



## Professor Sir Michael Marmot joins Mayor Driscoll, Sir Nigel Wilson, and leaders from across the region to improve health equality

On Monday 20 June, internationally renowned epidemiologist Professor Sir Michael Marmot led a roundtable with the North of Tyne Combined Authority's Metro Mayor Jamie Driscoll, supported by Legal & General's Sir Nigel Wilson, to discuss how the public sector and business can improve people's lives by reducing health inequality. The roundtable brought together high-profile local leaders to discuss both the progress the region has made to reduce health inequality and targeted actions to continue this progress in future. Attendees included Dame Jackie Daniel (Chief Executive at Newcastle Hospitals), Dr Henry Kippin (CEO of North of Tyne CA), and key leaders from the industry and the public sector.

The UCL Institute of Health Equity (IHE), in partnership with Legal & General, launched The Business of Health Equity: The Marmot Review for Industry, setting out ways in which business can improve people's lives by reducing health inequality.

The North of Tyne roundtable marks the first place Sir Michael and the partnership have visited since IHE launched the report.

The study found that, by improving the health of their employees, employers benefit from a more productive workforce. It has been estimated, for example, 30% of the shortfall in productivity in the Northern Powerhouse compared with the rest of England is due to ill health.

Poor health is closely associated with deprivation. Almost 40% of neighbourhoods in Newcastle specifically are amongst the most deprived 20% across England.

Healthy life expectancy at birth is significantly lower in Newcastle than the England average. Over the last decade the number of years a child born in Newcastle can expect to live in good health is now lower than it was in 2009-10. A female born in Newcastle in 2017-19 can expect to live 56.4 years in good health, compared with 60.8 years in 2009-10.

**“Legal & General’s ongoing partnership with the IHE has underscored that health is a fundamental driver of business success and true ‘Levelling Up’. We are encouraging businesses to move beyond ESG to focus on ESHG — such is the importance of health inequality in improving people’s lives. The one-two punch of COVID and economic pressures has put workplace productivity high on the business agenda, but for Newcastle’s businesses to truly unlock employees’ productivity potential, employers in the region need to recognise and tackle the major obstacle posed by health inequities. This roundtable is an opportunity to both celebrate achievements in this area and ensure a committed effort to continue improving health equity and productivity in the region.”**

**Sir Nigel Wilson, CEO of Legal & General**

**“There is great potential for businesses to contribute more in the endeavour to reduce unnecessary and unjust health inequalities which are so prominent in the North of Tyne Region. Business can and should help improve the health of their workforce, ensure products and services support good health, and make great contributions to local communities; in sum to be positive forces for health equity. is nowhere more crucial for action than in the North-East of England where levelling up is key to addressing health equity.”**

**Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Director, UCL Institute of Health Equity**

**“People in the North East are dying younger than anywhere else in England. Despite having some of the UK's best hospitals, serious illnesses affect people earlier in life, too. This health gap ruins people's quality of life and hammers their ability to earn a good living. It's a vicious circle that we have to break.**

**The answers lie in better housing, better paid work – better life chances full stop. A healthy life means believing you have a good future. We need to invest upfront, or we'll be paying the human and economic costs for a generation.”**

**Metro Mayor Jamie Driscoll**

This latest Marmot Review, published by the UCL Institute of Health Equity in partnership with Legal & General, confirms that businesses with a strong social purpose attract and retain the best employees - who increasingly seek more than just a paycheque.

The report points out that employees who feel emotionally connected and understand how they personally contribute to their organisation have a stronger sense of wellbeing. Research shows having a sense of purpose in life is highlighted as a key feature for living to be over 100.

## Notes to editors

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**The Business of Health Equity: The Marmot Review for Industry** is the latest in a series of reviews of health inequities by the UCL Institute of Health Equity. The Institute is led by internationally renowned epidemiologist Professor Sir Michael Marmot. It was established in 2011, following the publication of the landmark 2010 report **Fair Society, Healthy Lives**, known as the Marmot Review.

That report set out how social, economic and environmental conditions – or ‘social determinants’ – shape health to a much greater extent than healthcare does, and how inequalities in these social determinants lead to widespread inequalities in health. The Review made a series of recommendations to government to take action on the social determinants of health.

In February 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic, published **Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On**. The health picture that it presented was not encouraging, suggesting that policies of austerity had damaged health. In 2020 IHE published **Build Back Fairer**, a programme for action in response to the inequalities exposed and amplified by Covid-19.

Since 2010, the UCL Institute of Health Equity. has worked with national and local governments, the NHS, public health bodies, the voluntary sector and communities to embed effective approaches to reducing health inequalities. The Institute also works globally and has led major reviews across the world, influenced action by governments and international organisations, and led the social determinants and health equity movement.

### About Legal & General

Legal & General has a strong and longstanding social purpose, ‘to improve the lives of its customers, build a better society for the long term and create value for its shareholders ..., to use its long-term assets in an economically and socially useful way to benefit everyone in its communities’. Legal & General describes its ethos as ‘inclusive capitalism’ – a recognition that the benefits of economic growth must be shared by all. This means wealth, but also health.

Legal & General’s impact comes not only from how the business is run, but also how the group invests its £95 billion of proprietary assets, and how it uses its influence as an asset manager, with £1.4 trillion in assets under management. Beyond those companies in which Legal & General holds shares, or has influence with shareholders, there is a network of suppliers and contractors, at a local level, nationally and internationally. Legal & General has an influence on the entire business ecosystem as a leader, and with government. Legal & General’s move to make health equity a central concern is a new and welcome contribution that could have highly significant, positive and wide-reaching impacts on health.

Recognising the important role of university and business partnerships in driving forward health innovations, Legal & General is a founding member of both the Longevity Science Panel and The Trinity Challenge; a coalition, including the University of Cambridge and leading academics, seeking to support prevention around future health emergencies. Meanwhile, its long-term partnership with Newcastle Council and Newcastle University continues to deliver at pace, undertaking research into improving ageing health span with The National Centre for Ageing.

Legal & General has also formed long-term multi-billion pound partnerships with the Universities of Oxford and Manchester to develop innovation districts which will help incubate spin-out businesses such as those which lead the way in developing the COVID-19 vaccinations. Legal & General also established the Advanced Care Research Centre (“ACRC) with the University of Edinburgh and was the initial funder for Care Sourcer, the UK’s first comparison and matching site for elderly care, which launched a free Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to all UK care provider employees.

The Covid-19 pandemic has motivated Legal & General to further strengthen its role in reducing health inequalities through action on the social determinants of health by partnering with IHE. Legal & General is committed to levelling up disadvantaged areas of the UK and ensuring that the country builds back fairer, as well as better.

### About the North of Tyne Combined Authority

The North of Tyne Combined Authority is a combined authority with an elected mayor that was created in November 2018, when Parliament signed off on a £600 million devolution deal bringing Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside councils together in an unprecedented transfer of power and investment from Westminster to the North East.

It is tasked with initiating projects to boost growth, create jobs, and create a more green, inclusive economy.

North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll was elected on a promise to support communities in the North of Tyne to create and build wealth, then keep that wealth in the region.

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## Further information

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