



## **JOINT STATEMENT UNITE/CPHVA AND DH FOR 'ACTION ON HEALTH VISITING PROGRAMME'**

Excellent services for children and families are a high priority and 'The Children's Plan - Building Brighter Futures' and 'Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures –The Strategy for Children and Young Peoples Health', set out the vision for these services.

The '**Action on Health Visiting Programme**' covers a range of actions to define and deliver key roles for Health Visitors in the new child health policy context, support, develop and increase the number of Health Visitors and ensure the future workforce through attractive and rewarding careers routes

Health Visitors are a highly skilled part of the workforce working with children, families and communities to address the major health challenges facing society today. There is increasing evidence of both the relationship between health and wellbeing in pregnancy and childhood and health in later life, and also of the types of interventions that maximize health and health potential – Health Visitors are key to delivery of many of these interventions.

In particular, Health Visitors have key roles in:

- Continually assessing the health needs, and delivering and organising the delivery of family focused health services to every family with pre-school children.
- Leadership and expert practice in the Healthy Child Programme
- Enabling effective joint working between health and other local children's services (such as from within Children's Centres) in the 'named Health Visitor' Children's Centre role
- Utilising their specialist skills in supporting vulnerable families and those needing extra support

DH and UNITE/CPHVA therefore welcome the announcement of the 'Action on Health Visiting Programme'. We are committed to working together to ensure this programme takes action on key areas facing Health Visitors including:

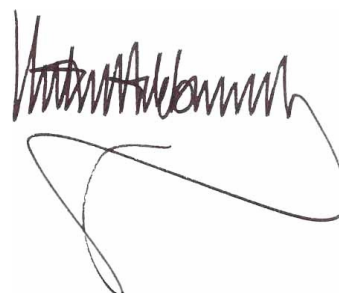
- Enabling Health Visitors to embrace their lead role in public health practice by promoting health and the early detection of health needs

- Increasing the number of Health Visitors through more training places, support for people to return to practice and career routes to enable nurses to move into health visiting and more higher education opportunities.
- Appropriate education, training and development programmes for both prospective Health Visitors and those in post
- Providing opportunities for Health Visitors to embrace new clinical leadership roles both in children's teams and the wider community
- Providing additional support for when Health Visitors are working in difficult roles such as safeguarding children
- Aiming for high morale in the existing Health Visitor workforce

Health Visitors require clear and rewarding roles so that the profession can embrace new opportunities to lead the delivery of high quality preventative services to families with pre-school children and support vulnerable families in difficult circumstances. DH and Unite/CPHVA will work together to ensure that the 'Action On Health Visiting Programme' is implemented rapidly to enable Health Visitors to maximise their contribution to excellent outcomes for all children and families.



**The Rt. Hon. Alan Johnston**  
**Secretary of State**  
**The Department of Health**



**Lord Victor Adebowale MA, CBE**  
**President Unite/CPHVA and Chief**  
**Executive, Turning Point**