamins were left together with the necessary paperwork and a copy of the procedure manual.

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

Engaging Community Pharmacies as the sole distribution points has worked really well for the day to day distribution. We have also selected specific centres used solely by asylum seekers, to promote the uptake of Healthy Start vitamins. When stock of the drops in the pharmacies has three months left before expiry, it is collected and distributed through these centres to those in most need and this too has been successful.

### **What has been a challenge?**

Managing supplies from NHS supply chain and ensuring that there are sufficient stocks within every Pharmacy to deal with the demand.

We have the advantage that we are well and truly into the second year of distribution and have been able to tweak our procedures to ensure a smoother operation. However, it must be stressed that there was never any great challenge in the first year as we took a simplistic approach from day one.

### **What are your next steps?**

Now that we have established that the Community Pharmacies are very effective distribution centres, we can now look into the possibilities of broadening our horizons and looking at other potential distribution points.