

Briefing Note

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Health & Wellbeing Strategies



Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) analyse the current and future health needs of local communities. Health & Wellbeing Boards will be responsible for leading the preparation of JSNAs and ensuring they are used to shape the design and delivery of local health wellbeing and social services. They are a shared resource for all service providers in local areas including voluntary and community organisations. JSNAs will provide the evidence base for Health & Wellbeing Strategies that set out the long term, strategic plan for an area.

Introduction

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) are not new. The NHS and local authorities have had a legal requirement to prepare and update their assessments since April 2008. The coalition government has signalled an on-going and central role for JSNAs in the NHS White Paper, *'Equity and excellence: liberating the NHS'*. Health and wellbeing boards, convened by local authorities, will be responsible for leading the JSNA process. The Health and Social Care Bill 2011 sets out a key role for JSNAs, enabling partners to come together to jointly analyse the current and future health needs of their local communities. It will ensure that agencies working in an area to reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing have a single reliable source of information.

What is a JSNA?

The JSNA process is concerned with assessment of current and future needs and with influencing commissioning decisions:

- In the medium-term (3 to 5 years ahead)
- In the long-term (5-10 years ahead & beyond)

It provides an opportunity to direct and support change that needs to happen in services that would:

- make them more responsive to local people
- help to reduce inequalities
- improve engagement with marginal groups
- promote more outcomes-focussed services

A successful JSNA will:

- achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes, reduce health inequalities and lead to improve health and social care provision;
- assess the needs of local population, including all factors of health and wellbeing;
- produce a comprehensive map of local service provision;
- inform Health & Wellbeing Boards and Clinical Commission Groups' plans and decisions;
- provide an evidence base to ensure funding is directed to areas of greatest need.

Voluntary & Community Sector contribution to JSNAs?

A major element of the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is consultation with the local community. The voluntary & community sector can bring a wide range of skills and knowledge to the process including:

- Data and information about service user needs
- Understanding of complex needs and conditions
- Engage people that lack visibility
- Knowledge about local services and gaps
- Map local provision and inform future service planning
- Evidence on the cost effective interventions and advise on quality
- Leaders in providing person centred care.

Why engage with JSNA?

Taking the time to engage with the development of your local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment can have a wide range of benefits for community and voluntary organisations including:

- Increased awareness of the needs of your users and inclusion of their voice in planning process
- Improved integration with commissioners and partnership working to establish commissioning strategies and priorities
- Greater understanding of local market and projections in demand for services
- Opportunities to identify gaps in provision and develop new and innovative services

How to engage with JSNA – top tips!

- Find out who locally is leading the JSNA process and ask how they are engaging VCS providers.
- Develop links with existing local networks.
- Be prepared to demonstrate how your group or organisation can contribute to the JSNA and how your service impacts on local outcomes.
- Make sure your evidence is clear --- how will you quantify value and outcomes?

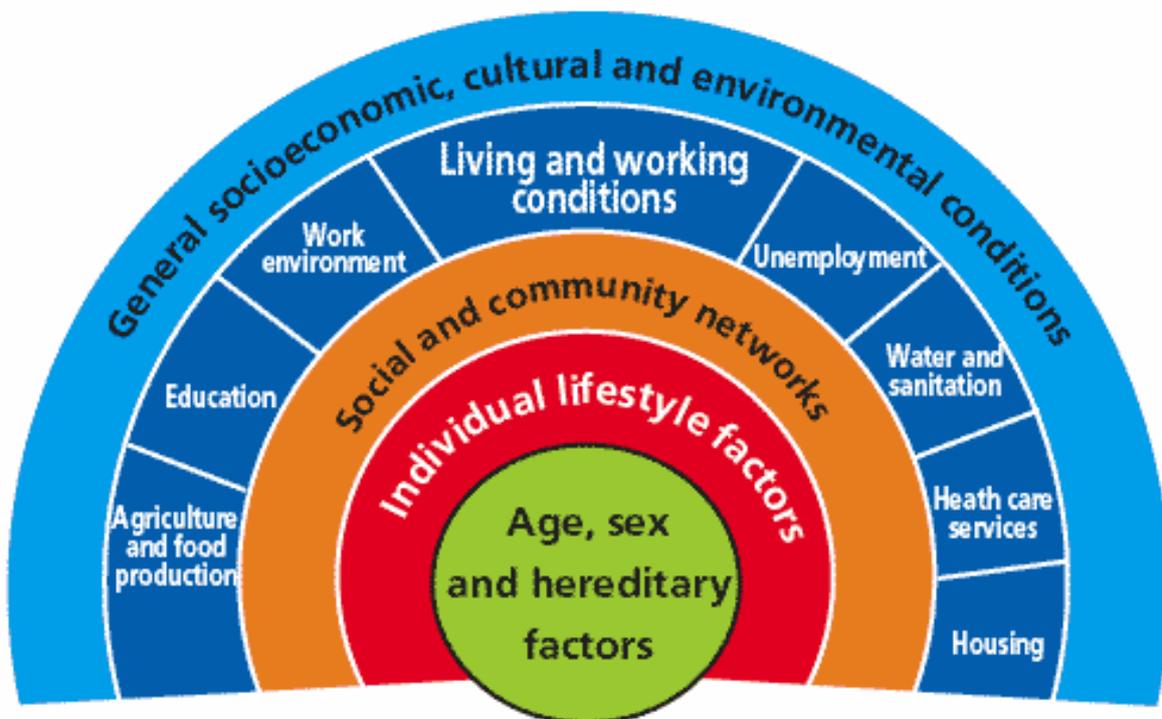
Health & Wellbeing Strategies

It's important to remember that Joint Strategic Needs Assessments don't provide an action plan or a policy framework to reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing – this is the role of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. Local areas will be developing Health & Wellbeing Strategies in Summer 2012 to inform commissioning arrangements from 2013.

Health & Wellbeing Strategies will draw on the work of Prof. Sir Michael Marmot, who in his report, Fair Society, Healthy Lives, emphasised the wider determinants of health.

The Marmot Principles

- Give every child the best start in life
- Enable people to maximise their capabilities
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop healthy communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of prevention



Further Information:

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: A springboard for action](#), Local Government Group (April 2011).

[Regional Voices](#), the national network of regional third sector organisations, has prepared briefings on a range of Health & Social Care Policy. You can view these on their website.

[Voluntary Organisations Disability Group](#), the national umbrella group of voluntary sector providers of social care services for adults with disabilities, has a range of JSNA information, tools and good practice on its website.

Local Voluntary Development Agencies or Council for Voluntary Services – many local third sector organisations are engaged in the preparation of local JSNAs. Contact your local organisation to find out more.

Local Authority Websites – each local authority has information on its progress in preparing its JSNA available on its website.

Links to COVER briefings:

COVER has produced a range of Health & Social Care, these include:

- [Health & Wellbeing Boards](#) (October 2011)
- [HealthWatch Transition Plan](#) (May 2011)

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