Editorial

What Can Health and Wellbeing Boards Do For Us?

Paul Thomas

General Practitioner, London, UK

Laura Nasir

Tutor, Florence Nightingale School of Nursing & Midwifery, King's College London, UK

The relaunch of *London Journal of Primary Care (LJPC)* with a new website continues the theme of integration and collaboration in community settings. The argument for local integration is well-rehearsed – quality elderly care cannot be provided unless there is interagency teamworking in community settings; addressing intractable problems like addiction, child abuse and family breakdown requires joint working and innovation in community settings; chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer require shared care between specialists and generalists in community settings.

The question is, HOW do we do it? This issue of *LJPC* explores this question, starting with five papers that describe the infrastructure needed.

Colin-Thomé and Fisher explain that policy must be bold:

If Health and Wellbeing Boards are to make a real and lasting impact on the health and resilience of the populations they serve, they must revitalise the principles of community-oriented primary care.

Chandok *et al* remind us that communities for health require trusted relationships:

One important ingredient of trust-building is the size of area in which activity happens. 50 000 population – 10–20 general practices – is small enough to feel you belong and large enough to have political clout.

Unadkat *et al* describe a model of shared care for long-term conditions (diabetes):

... team-working across disciplinary and organisational boundaries that avoids duplication, synchronises efforts, quickly accesses specialist knowledge and helps patients to help themselves.

Dhillon and Godfrey describe ways that routinely gathered data can evaluate complex community-embedded interventions:

Feedback of data needs to be regular to see overall trends, and used as 'food for thought' rather than claiming a higher 'proof'.

Stange and Gullett compare multi-agency working with high-quality cooking:

... the secret is to taste it.

LJPC invites you to continue this theme through online discussion and case studies of integrated care. In particular we want to explore:

- what the role of primary care is in the 21st century
- what infrastructure it needs to be effective.

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Paul Thomas

Email: Paul.thomas7@nhs.net