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Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

The What

The promotion of health and wellbeing is at the core of our organisation's culture by treating the person and not the symptom.

Making Every Contact Count is about altering **how we interact with people** through learning **how to recognise opportunities** to talk to people about their wellbeing.

It aims to create an holistic environment where residents feel comfortable and able to address a number of issues other than that which they may have 'presented' with. It also encourages the professional to make connections and ask lateral questions, enabling them to signpost the resident to other services which may help with underlying or other related issues. Remembering that telling people what to do is not the most effective way to help them to change.

Ultimately it helps residents to make positive long-term behaviour change.

Having a good MECC conversation is about:

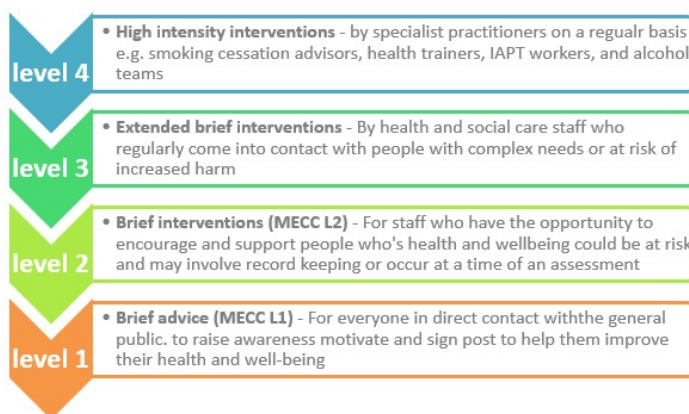
1. **Spotting opportunities** to talk to people about their wellbeing
2. Being able and confident to **start a conversation** about a wellbeing matter
3. Being able and confident to **deal with any issues that arise**
4. Quickly **assessing the motivation** a person has to take action to improve their wellbeing (e.g. taking a small step that will help them)
5. **Providing information** that will help the person decide what they want to do
6. Encouraging people to take actions to **help themselves**
7. **Signposting** to relevant services when required
8. Know about and apply **key MECC messages**

The How

In order to do this it helps if you are confident and able to use brief advice. This means being able to:

- Understand the issues affecting wellbeing
- Know the key behavioural change theories and how to apply them
- Apply skills to engage clients in a good MECC conversation
- Give brief advice, encouraging self-care and signposting to higher level services

How MECC fits into NICE behaviour change guidance



Training

For people to really be able to make a difference and Make Every Contact Count with the people they work with, they need to have the right knowledge and skills. This will help them to make the most of the opportunities and to empower individuals to make changes to their lifestyles.

Basic elements included in the practical and interactive MECC training:

- Underpinning knowledge - How MECC and public health fits into their role and why it is important

- A brief introduction to behaviour change theory and the psychology behind 'nudging'
- A brief overview of healthy lifestyles and wider wellbeing (where appropriate)
- Start conversations using MI micro skills
- Address barriers to change.

Level 1 brief advice training usually lasts for three hours although this can be negotiated depending on staff's prior learning. Alternatively level 2 training for brief interventions is a two day course accredited by RSPH. Contact Fsutton@westminster.gov.uk for more information about free training for your team.

Resources

- [Public Health England](#) contains the most recent documentation including consensus statement, implementation guide and evaluation framework
- [Health Education West Midlands NHS](#) useful site with a range of resources, ideas and case studies
- [Yorkshire and Humber NHS](#) with a number of resources including e-Learning tools

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