

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) – Healthy Chat Training

‘Health is one of the most precious things to us and our families. It is also something we can sometimes take for granted, until we no longer have it.’¹

Health is everybody’s business

Improving health and wellbeing is everybody’s business, but often prioritising our health is last on a long list of things we prioritise. The fact remains, we want to have a better quality and longer length of life, therefore, the adoption of a healthy lifestyle can benefit us as individuals and as a society. For this reason the MECC Healthy Chat training has been developed.

What is MECC?

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) Healthy Chat training is an approach to lifestyle change that uses the millions of day to day conversations that people have with other people to encourage changes in lifestyle that have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and populations. This training is a skill we can all have to enable us to give the right messages on aspects of lifestyle and how to signpost to other services for support as required.

We are all capable of change

By making simple lifestyle changes such as stopping smoking, improving diet, increasing physical activity, losing weight and reducing alcohol consumption, can really help people to reduce their risk of poor health significantly, and in turn means less sickness absence.

The training

The training is FREE and our aim is to recruit as many people as possible across the North Lincolnshire community to undertake this short training course, then when appropriate, in the interactions and conversations they have with others they come across, are able to give the right information, and then let them know where they can access support.

¹ Article by Dr David Nabarro, UK candidate for the World Health Organization (WHO) Director General's post.

The training takes approximately 2.5 hours and gives information of how people can change their lifestyle, explains how to have that conversation, the benefits, and the difference that can make. Surprisingly it can be small changes that can make a big difference, for example:

- **By stopping smoking - within 72 hours breathing is easier and you have more energy**
- **Losing 5 - 10% of excess weight means a 20-25% reduction of death from all causes**
- **40-50% of people who die under the age of 75 die because of the unhealthy lifestyle they lead**

Attendees are given a leaflet which includes all the service names and contact details, so they can give that information and signpost any member of the public, colleague, friend or relative to the relevant service they require help and support from.

To take part in this training please contact Angie Underwood on 01724 298200 or email angela.underwood@northlincs.gov.uk

Following this people will then be offered wider training such as health champion, mental health core skills etc to enable them to act as peer educators across their wider colleagues and peers.

What we have achieved already

The training has been delivered to staff in the NHS, North Lincolnshire Council, Fire and Rescue, Pharmacy, Taxi Drivers and students at North Lindsey College.

The Council alone have approximately 1,500 frontline staff and if they can each deliver brief advice 10 times per year that is 15,000 opportunities to change lifestyle behaviour. If just half of those go on to make a positive change to their lifestyle, as a result a total of 7,500 people in North Lincolnshire would improve their health and wellbeing.

If you wish to find out more about MECC:

<http://makeeverycontactcount.co.uk/>