

## Factsheet on...

# The Impact Of Air Quality On Health

### What Impact Does Air Quality Have On Health?

The Health Commission recognises the impact air quality has on health. The loss of life expectancy attributable to air pollution is estimated to be around six months, although the impact is likely to be greater for those living in areas of greatest pollution.

There are clear associations between short and long term pollution levels and their effect on a person's cardiovascular system.

Air pollution can trigger wheezing in children with asthma.

### How Clean Is Our Air?

The UK meets most legal air quality standards but not those for nitrogen dioxide. Within Greater Manchester, the annual average objective for nitrogen dioxide will not be met. Emissions of nitrogen oxides are going down but airborne concentrations are not showing the same reductions. A major source of nitrogen dioxide is road traffic.

### What Causes Air Pollution?

Transport is the major source of air pollution. There are busy roads throughout Greater Manchester and these can impact on the health of everybody who lives and works close to areas with a high volume of traffic.

### What is the Greater Manchester Health Commission Doing?

The Greater Manchester Health Commission recognises the effect air pollution has on health and health inequalities and endorses the work of the Greater Manchester Air Quality Group in tackling the issue of air pollution.

The Health Commission is strongly supporting proposals to increase the number of people walking and cycling, rather than using their car all the time.

Research looking into the shortening of a person's life in Greater Manchester, due to poor air quality, is also being supported.

A review of existing air pollution early warning systems is going to be carried out.

The Health Commission is also recommending more consideration is given to air quality health impact assessments when making major strategic decisions.

### For more information please contact:

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