

For Immediate Release

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Campaign to understand Oldhamers' health needs

Health staff are launching a campaign to collect the heights and weights of adults across Oldham to better understand the health needs of local communities.

Over the next few weeks, clinicians from Oldham Primary Care Trust will be asking patients in clinics and shoppers in supermarkets to hop on the scales in order to get their body mass index (BMI) score.

BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both adult men and women.

Alan Higgins, Oldham PCT's public health director, said: "It is really important that we better understand the health of people in Oldham so that we can develop plans to improve health and wellbeing across the borough. We already know the BMI scores of children, and we are very keen to have comparable data for adults.

"We think that around one quarter of adults in Oldham (around 41,000) are obese, and a further 67,000 are overweight. Obesity is linked to a range of long-term health conditions, such as cancer and heart disease, and can reduce life expectancy by up to nine years.

"To support families and communities we need to have a much better picture of the health of people living across the borough."

For more information, contact associate director (clinical leadership) Jacqueline O'Reilly on 622 6500, or log onto the PCT's website www.oldham.nhs.uk