

# NEWS RELEASE



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Ref. 2007 Skills Review

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## **BIG LOTTERY DONATES TO LIVING WELL**

WEST Midlands Regional Assembly announced today a major boost to its Healthy Living in the Region that brings together representatives from the public, private and the voluntary sector, in promoting economic, social and environmental well-being projects across the Region thanks to a donation from the Big Lottery Fund.

The donation of £6.7 million from the Big Lottery Fund will go towards ensuring new and innovative projects that will be introduced across 14 local authority partnerships.

There are 27 projects in total and examples include; training female volunteers from the community to deliver exercise sessions to women in local community settings; establishing an allotment at a school to enable children to learn how to grow fruit and vegetables and learn cooking skills based around the food they have grown; and a project to promote mental health and well being in the workplace.

Dr Rashmi Shukla, Regional Director of Public Health at Department of Health (West Midlands) said: "I'm delighted the West Midlands has been successful in its application. The portfolio of projects will give the opportunity to make a real difference in tackling the health inequalities across the region by contributing, for example, towards the reduction in obesity levels, improved mental health and greater participation in physical activity, with the added value of learning from the projects which will inform future work in these areas.

“The projects will be delivered through a wide range of partnerships of large and small Voluntary and Community groups together with public service agencies such as Primary Care Trusts and Local Authorities which is a particular strength of the region in its delivery of health and social care.”

Chairman of the West Midlands Regional Assembly Cllr David S Smith said: “I am pleased with the amount of money the Regional Health Partnership has received today. This grant from the Big Lottery has shown the important role local authorities play and the importance of partnership working at Regional level in obtaining funding to make a difference to the lives of those that live in the West Midlands. I am therefore delighted to congratulate the Regional Health Partnership.”

Chairman of the Regional Health partnership Steve Eling said: “This is a significant amount of money which the partnerships have been awarded but ultimately it will help us maintain our commitment to creating healthier lifestyles for those that live in the Region.”

It is expected that more than 500,000 people will benefit from this cash boost, directly or indirectly, including Asian girls, employees, mothers and sedentary groups.

- ENDS -

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**Notes to editors:**

1. There will be 14 partnerships in the West Midlands that will benefit from the grant offered by the Big Lottery which are Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Partnership in Edgbaston, Coventry City Council, Dudley Council, Herefordshire PCT, Sandwell PCT, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Shropshire PCT, Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent PCT, Telford and Wrekin PCT, Walsall PCT, Warwickshire Westgate House, Wolverhampton PCT, Worcestershire Mental Health and Wellbeing in collaboration with Malvern Community First.

2. The main partners are those that make up the Regional Steering Group and include representatives from the physical activity network, regional food network, mental health network, strategic health authority, Health Living Centre Alliance and individual projects, provide direction and oversee delivery to check on equality and diversity and that the portfolio is still addressing the region's strategies.
3. The West Midlands Regional Assembly ('the Assembly') represents a wide range of democratic, social and economic interests throughout the West Midlands region.
4. The Assembly's membership consists of 100 nominated representatives, with 68 members representing the local authority, 16 representing the business sector and 16 representing other economic and social partners.
5. The Assembly provides a platform for organisations to consider matters of common concern including: regional planning, transport, economic prosperity, sustainability, culture and Europe. It also supports regional policy forums and task groups on social inclusion, faith, housing, life long learning/skills, health, rural and community safety/crime reduction.
6. The Assembly works in partnership with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) the regional development agency (RDA), the Government Office West Midlands (GOWM), Regional Action West Midlands (RAWM) the West Midlands Local Government Association (WMLGA) and other regional and local organisations from across the West Midlands region.
7. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body, and is also responsible for scrutinising the operation of the region's RDA, Advantage West Midlands.
8. For further information, visit our website [www.wmra.gov.uk](http://www.wmra.gov.uk)