

ROLE PROFILE

**Job Title:** Senior Health Promotion Officer

(ORAL HEALTH)

**Band:** 7

**Hours:** 22.5

**Accountable To:** Health Improvement Lead (SL HSCP)

**Responsible To:** Senior Health Improvement Manager (SL HSCP)

**Base:** Law House, Carluke

**Background**

The World Health Organisation recognises that “The interrelationship between oral and general health is proven by evidence.” Regardless of age, the impact of a healthy mouth on general health is significant. In children it can mean the difference between regular attendance at school or not. For some people poor oral health can affect their ability to eat, speak and socialise.

The Oral Health Improvement Plan (OHIP), published in 2019 recognises that there needs to be a focus on prevention given that most oral health disease is preventable and that improvements in oral health cannot be achieved solely by providing dental services. It highlights that is important to tackle the broader issues which impact on poor oral health such as diet, smoking and alcohol intake - factors which significantly contribute to an individual’s oral health.

The OHIP highlights a continuing need to find innovative ways to tackle oral health inequalities in Scotland, recognising the need to enable people to have more health promoting behaviours. Despite the success of the Childsmile programme in improving the oral health of young children, it remains challenging to achieve good oral health in some of our most deprived communities. In addition, the Covid 19 Pandemic has significantly disrupted oral heath prevention programmes as well as reducing access to dental services. This will have a negative impact in terms of widening oral health inequality and reducing good oral health outcomes.

**Oral health improvement in Lanarkshire**

The Oral Health Improvement Programme in Lanarkshire (OHIPL) consists of a variety of community based projects, public awareness campaigns & educational programmes. The programme contributes to & forms part of the wider public health function provided by the Public Dental Service. The OHIPL is also overseen by the Consultant in Public Dental Health.

The overall aim is to improve the oral health of individuals and their families, through prevention and awareness raising initiatives, particularly targeting those living in areas of deprivation. The OHIP objectives are:

**Prevention**

* Increase awareness of the detrimental effects that alcohol, tobacco, and a diet high in sugar, can have on oral health.
* Promotion of mouth self-examination to improve mouth cancer survival rates.

**Reducing Oral Health Inequalities**

* Target areas of deprivation to make sure that everyone, no matter where they live, can have the best oral health.
* Support third sector organisations with funding and partnership work on oral health improvement programmes.

**Improving Information for Patients**

* Provision of clear advice for people on dental treatments available, the location of general dental practices and benefits advice in relation to dental treatment.

**Meeting the Needs of an Ageing Population**

* Overall promote positive ageing and increase awareness of good oral health in later life, regardless if you have natural teeth or dentures.

Health Improvement staff are critical to the delivery of the six public health priorities (PHPs) for Scotland which aim to improve population health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. The programme is supported by oral health champions from the health improvement department and Third Sector staff who facilitate projects funded by oral health monies and the Oral Health Community Fund. The OHIP therefore contributes mainly to PH6 (Nutrition & Oral House) but because of a holistic approach also impacts positively on PH 2 (Early Years), PH3 (Mental Health) and PH 4 (Tobacco).

**Background to this role**

Prior to COVID-19 the following activities were provided as part of the implementation of the OHIP:

* face to face training;
* project planning meetings;
* OH awareness sessions;
* Facilitation of focus groups;
* Supporting after school activities;
* OH family community based activities;
* Co-facilitation of healthy eating sessions;
* OH awareness events for e.g. in the Family Centre in HMP Shotts
* OH messages implemented into the Healthy Schools web-site for teachers
* Development of OH resources in partnership with young people.

Quantitative and qualitative evaluations for the projects funded within the OHIP are available and show the positive impact on awareness of oral health and impact on individual’s ability to achieve a healthier lifestyle. We know that as a result of interventions people have felt more confident cooking healthier family meals, reducing sugar in their children’s diet & the importance of regular attendance at the dentist.

**Main duties & responsibilities**

* Lead the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of the Oral Health Improvement Programme.
* Provide robust management of the team and the team’s delegated budget.
* Lead on strategic partner collaboration and provide subject expertise and direction in a range of partnership arenas.
* Lead the development and oversee the delivery of oral health training.
* Lead and manage the initiation, planning, development and implementation of community based oral health improvement initiatives.
* Lead on public awareness campaigns for example National Smile Month & Mouth Cancer Action Month etc.
* Identify opportunities within a range of communities and settings to improve oral health and wellbeing.
* Facilitate support for oral health improvement programmes through securing external funding sources.
* Provide oversight and leadership regarding the OH Champions & their work plan.
* Lead the development of communication plans linked to the work programme and manage the development of oral health improvement resources.
* Keep abreast of public health policy and evidence base good practice regarding oral health improvement – translate policy into practice.
* Lead the development of and contribute to the oral health improvement research base.

***Position in the Health Improvement Structure***

**HSCP NL- Chief Officer NHSL Director of Public Health SLHSCP–Chief Officer**

**Head of HI (8C)**

**Health Improvement Lead (HSC NL) 8B Health Improvement Lead (SL HSCP) 8B**

**Senior Health Improvement Manager (8A) Senior Health Improvement Manager (8A)**

**Senior Health Promotion Manager (Oral Health)**

**THIS POST**

**Health Improvement Senior**

**(Oral Health) 0.5 WTE**