**Public Health AHP session questions (10/10/24)**

1. Are community link workers part of the strategy for secondary prevention in NHS Lothian? (Kirstin Unger)

Community Link workers are a valuable resource for patients, staff and communities. Particularly, in supporting patients with non-clinical issues that impact health and wellbeing and in supporting the prevention effort. Much of the detail of how we embed prevention activity in health and care services and pathways has still to be worked up so it’s a little early to be explicit about the role of Community Link workers in the overall strategic plan.

1. This is maybe beyond your scope but I think as a society food companies need to have proper labelling where the ingredients are legible (writing so small you cant read it) and that they are unable to lie to us, like saying something is sugar free when its got sweeteners etc (Claire Wakefield)
   * Comment from Laurie Eyles on this which you might want to respond to if any relevant infor:

“Do you think that food labelling would make a difference to purchase and consumption for those that would most benefit?  I worry that numerical literacy and understanding in general is not matched to the detail on food packaging.  I am not sure how much of an impact this would actually have.”

There are legal requirements for providing food information to consumers that food businesses must follow. It is important that consumers can make informed choices when it comes to food, and we need to ensure this information is clear and easy to understand. However, the nutritional content of food is only part of the decision-making process for individuals, and price, promotions, marketing, food knowledge and skills, and individual preference all come into play. We need to make sure we are acting at all levels, including restrictions on promotions and advertising of foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt.

1. How does Ashley see documents like Good Food Nation supporting us with prevention strategies? (Tara Hargreaves)

I think the Good Food Nation Act, and subsequent preparation of local food plans, presents a good opportunity to improve our food environment and diet-related health and wellbeing outcomes. Notwithstanding the direct impact this may have on the affordability, availability and accessibility of healthy food, it will also support activity on the wider determinants of health including climate sustainability and local economic growth.

1. Primary prevention and structural interventions rely on communication with the population; inclusive communication is acknowledged but often not invested in - do you have any ideas on how to change this? (Lucie McAnespie)

I agree that clear, inclusive and easy to understand communication with local populations and communities is vital, and a communications strategy should be a routine part of service and programme delivery. In addition, I think we could well do better on patient engagement and participation. It is so important that the voices of our patients and communities are listened to and heard, and that people are supported to be part of decision-making about their care, and that they can help shape how we deliver our services. People are experts in their own lives.