

HEALTHY START



Healthy Start vitamins distribution case study August 2011

Luton

Who can get Healthy Start vitamins in your area?

First pack of Healthy Start vitamins free to every pregnant woman at booking visit.

All other Healthy Start vitamins offered as per the scheme in return for a qualifying coupon or purchased to those not on the scheme.

Where are they available?

23 Children's Centres & 3 Health Centres.

What was the driver for increasing uptake?

Public Health concerns at poor uptake across our population coupled with poor local knowledge of the benefits associated with the use of Healthy Start vitamins.

How is Healthy Start organised in your PCT?

Healthy Start work is driven by Public Health. There is no team, however, Healthy Start vitamins are supplied to Children's Centres by the PCT. Children's Centres complete a return each month detailing vitamins distributed. On receipt of the return the PCT dispatches the number of vitamins distributed to the Children's Centre ensuring that they are able to maintain a small stock level. This work has the support of senior management and the Director of Public Health.

How is vitamin distribution embedded into local delivery plans?

Vitamin Distribution has been developed to locate the service in the heart of the community, in locations that families will naturally frequent. We have specifically avoided locating the service in premises traditionally associated with ill health choosing instead to maintain a health promotion/normal activities of living focus.

How have you trained staff and others who are giving out the vitamins?

All client facing staff in each children's centre have been trained to deliver the scheme. This included:

- An explanation of the scheme & its benefits.
- Helping people to apply for the scheme
- Who can sign the application form.
- Where people can redeem their vouchers and coupons.
- The benefits of Vitamin D.

Training was offered in each of the children's centres and took approximately 30 minutes in each location.

What has been a challenge?

The scheme appears to be working well. The challenge is making sure each centre submits its monthly return on time. This is submitted on the 1st of every month and submission on time ensures that the courier will deliver a new stock of vitamins to each centre on the 2nd week of every month.

Do you have any issues with selling the vitamins?

No administrative issues of note. We issued each children's centre with a PCT Bank Paying in book enabling them to bank any monies taken in exchange for vitamins.

What advice would you give other PCTs?

Establish the simplest process possible. Children's Centres were keen to engage with this work once they knew that we had kept administration to a minimum.

