

Impact of Cost of Living Pressures on Residents' Health and Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing Board

19th January 2023

What is the relationship between money and health?

Research has shown that increased income equals better health. The latest data on health inequalities shows that is the same for Barnet. Theories as to why are varied.

Explanations include:

- **materialist arguments:** for example, money buys health-promoting goods and the ability to engage in a social life in ways that enable people to be healthy, or can improve the quality of housing;
- **psychosocial mechanisms:** for example, the stress of not having enough money and/or insecure housing may affect health;
- **behavioural factors:** people living in disadvantaged circumstances may be more likely to have unhealthy behaviours;
- **being in poor health may affect education and employment opportunities in ways that affect subsequent health.**

Source: HOW DOES MONEY INFLUENCE HEALTH?, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, March 2014

A wide range of measures are being introduced to support residents and employees financially

Maximising income and reducing costs

- Residents Support Fund created, with a budget of £2m
- Investment in systems to highlight financial vulnerability, so signpost residents who are experiencing financial vulnerabilities to local and central benefits and fund support scheme
- Additional salary increase for LBB employees on lowest grades
- Council Tax 1% rebate to residents
- BACE Holiday scheme providing free activities and food for children who are on Free School Meals

Advice and Support

- Investment in two additional outreach workers in partnership between BOOST and CAB
- Digital Inclusion initiatives to connect digitally excluded people
- Streamlined application processes for grants and benefits
- Advice hubs and signposting by NHS trusts for staff and patients

Strengthening the VCFS

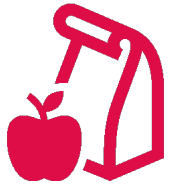
- Additional money put into the Community Response Fund to take it to £0.3m, which is available for Barnet VCFS groups to bid towards developing initiatives to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis.
- Community Innovation Fund Round 3 – Cost of Living built into the desired outcomes for projects
- Communication through Barnet Together Alliance

However, there are specific health impacts that we are also helping to reduce



COLD HOMES WORSENING HEALTH

- Increase or worsening of Cardiovascular Disease
- Increase in/exacerbation of Respiratory Disease



WORSENING DIET AS A RESULT OF FOOD INSECURITY

- Worse dietary outcomes (incl dietary related disease)



WORSENING MENTAL HEALTH

- Increase / exacerbation of common mental health conditions
- Increase in self harm and suicide attempts



WORSENING OR PREVENTABLE AND TREATABLE PHYSICAL ILL HEALTH

- People not booking/keeping health appointments
- People not accessing co-payment/private services
- People not taking prescribed medications

Worsening health conditions

ACTION ON: Cold homes worsening health

Warm Spaces

29 Warm Spaces open in Barnet, which offer a warm space, as well as sometimes refreshments and activities



Advice and Signposting

Online and in person advice and signposting on keeping warm, including financial support for energy bills

www.barnet.gov.uk/winterwell

Mayor of London Warmer Home Grants

London wide scheme offering grants between £5,000 - £25,000 for low income households

[Warmer Homes | London City Hall](#)



ACTION ON: Healthy and Nutritious Food

Barnet Food Plan, led by the Barnet Food Partnership

Raising awareness of, and destigmatising, food banks, to ensure people know how to get emergency food if needed

Signposting to low budget/low energy healthy and nutritious recipes

10,709 beneficiaries of Barnet foodbanks in September 2022 (62.5% adults, 37.5% children, not unique users)

Final version of Food Plan is in at the Board today for sign off



Supporting Childhood Nutrition

Promotion of Healthy Start vouchers

Working with schools and settings on Healthy Early Years and supporting Healthy Food Options in Schools (linking to BACE programme)

ACTION ON: Mental Health Impact from Rising Costs



Mental Health and Wellbeing

A wide range of resources are available for Barnet children and adults - www.barnet.gov.uk/stayconnected:

- [Home – Kooth](#)
- [Help yourself and others – Thrive \(thrivedn.co.uk\)](#)
- [AndysManClub](#)
- [Stay Alive App](#)
- [Resilient Schools Programme](#)
- [Digital mental health and wellbeing support for Londoners | Good Thinking \(good-thinking.uk\)](#)
- [Barnet Mental Health Campaign Toolkit](#)

The Challenge is to match up people and the support

The challenge is two fold – ensuring that people are aware of the support, and that is clear and easy to access

UNIVERSAL CAMPAIGN

Information in Barnet First e-newsletter, Together newsletter, social media, Barnet First magazine (November edition)

Street advertising of Mental Health campaign

Information in health settings such as Pharmacies, GPs and hospitals

TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS

Families – Early Years settings, Children’s Centres and Schools identifying households with children who would be eligible for support

Work with voluntary community sector and partners especially mental health VCS orgs/community groups, food bank managers, libraries, and Barnet Health Champions to share and communicate



Cost of Living Support
in Barnet

The rising cost of living is affecting many people in the London borough of Barnet. If residents who may be feeling the financial pressures of these rises Barnet Council and organisations are here to provide guidance on the financial support available to you.

ACCESS OUR ONLINE COST OF LIVING PAGE

What support is available?

- Finances and housing
- Employment services
- Children and adult social care
- Mental health and wellbeing

You'll find information on:

There are also number of other support services available to residents, including food and meal support, debt management, care services and more.

www.barnet.gov.uk/costofliving

If you would like to talk to someone about these services, please call us on 0208 359 2000

SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT EMPLOYMENT AND BENEFIT ADVICE

BOOST Boost provides personalised benefit advice, skills and employment services to Barnet residents.

This support includes a team committed to helping residents get back on their feet, and includes services such as CV writing, interview workshops, and weekly updates on new jobs and apprenticeship opportunities.

To learn more visit www.boostbarnet.org

Or call us on **0208 359 2442**

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH