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# **The Role Of Chiropractor In Public Health At A Community Level**

## **How the role of a Chiropractor contributes to a public health issues: Smoking/vaping, at the community level.**

In this assignment, I am going to discuss how a chiropractor would contribute to a worldwide public health issue, smoking/vaping, at a community level. Looking at why being a chiropractor can have an influential role in addressing smoking/vaping and what they can do to help people who have issues quitting or are uneducated in the harm of smoking/vaping.

Smoking is a major health concern around the world. Public Health England state 'that nearly 1 in 5 adults smoke and there are around 90,000 regular smokers between the ages of 11-15. Smoking causes 17% of all deaths over the age of 35' (Public Health England, 2015). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that 'cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States' (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2014). Vaping is another concern for the public as e-cigarettes and vape pens still have dosages of nicotine and other dangerous chemicals. It is clear to see that Smoking and Vaping are huge public health issues. The difference between smoking and vaping is that smoking delivers nicotine by burning tobacco, in forms of a cigarette, while vaping delivers nicotine by heating a liquid, in forms of a vape pen or e-cigarette (Health Promotion Agency 2019). Public Health England state 'E-cigarettes are at least 95% less harmful than normal cigarettes and using a nicotine-containing e-cigarette makes it much more likely someone will quit successfully than relying on willpower alone' (Public Health England 2015). The United States, however, have a different approach to vaping and have warned about an outbreak of a serious lung disease that has said to be relating to vaping. 1,604 cases have been reported to the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) including 34 deaths around vaping lung disease. (Newton 2019) These statics highlight that vaping and smoking are huge public health issues.

A chiropractor takes on the role of being a health care professional, this involves diagnosis and treatment with an emphasis on treatment through adjustments and manipulation. Chiropractors seek to reduce pain and to improve patient's mobility and function as well as educating patients on their health. (Yeomans, 2013). Public health is defined as 'the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society' (Acheson, 1998; WHO). One of the main roles of a chiropractor is to educate patients as well as public health community groups. The overall vision for public health services is to promote health and well-being sustainably, chiropractors have a role to play in public health issues. For chiropractors to understand working with public health issues they need to help communities without benefitting themselves. With public health issues such as smoking or vaping a chiropractor can give out government information about quitting smoking through leaflets at their clinic. These leaflets have weblinks to NHS quit smoking advice. Advice on the NHS website includes; smoking facts and advice and support. 'Local stop smoking services are free, friendly and can massively boost your chances of quitting for good' (NHS 2018). As this is a free service, chiropractors do not receive any benefits for themselves, meaning they become a good contribution with addressing smoking to the community. The American Lung Association has a

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successful effective cessation program called 'Freedom From Smoking'. This program includes smoking group clinics which are led by a certified facilitator in small groups of 8-16 people featuring step-by-step plans for quitting smoking and being about to control smoking behaviours (American Lung Association).

Being involved in the chiropractic community has its benefits towards public health issues. The World Federation of Chiropractic, WFC, is a non-profitable global organisation that exists to promote, support and advance chiropractors and the chiropractor profession. As the WFC is a non-governmental organisation of the world organisation the WFC is committed to supporting public health initiatives (World Federation of Chiropractic, 2009). The WFC has an Anti-tobacco campaign, CAT, Chiropractors Against Tobacco. This Campaign has supported the Tobacco-Free initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO) and has been able to encourage all chiropractic and their associations to participate in this campaign (WFC 2009). By chiropractors joining this campaign they will be endorsed with patient information brochures that give information and advice about tobacco use, quitting and all health hazards of second-hand smoke. These patient brochures are like NHS leaflets and will give out non-profitable information to patients who have a smoking habit. Chiropractors will also receive anti-smoking posters which they can put in and around the clinic they work in. These posters have the same effect as the leaflets and brochures. Therefore, being a chiropractor helps for this public health issue as they can gain knowledge and advice through this campaign which they can transfer to any one of the communities that seek advice for smoking habits.

A chiropractor can help educate smoking communities by raising awareness of how smoking/vaping can affect the body and how chiropractic can help with symptoms related to smoking. They can do this by setting up a free monthly 1- hour drop-in session located at a library or community centre. This is beneficial for members of the public who are less educated over the matter and they may not be aware of how smoking is harmful. Therefore, if they are educated, they might find a means to quit their habit. By making this drop-in session free it opens the opportunity for anyone to take part and join in. It will be a monthly session as chiropractors can work up to 5 days a week so a monthly session will not take up much of the chiropractor's own time. If the chiropractor has children or family members to deal with this drop-in session will not become an inconvenience for them also it gives the chiropractor time to prepare for each drop-in session with answers to possible questions asked. The drop-in session is beneficial for a smoking community as people can attend at their own time within the 1-hour slot and they do not have to be there for the entirety of the session. This can entice younger smoking generations as a walk-in session can feel more personal instead of having an hour talk which they can find boring or too long. By having a drop-in session, NHS or CAT campaign leaflets can be used for people who do not want to have a personal talk but can be educated through visual learning. Also, this can be the time for them to collect educational leaflets about quitting smoking as they may have accessibility to local hospitals or GP's where this information can also be found. Chiropractors can make this a free session by hiring a meeting room at a library or organising a place and time with a local community centre. By organising the drop-in session and either place both examples are usually accessible for most people as they located in the middle of towns or cities. Therefore, there is no barrier for people who don't own transport or cannot afford to pay for mode of transport. Being a chiropractor will help educated smoking communities by having a general knowledge about the human body will help to describe what happens when someone smokes eg. Lung disease, smoking-related cancers. Being a chiropractor can also bring a sense of community as they may already know some of the local community by providing chiropractic care to them. If a chiropractor already had a

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patient who smokes and is looking to quit or become aware of the damages relating to smoking, the patient, can provide word of mouth to other smoking communities that wish to quit.

Therefore, inviting more members of the public to join the drop-in session. To advertise for this drop-in session the chiropractor can make posters and place them in public areas such as the library and even their chiropractor clinic they work in. Making posters will not cost much if the chiropractor has a printer at home. If not the use of library printers can be around 40p per page and then to use the photocopier is 10p per page (Bristol City Council). This arranged drop-in session will also benefit the chiropractor if some signs and symptoms of smoking relate to their profession. If a member of the public who smokes attends the session with low back pain and needs help for both smoking and their back pain the chiropractor can acquire another patient if they need chiropractor care.

## **How the role of a Chiropractor contributes to public health issues: Physical fitness, at the community level.**

In this assignment, I will discuss how a chiropractor would contribute to a worldwide public health issue, physical fitness, at a community level. I will be looking at how a chiropractor can contribute to this public health issue through advertising fitness sessions and the benefits attached to an increase in physical fitness levels.

Most people do not realise that physical activity has great benefits for both physical and mental health, it can prevent and manage over 20 chronic conditions and disease (Public Health England 2019). Public Health England state 'physical inactivity is responsible for one in 6 UK deaths (which is near equal to smoking)'. The UK's population is around 20% less active than in 1960 and will decrease by 35% by 2030 (PHE 2019). Physical activity varies with age and life stages and it's said that people tend to become less active with age, especially in older years. This is an important public health issue that needs to be looked at and improved, to sustain a healthy and fitter country. The UK Chief Medical Officers' Guidelines recommend for adults to complete at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, 75 minutes vigorous activity or a mixture of both. This also needs to include strengthening activities for two days. There are a lot of barriers which people reach when trying to complete physical activity some examples include; lack of motivation, insufficient time to exercise, boredom with exercise, fear of being injured or having a past injury and non-availability of parks, gym, bicycles or a safe place to exercise (Physiopedia 2020). All these barriers prevent people from completing their weekly recommended amount of exercise.

Being a chiropractor and joining the health care profession, a chiropractor provides knowledge and education to each patient they work with. Chiropractors seek to reduce pain and to improve patient's mobility and function as well as educating patients on their health. (Yeomans, 2013). Public health is defined as 'the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society' (Acheson, 1998; WHO). The overall vision for public health services is to promote health and well-being sustainably, chiropractors have a role to play in public health issues. When looking a physical fitness, as an important public health issue, it doesn't necessarily mean obesity or overweight it's looking at the issue of communities not completing recommended weekly physical activity and are not on average aerobically fit. Some chiropractic clinics offer fitness and movement session in their clinic already such as Pilates. Clifton Chiropractic Clinic in Bristol have Pilates session every day of the week except Sundays and say, 'Pilates is suitable for all ages and fitness levels.' (Clifton

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Chiropractic Clinic). However, some chiropractic clinics do not have the facilities to run Pilates session.

A chiropractor can help physically unfit communities by setting up a fitness session to improve on matching the weekly recommendation of exercise. They can do this by running a free weekly fitness session at a local park for 2 hours. To advertise this weekly session the chiropractor can use word of mouth through patients they already have, and they can set up a social media fitness page with members of the community which will like to take part. By doing this it can help organise the event by putting timings on the page and explain what will happen in the 2 hours. As the session is 2 hours these hours can be used for running elements and strength elements which covers part of the recommended weekly physical exercise. To run continuously for 20 minutes will start to improve on the body's aerobic fitness, this session will include 30 minutes dedication to continuous running, walking or jogging any source of activity which will increase participants heart rates. The other time of the session can include stretching and mobility and some strength workout that doesn't include equipment for example; planks, press-ups and body squats. This break downs the barrier for people who do not have money for gym equipment. By the chiropractor setting up this 2-hour fitness session, it will contribute to a community which lack the motivation to complete exercise. A setup session can motivate people to take part and having someone run a session can take care of their fitness needs. With the use of the social media group page, this can reassure people that they will not be alone, and others are also participating. This session is also beneficial for members of the public who are less educated over the matter of physical fitness and government recommendations so in this session, they can be taught how to maintain and improve on their fitness. Which can also break down a lack of motivation barrier. By doing this session once a week it doesn't put pressure on people of the community that struggle to find time for exercise. The session can be on the weekend which benefits people who work Monday to Friday. It puts less pressure on the chiropractor and doesn't invade too much on their time, also gives the chiropractor time to prepare and plan what the fitness session will include. By being a chiropractor, it will help the community's physical fitness truly by motivation and having advice on muscular-skeletal pains or past injuries. The chiropractor can organise the session to physical needs, for example, if someone has a past injury the chiropractor can change or limit the exercise to prevent damage to that injury. There will be a great sense of community in this session as it is not limited to certain ages or physical needs so anyone can take part. Being a chiropractor is not being person trainer or fitness instructor just an organiser of a weekly event, some people fade away from fitness session run by personal trainers and they already assume it will be a hard session. The 2 hours session is not compulsory, and people can take part in times they can make, so people who struggle to make time for exercise can complete 20 minutes if they have other schedules to keep up with. This session needs to be a weekly event, otherwise, the physical fitness benefits the group receives will decrease if not repeated. Therefore, they will not become fitter if they only do the session once a month. By organising this fitness session in a local park, it means the chiropractor doesn't have to pay to hire someone to do the session. Similarly, the park means people don't have to travel as they can walk if it is near-by and provides a large area to complete walks, jogs and runs. This session benefits the chiropractor's fitness as well as they will be taking part in the fitness session. It can also benefit their profession if someone joining in with the session as ongoing chronic or acute pain and needs to seek chiropractor care.