Delivering a robust health visiting service to homeless families
Learning outcomes

To gain an overview of the role
To explore the issues facing homeless families
To understand the challenges in addressing complex unmet health needs
To give an insight into the family journey
To demonstrate positive outcomes
My career
Is this a picture of homelessness?
Why families become homeless

End of tenancy
Financial problems
Loss of job
Divorce/separation
Violent relationship breakdown
Dispute
Emergency (fire/flood/storm)

The average house price in 1971 was £5,600
2011 was £245,300
Priority groups for emergency housing.

Families with children (In full time education)
Expectant mothers
Homeless due to violence or harassment
Care leavers aged 18-21
Vulnerable adults
16-17 and non entitled to social care support
Wolverhampton’s emergency accommodation

6 refuges
2 hostels
1 B&B
1 guest house
1 safe house

Over 60 allocated properties across the city (owned by local council)
Hotel (occasionally used)
The Wolverhampton picture

Has a population of 252,000
450 children per year are part of a homeless household
Deprivation is higher than average
There is a higher than average infant mortality rate
There is a lower than average life expectancy
Family life

Homelessness and domestic abuse are life changing events and can happen to anyone
Hostel living
Challenges (for clients)

- Lack of space
- Limited safe play areas
- Noise
- Social isolation
- Financial instability
- Bed sharing
- Communal living
- Accident risks
- Frustration
- Developmental delay
- Conflict
- Mental illness
- Lack of food
- Safety issues
- Infection risk
Package of care

Health visitors currently deliver the healthy child programme which is adopted as the universal minimal care programme to enable children to reach their potential.

5 core contacts include:

- Antenatal contact
- New birth visit
- 6-8 week review
- 9-12 month review
- 2-2.5 year review
Specific package of care

Initial visit (holistic health and social care assessment)
Follow up visits at 1-2 month intervals
“New home” visit prior to handover
Key health topics

GP and dental registration
Immunisations
Nutrition (breast feeding support) and growth
Maternal mental health
Developmental progress
Managing minor illness
Reducing injury from unintentional accidents
Supporting parenting/attachment
Support with nursery and school application
Signposting to appropriate services
Initiatives

Oral health promotion
Fire safety referral scheme
Toddler treatment triangle
Home safety event
Baby play mat project
If you need advice about your infant's health, use the triangle to help you prioritise their health needs and assess the most appropriate services. Most parents can be supported by community services: Health Visitor/Pharmacy/GP rather than attending A&E.
Baby play mat project

- To promote safe and clean floor play
- 40 play mats
- 0-8 months of age
- Tummy time leaflet
- Assessment of development
- Evaluation
Baby play mat-outcomes

No incidents of babies rolling off the bed!
Reduced parental anxiety
Improved gross motor skills
Increased parent/child interaction
Baby enjoys floor play and is happy
Visual stimulation
Stimulation of fine motor and personal/social skills
Increased play opportunities
Physiological Needs
- Shared or individual space with front door
- Fresh air
- Food (cooking and storage facilities)
- Heating
- Clean comfortable bed and bedding
- Clean toilet
- Washing facilities
- Clothing

Safety Needs
- Lockable door
- Free from danger (violence or threat)
- GP (access to health services)
- Financial stability
- Allocated key worker
- Use of a mobile phone

Social Needs
- Friends
- Employment
- Children in education
- Access to family support
- Neighbourhood harmony
- Feel part of a community
- Access to toys/safe play area

Esteem Needs
- Volunteering
- Hobbies
- Creating a home

Self Actualisation
- Self Acceptance

Hierarchy of needs and homelessness

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Abraham Maslow 1943) adapted by T Law (02/2017)
In pursuit of happiness
Poem entitled “Hope”
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