

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMENTS ON TEES ESK AND WEAR VALLEYS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 20221

The Committee welcomes Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Account 2020/21 and the opportunity to provide comment on it. The Committee are mindful of their statutory health scrutiny role and the need to demonstrate a robust mechanism for providing assurance to the residents of County Durham that health service provision is efficient and effective. The quality account process provides the Committee with one such mechanism.

The Committee usually undertakes in year monitoring of the trust's progress against their quality account priorities however, the pressure placed upon both the NHS and Social Care system by the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the reduced number of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and more prioritised work programme has not made this possible during 2020/21.

The context for the Quality Account in terms of the pressure placed upon TEWV to maintain services and performance whilst at the same time ensuring that they are COVID-19 safe is noted. Members have engaged with the Trust in respect of the specific impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the services provided by TEWV. Examination of the closure of inpatient beds at West Lane Hospital, Middlesbrough has previously taken place, and the committee have asked that the CQC inspection improvement plan be brought to members for consideration. A detailed examination of the implications of the West Lane Hospital closure and the plans for reprovision of the service has been undertaken by the county council's Children and Young Peoples' Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee considers that the Quality Account is clearly set out and that progress made against 2020/21 priorities is clearly identified. The committee notes the positive steps taken by the Trust during the past year including the support provided to Care Homes in County Durham by the Care Home Liaison staff; the launch of the Trust's new freephone service for those in mental or emotional distress; additional funding secured for Adult Learning Disabilities in Durham and Darlington working with Primary Care to complete annual health checks; and the commencement of the Care Home Liaison service across Durham and Darlington Mental Health Services for older people.

Members remain concerned about the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on mental health within the community, which is likely to result in a further increase in demand upon mental health services and therefore are keen to learn from TEWV as to how they are working with partners across the health and social care system to ensure that service users continue to be supported.

In respect of the proposed quality account priorities for 2021/22, the committee supports them and the associated actions. It also notes with some concern the

cessation of the 2020/21 priority “Improve the clinical effectiveness and patient experience in times of transition from children and young peoples’ mental health services to Adult mental health services”. This was an area of concern identified by the Committee particularly in view of the events leading to the closure of West Lane Hospital and the CQC inadequate judgement of the Trust. The Trust has indicated that the new trust-wide project “Improving Transitions and Service provision for people aged 16-25 in Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust” has superseded the work of the previous priority. It is therefore important that the work of this new project is implemented and monitored to ensure that it addresses those issues identified by the CQC.

Finally, in order to ensure that it continues to provide a robust health scrutiny function and to provide assurances in this respect to the residents of County Durham, the Committee would request a six monthly progress report on delivery of 2021/22 priorities and performance targets with a particular emphasis on the effects of COVID-19 on demand and the trust’s response to this.

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMENTS ON COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 2020/21

The Committee welcomes County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Account 2020/21 and the opportunity to provide comment on it. The Committee are mindful of their statutory health scrutiny role and the need to demonstrate a robust mechanism for providing assurance to the residents of County Durham that health service provision is efficient and effective. The quality account process provides the Committee with one such mechanism.

The Committee usually undertakes in year monitoring of the trust's progress against their quality account priorities however, the pressure placed upon both the NHS and Social Care system by the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the reduced number of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and more prioritised work programme has not made this possible during 2020/21.

Members have been specifically engaged with the Trust in respect of the healthcare system response to the COVID-19 pandemic; Shotley Bridge Community Hospital; winter planning and the work of the Local Accident and Emergency Delivery Board and the Sunderland and South Tyneside Path to Excellence Phase 2 programme.

The Quality Account is clearly set out and the Committee notes the Trust's intention to refresh its Quality Strategy by October 2021 and the impact of COVID 19 which has resulted in the 2020/21 Quality Account priorities being carried forward into 2021/22. In terms of performance against the 2020/21 priorities the Committee notes that performance has dropped in areas such as patient falls and discharges but that this has been a particularly challenging year for the Trust in dealing with extremely sick patients throughout the COVID 19 pandemic. There are areas of outstanding work by the Trust not least in terms of end of life care and the Committee welcomes the work planned in respect of the development of a new palliative care strategy.

The Committee has previously monitored in some detail the Trust's Improvement Action Plan for previous CQC inspections and the Committee notes the continued progress in implementing improvements albeit against the impact of COVID in respect of operations and management arrangements, particularly in respect of elective surgery.

Whilst the Committee is again disappointed that the Trust has not achieved its ambitions in relation to reducing the length of time to assess and treat patients in the Emergency Department, this has proven difficult given sustained demand pressures. The Committee had previously agreed to examine the joint work of County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust and North East Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust in respect of Accident and Emergency services including response times, conveyance to hospital and A&E handover times but this again has been delayed in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope to commence this work as soon as possible.

It is considered from the information received from the Trust that the identified priorities for 2021/22 are a fair reflection of healthcare services provided by the Trust.

Finally, in order to ensure that it continues to provide a robust Health scrutiny function and assurances in this respect to the residents of County Durham, the Committee would request a six monthly progress report on delivery of 2021/22 priorities and performance targets.

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMENTS ON NORTH EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 2020/21

The Committee welcomes North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Account and the opportunity to provide comment on it. The Committee are mindful of their statutory health scrutiny role and the need to demonstrate a robust mechanism for providing assurance to the residents of County Durham that health service provision is efficient and effective. The quality account process provides the Committee with one such mechanism.

The Committee usually undertakes in year monitoring of the trust's progress against their quality account priorities however, the pressure placed upon both the NHS and Social Care system by the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the reduced number of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and more prioritised work programme has not made this possible during 2020/21.

The context for the Quality Account in terms of the pressure placed upon North East Ambulance Service to maintain services and performance whilst at the same time ensuring that they are COVID-19 safe is noted. The Committee welcomes the work undertaken by NEAS and its staff in this respect noting that Personal Protective Equipment, enhanced cleaning, changing guidance, operational pressures, deployment into different roles, swabbing and testing, rolling out vaccines and managing outbreaks have pushed the Trust's logistical capability and operating model to new levels in 2020/21.

In examining core performance indicators, the Committee is pleased to note that the Trust has improved performance across all categories for 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 although in some instances it still falls below that of 2018/19.

Members have previously requested that the Trust performance across County Durham in comparison to Trust wide performance is reported back to the Committee as the new National Ambulance Response programme targets have been embedded across the organisation and also that the Trust seek to restore optimum staffing levels in respect of Paramedics. This Committee would ask that this information be brought to the Committee at some stage during the coming year.

The Committee note the importance of scheduled care in supporting provider organisations to deliver the restoration of elective and cancer services during 2021/22 as well as its ongoing role in supporting timely patient discharges.

The Trust proposes the roll forward of the identified priorities for 2020/21 in view of the impact of the COVID -19 Pandemic and this is to be supported. They remain clearly expressed and will contribute to improvements in the healthcare system generally.

Finally, in order to ensure that it continues to provide a robust Health scrutiny function and assurances in this respect to the residents of County Durham, the

Committee will continue to receive and consider performance overview information. As in previous years, the Committee would request a progress report on delivery of 2021/22 priorities and performance targets.