

<b>Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board</b>	
Title	End of Life: Conversation with the Public (Update)
Date	7 <sup>th</sup> June 2018
Board Sponsor	Richard Harling
Author	Vicky Rowley & David Sugden
Report type	For Decision

## **Recommendations**

1. The Board is recommended to:
  - a) Consider the update on the Dying Matters public conversation.
  - b) To consider that whether the next scheduled public conversation can focus on digital innovation in relation to health. The intent is for the community dialogue to raise awareness of and contribute to shaping of future digital products to support healthy living.

## **Background**

2. The 2017/18 Director of Public Health Annual Report focused on End of Life told us how little people choose to talk about death and dying. It also told us that only a small proportion of the population has an end of life plan in place at the time of death which can cause a person's end of life experience to be more unpredictable and chaotic.
3. In March 2018, Staffordshire County Council and the Health and Well-being Board launched a public conversation called Dying Matters, Staffordshire. The aim of the campaign has been to facilitate dialogue/discussion with the public about the importance of talking about and planning for our own end of life experiences, and to encourage adults, without advanced long-term conditions, to start talking to someone about dying, death and their own final wishes.

## **Dying Matters update**

4. The public conversation has taken the form of a media campaign, combined with a roadshow of meetings/events, in order to encourage people to open up a conversation about death and dying, whilst also informing them about how they can begin to put plans in place in order to help ensure that they experience both quality of life and quality of death.
5. The idea and content for the campaign was developed last year in line with the original plan to launch the campaign in November 2017. A decision was taken to delay the launch until 2018, during which time commissioners worked with the County Council Communications team in order to develop a new plan. The campaign was launched on 26<sup>th</sup> March and is due to continue until the end of National Dying Matters week on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2018.
6. The core campaign objectives are as follows:
  - At least 20 partner organisations proactively engage in the Staffordshire campaign (either by running events or proactively sharing content in their channels)

- At least 1700 engagements with social media content (likes, comments, shares)
  - Positive media score
  - At least 50% of respondents (either on social media, on site or at events) agree that they intend to discuss with someone their wishes around death and dying
  - At least 35% of respondents (either on social media, on site or at events) confirm that they have discussed with someone their wishes around death and dying (See Appendix 1 around evidence informing these objectives).
7. The campaign approach has been to utilise euphemisms that we use to refer to death and dying, which then act as a conversation starter which people can relate to. These euphemisms have then been created into visual representations and have acted as part of the branding for all communications and promotional resources. Examples are shown in Appendix 2. Importantly, the branding itself has been developed in partnership with leading national charity, Dying Matters, who have allowed Staffordshire to create a local version of their logo and have hosted a Staffordshire specific page on their website at no cost to the authority.
  8. This partnership with Dying Matters has enabled us to capitalise not only on the wealth of valuable content on the national site, but also to gain buy-in with partners across the county to adopt the same branding and drive others to the Staffordshire web pages. The campaign launched with promotional material released across social media channels, to local media outlets and to key stakeholders.
  9. The campaign has begun (See progress in Appendices 3 to 5) and the main push for the campaign is planned for during national Dying Matters Awareness week (14-18 May), when there are events planned across the county. There are currently 26 planned events to raise awareness of the need to discuss death and dying in an open way. We will support the promotion of these events in partnership with communications colleagues in our CCGs.
  10. One specific event planned for Dying Matters Week, organised by the county council, is an online webinar that will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> May, led by Rev David Primrose (Lichfield Diocese). David will be talking people through how to lead a 'Grave Talk' type session, which essentially enables people to talk as a group about death. Giving people the space to talk about their own experiences as well as what their own wishes might be.
  11. The awareness raising media campaign is also being supported by a resource pack for stakeholders to disseminate the campaign within their own organisations. The public health team have been engaging directly with the public and key stakeholders via a schedule linked with events and forums and meetings across the county. This aims to promote the key messages behind the campaign and encourage people to take part.
  12. The primary call to action is to visit [dyingmattersstaffs.org](http://dyingmattersstaffs.org), where they will find a wealth of information around running a dying matters community group as well as advice and guidance on making personal plans around death and dying.

13. The Social media campaign has achieved excellent results in terms of reach and public engagement. Outcomes thus far are summarised in Appendix 6.

#### **Further public conversations**

14. Following the success of linking the End of Life campaign with the theme of the annual DPH report in 2017/18 it is suggested that a similar approach is used in 2018/19. This year the DPH report will focus on the use of digital technologies to support and enhance personal responsibility for health and related areas (such as the integration of health data).

#### **What do you want the Health and Wellbeing Board to do about it?**

15. The Board is asked to consider the theme for the next public conversation as the role of Digital technology in supporting health and healthy lifestyles.

## Appendix 1: Do people talk about plans for death and dying?

- A recent survey in Scotland indicates that nearly three-quarters of people surveyed (74%) had not discussed what their wishes would be if they did not have long to live. 79% of people also didn't have any written plans for their end of life care, financial wishes or funeral plans. (Ipsos MORI)
- The National Survey of Bereaved People identified that just one third of people (34%) had told their loved ones where they wanted to die.

## Appendix 2: Example creative

A4 community posters



Plasma screen (shared with GP surgeries, libraries and children's centres across the county)



## Appendix 3: Example Facebook posts

**Staffordshire**  
Published by Anthony Gale · 3 April at 09:27 · €

We are working with **Dying Matters** to encourage #Staffordshire people to talk openly about death.

People can visit <http://bit.ly/DyingMattersStaffs> to find help and advice on how to discuss and prepare for their end of life. There are also resources for those who wish to host informal group chats in their community where people are encouraged to talk openly about dying and bereavement.

#dyingmattersstaffs



**Dying Matters Staffordshire**  
Why 'pushing up daisies' isn't helpful Few of us are comfortable talking about dying and death. Look at the sheer number of phrases we use to avoid discussing it openly. We 'kick the bucket', 'pop our clogs', 'peg it', 'pass away', we seldom simply 'die'.

Get more likes, comments and shares  
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

2,385 people reached

Pauline Wood, Bev Jocelyn and 3 others · 2 Shares

Like Comment Share

**Performance for your post**

2,385 People Reached

9 Reactions, comments & shares

6 Like	4 On post	2 On shares
1 Love	1 On post	0 On shares
0 Comments	0 On Post	0 On Shares
2 Shares	2 On Post	0 On Shares

46 Post Clicks

0 Photo views	19 Link clicks	27 Other Clicks
---------------	----------------	-----------------

**NEGATIVE FEEDBACK**

3 Hide Post	0 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

**Staffordshire County Council**  
@StaffordshireCC

Exa

It's important to make time to have honest conversations about your end of life wishes while you are still well enough to do so

It can be a difficult conversation to have but help and advice is available at [bit.ly/DyingMattersSt...](http://bit.ly/DyingMattersSt...) @DyingMatters #Staffordshire #dyingmattersstaffs



10:00 AM - 25 Apr 2018

7 Retweets 7 Likes

1 7 7

**Staffordshire**  
Published by Anthony Gale · 24 April at 10:00 · €

Get people in your community talking openly about death, dying and bereavement by hosting community events.

Studies show it's easier to talk openly and honestly about end of life plans when in a group.

You can find loads of help and resources at <http://bit.ly/DyingMattersStaffs> to help get your started.... See more



Get more likes, comments and shares  
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

1,074 people reached

Chris Stanley and Hazel Ball · 1 Share

Like Comment Share

**Performance for your post**

1,074 People Reached

4 Likes, Comments & Shares

3 Likes	2 On Post	1 On Shares
0 Comments	0 On Post	0 On Shares
1 Shares	1 On Post	0 On Shares

10 Post Clicks

4 Photo views	0 Link clicks	6 Other Clicks
---------------	---------------	----------------

**NEGATIVE FEEDBACK**

0 Hide Post	0 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

Add another Tweet

**Lesley Goodburn** @lgoodbu · Apr 25  
Replying to @StaffordshireCC @DyingMatters

Pis don't think of these conversations as difficult because they will be if that's the way you think of them instead have important brave honest or courageous conversations

1

## Appendix 4: Examples of online coverage in hyperlocal news outlets

Lichfield Live: <https://lichfieldlive.co.uk/2018/04/03/campaign-urges-people-in-lichfield-and-burntwood-to-break-the-stigma-surrounding-death/>

A Little Bit of Stone: <https://alittlebitofstone.com/2018/03/26/campaign-urges-speak-openly-and-honestly-about-death-and-dying/>

## Appendix 5: Feedback from events attended so far

“My husband wouldn’t talk about dying and it was horrible. I didn’t know what he wanted. So I’m not doing that. I’ve done my funeral plan and my will, and I’ve told my kids what I want. They didn’t want to hear it – but least they know, so they won’t have to go through what I went through”

“I don’t even want to think about that. I’ll cross that bridge when it comes to it”

“I’ve got all my plans sorted. I’m going to have a natural funeral, buried in a cardboard box, under a tree – going back to nature”

“When my Auntie died I was the executor of the will. It was so difficult as I didn’t know where anything was (paperwork, etc.), as I didn’t live nearby. After it was all sorted I made sure I spoke to my Mum and got everything sorted for her, as I didn’t want to have to go through all that again”



Also, people related well to the images – saying things like “I say that” for kicking the bucket, etc. And talking about the images was a good way to get the conversation started (on an emotive subject). People were really positive about the campaign, saying that it’s such an important subject to talk about. Some were more resistant to talk about it (understandably), but most people were happy to chat. Some had made loads of plans already, but some hadn’t thought about it at all. I did think it would be quite a hard subject to discuss with people – but it went better than I expected. I did have one person ask what I was selling (funeral plans, etc.)!

Other feedback we’ve had is that it’s sometimes the children that don’t want to discuss or even think about their parents dying (even when the parents want to and try to talk to them about it).

## **Appendix 6: Social media campaign outcomes so far**

Overall, the campaign is achieving good levels of engagement with social media content, and plenty of people sharing/retweeting. The feedback on the campaign has been largely positive, with a minority feeling uncomfortable with the topic of discussion as expected. Statistics provided by the Communications Team shows that so far, Facebook activity has reached just under 20,000 people and Twitter has just over 45,000. See Appendix 3 for example Facebook posts and tweets.

On the run up to Dying Matters Awareness Week, the communications team also intend to make a small investment (£500) in paid for posts to increase our reach.

As a result of press releases and media engagement more generally, so far 11 mentions to date have been made, including 4 hits on Radio Stoke where County Councillor Alan White was interviewed. Newspapers that have covered the campaign include the Express and Star, Lichfield Mercury, and most recently the Biddulph Chronicle, with a media score of 58. Some links to online newspaper article are provided within Appendix 4.

Stakeholder communications are a key element of the campaign and this is being done primarily with weekly email updates being sent out to over 800 key stakeholders. These updates inform people about the campaign, where to access useful resources and any events/activities coming up, which people can attend in their local area.