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Update on Transforming Care, Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy and Think Autism Strategy



Report of Sarah Burns, Joint Head of Integrated Strategic Commissioning for County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group and Durham County Council, and

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Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update in relation to local delivery and progress of the Transforming Care Programme, incorporating an overview of progress on the Joint Health and Social Care Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy and the Think Autism Strategy for County Durham.

Executive summary

Context

- 2 The impact of the pandemic on the entire system, not least community care and support services, continued in 2021/22. Covid restrictions have had an inevitable impact on the flow of discharges from both Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Specialised Commissioning inpatient settings into the community. This has also created significant challenges in maintaining those in the community, increasing the risk of admission.
- 3 Several community support resources, such as day and respite services, temporarily closed or functioned at a significantly reduced level due to Covid restrictions, Covid outbreaks, or service users/families choosing not to access the services for fear of the virus. A small number of day service providers chose to close their services in 2020/21 due to the low demand and sustainability issues despite the Covid financial support given by the council. Associated quality and safeguarding issues were also contributory risk factors.

- 4 Case managers and community teams continue to support people in the community, although several community social care and nursing services are facing noticeable pressures relating to increased anxiety and associated behaviours that challenge. Whilst there have been a number of successful discharges to the community, the acuity of some patients and the need to ensure that there is a safe and stable community package of care has resulted in the pace of inpatient discharges being impacted.
- 5 Nevertheless, the momentum to deliver Transforming Care objectives remains strong in County Durham through the local planning mechanisms: Transforming Care Partnerships, Integrated Care Systems (ICS) and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP) working to deliver the NHS Long Term Plan commitments for learning disability and autism locally and across the North Cumbria and North East region.
- 6 Quality assurance guidance on in-patient care for people with learning disabilities and/or autism has been published by NHS England (NHSE) and NHS Improvement. This report summarises key aspects of the guidance in relation to information sharing and interfaces between different commissioners as well as contracting, quality and safeguarding teams.

Reducing the reliance on inpatient provision

- 7 In line with CCG Planning Guidance, CCGs are expected to reduce the inappropriate hospitalisation of people with a learning disability, autism or both to meet a planned trajectory. For 2020/21, each CCG is expected to require adult inpatient capacity for no more than 13 adult inpatients in CCG-commissioned beds per million adult population, and 17 adult inpatients in NHS England-commissioned specialist beds per million adult population. For County Durham this would see a combined total of no more than 12 inpatients as a 2023/24 target rate (CCG and Specialised Commissioning). Currently, there are 16 inpatient beds for County Durham.

Community developments

- 8 Two key accommodation-based developments are underway which will form part of the joint health and social care response to increase our housing and support provision in Durham alongside supporting people to develop their life skills to promote independence.
- 9 The strategic needs assessment of people with a learning disability and people with autism is constantly under review to enable services to be shaped around current and future demand.

Recommendation(s)

10 Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to note:

- (a) The impact that the Covid 19 pandemic and the change in scope of the Transforming Care criteria has had on the ability to meet the current trajectories set out in the CCG Planning Guidance, and the two further discharges planned within the next few months.
- (b) The progress made, despite the pandemic, with plans for new community services for people with the most complex needs including the use of the Community Discharge Grant, which will support the Transforming Care objectives over the next year and in the longer term.
- (c) Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to receive further regular updates with accompanying delivery plan, to retain oversight of the Transforming Care agenda.

Background

- 11 The background to the Transforming Care programme has been included in previous reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board, for example the 'Learning Disabilities and Transforming Care Update' presented on the 17 September 2019 and the update report on 18 March 2021. Regular updates have also been shared with the Local Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 12 The Health and Wellbeing Board has also received annual progress reports on the Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy for people with Learning Disabilities and the Think Autism Strategy.
- 13 This report aims to give an overview of the progress made with the strategic priorities, with a clear focus on Transforming Care. This update is from the perspective of the Integrated Strategic Commissioning service within the County Durham Care Partnership and takes into account the impact of the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic on service delivery and strategic objectives.

Current position- Inpatient Trajectory

- 14 In line with CCG Planning Guidance, CCGs are expected to reduce the inappropriate hospital occupancy of people with a learning disability, autism or both to meet a planned trajectory. For 2020/21, each CCG is expected to commission an adult inpatient capacity for no more than 13 adult inpatients beds per million adult population, and 17 adult inpatients in NHS England-commissioned specialist beds per million adult population. Table 1 sets out the current inpatient position alongside Q4 Planning Guidance trajectory requirements.

Table 1

	Target end of Q4	Actuals end of February 2021
County Durham CCG	10	16
County Durham Provider Collaborative	11	12
Totals	21	28

- 15 Of the 16 CCG commissioned inpatients within trajectory scope, all are within NHS settings, 14 are within NHS Mental Health inpatient settings.

There are no patients within the scope of Transforming Care commissioned by NHS County Durham CCG in an independent Mental Health hospital setting within the NE&NC that have a diagnosis of autism or a learning disability.

- 16 Table 2 shows the position across North Cumbria and the North East as at 18 February 2022 as an actual and against the trajectory.

Table 2

Trajectory 2021-2022	SC	CCG
Q4 Planned	75	55
Actual as at 18th Feb 2022	78	84
Variance	+3	+29

- 17 Of significance is the shift in patient profile for County Durham which has evidenced a higher proportion of people with a diagnosis of autism admitted to mental health inpatient settings (accounting for 87.% of current in scope inpatients). Reasons for admission and any associated barriers to discharge are being reviewed to help shape both local and regional strategies.

Community Developments

Harelaw

- 18 The specialist supported housing development at Harelaw, Annfield Plain, has received formal planning approval and capital grant funding from NHS England. The £3.35m eco-friendly scheme will offer sustainable, flexible housing to support adults (18+) with learning disabilities and autism with complex needs.
- 19 The new supported living service at Harelaw will help people to maximise their potential and remain as independent as possible through the use of assistive technology, skilled support staff and focused rehabilitation. There will be six properties, four longer-term homes, and two step up/step down properties, allowing people to progress at their own pace and in response to their own needs. It is envisaged there will be an option for the step-down/step-up homes within the development to become permanent if successful.

- 20 Durham County Council, NHS County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), North of England Commissioning Support, NHS England and housing provider Choice Support are working in partnership on the next stages of the project to commission a care provider and commence the building. The aim is for the new service to be operational
- 21 Durham Council and NHS County Durham CCG have determined through their commissioning planning that there is currently a need to increase provision within County Durham for people with learning disabilities, and or autism, and other associated mental health conditions; at least three new accommodation developments will be required within the next three to five years.

Hawthorn House

- 22 Durham County Council are progressing plans to develop 2 self-contained, single occupancy units for use as a short term “step-up/step down” service in Hawthorn House in Durham, which is an in-house residential respite service and forms part of County Durham Care and Support within Adult and Health Services. The service will help people with learning disabilities including those with autism or mental health issues transition out of hospital or prevent hospital admission, enabling those in a crisis to receive the right care at the right time from appropriately trained and skilled staff in a safe environment.
- 23 Durham County Council and County Durham CCG have agreed to share the capital costs to adapt the current building and the ongoing revenue costs required for the project.

Specialist Health Team

- 24 Additional investment has been through Transforming Care into the Specialist Health Team Community functions in County Durham. This is in recognition of the learning from Whorlton Hall, Newbus Grange and a number of larger residential settings where significant resource was being deployed often at crisis stage. Early intervention and support by a flexible team that can develop relationships with providers, provide increased community surveillance, and can implement strategies at an early preventative stage has been pivotal to further reducing the reliance on inpatient settings being utilised as places of safety and for avoidable admission.

Local strategies

- 25 The 'Think Autism in County Durham Strategy' Autism Strategy for children, young people and adults (2018/19 to 2021/21) will be reviewed by Q3 2022/23 in line with the new National Strategy for Autistic Children, Young People and Adults: 2021-2026. The County Durham Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities Adults and Young People aged 14+ (2019 – 2022) will be reviewed later in 2022/23. These already incorporate Transforming Care objectives and will continue to do so, supported by commissioning plans for needs-led accommodation and support.

Regional Plans

- 26 In order to support some of the more complex pieces of work at a larger scale, a Regional Learning Disability and Autism Plan is being developed. This will seek to make a step change, to increase safe, high quality community provision to enable hospital discharges and reduce inpatient numbers.
- 27 The plan will bring a wide range of partners together to:
- Agree what works well and what needs to change
 - Make best use of regional and local opportunities
 - Deliver a focussed action plan to influence market shaping and regional developments
 - Make best use of current governance arrangements to deliver at pace change to the timeframe of hospital discharges
 - Implement agreed actions over the next two years.
- 28 **The Community Discharge Grant** is given to local authorities to accelerate the discharge of patients with a learning disability, autism or both from learning disability and mental health hospitals into the community. The funding can be spent on costs associated with discharge, including establishing community teams, funding accommodation and staff training.
- 29 The Community Discharge Grant provides £62 million nationally over 3 years. The allocation to the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) was £1,292,915 for 2020-21 and £1,555,281 for 2021-22, based on the number of actual and planned discharges for those periods.

- 30 Funding is allocated to Durham County Council who is the nominated local authority for NENC Transforming Care Partnership, and a Memorandum of Understanding is in place naming Durham as the lead Local Authority. Durham County Council allocates the funding to individual local authorities and coordinates the completion of a reporting tool to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) for all of the 13 Local Authorities involved.
- 31 In 2021/22 Durham County Council received c.£350,000 based on a figure of 23 actual and planned discharges from inpatient beds, which were commissioned by the CCG or Specialised Commissioning. The figures will be updated at the end of the financial year ahead of the 2022/23 allocations.
- 32 For 2021/22, Durham County Council reported to the DHSC that the Community Discharge Grant was used to speed up and facilitate discharges by paying for staff to aid the transition from hospital to community placements; providing furnishings and paying for rent or necessary works to be undertaken to secure housing and enable timely discharge.

Approach to Wellbeing

- 33 Commissioning activity is already adopting the Approach to Wellbeing principles, e.g. for the planned Transforming Care services, consideration is being given to social value through service specifications and tender processes, which include collaborative commissioning and coproduction approaches. Local residents have been consulted through the planning processes, and the people who will be living in the new services and their families are being involved as much as possible in the design of the accommodation as well as care plans.
- 34 The new services are being commissioned to build resilience, maximise independence and improve outcomes for those who are currently in hospital or other restrictive environments. Commissioners are developing these services in partnership with health, social care and housing providers, working across different sectors to reduce duplication and have a greater impact.

NHS Long Term Plan commitments

- 35 The NHS Long Term Plan sets out key deliverables to improve the lives of people with a learning disability, autistic people, or both, and their families. The plan was developed in the spirit of co-production, involving much engagement with partners, stakeholders and, most importantly,

people with a learning disability, autism or both, and their families. Local areas are encouraged to engage with the same groups of people locally in the development of their long-term plans.

Key national ambitions at a glance:

Tackle the causes of morbidity and preventable deaths in people with a learning disability and for autistic people, though work on reducing health inequalities	Make the necessary investment in intensive, crisis and forensic community teams to support people to live in the community and reduce preventable admissions to inpatient services	We will work with CYP services to improve access to and reduce waiting times for Autism diagnosis for children
Introduce a digital flag in summary care records to enable NHS staff to easily make adjustments for autistic people and people with a learning disability	All services funded by the NHS will adopt the NHS improvement Learning Disability standards	By 2023/24 children and young people with the most complex needs will have a designated key worker
The NHS must do more to improve the quality of care provided across the NHS and in particular reduce the use of restrictive practices	We will work with partners to bring hearing, sight and dental checks for children and young people in special schools.	More people with a learning disability will receive an annual health check, and health checks will be piloted for autistic people

Main implications

- 36 If the Transforming Care programme and NHS Long Term plan is not appropriately delivered in a timely way, the main impact is on the health, wellbeing and safety of individuals with learning disabilities and their families, as well as staff in community and inpatient settings. This would also present financial, political and reputational risks for the council and NHS in relation to hospital admissions, delayed discharges, poor quality of care and increased costs to the local health and social care system.
- 37 The impact of the pandemic has to be taken into account as this affects the capacity to drive forward key areas of commissioning and strategic activity as well as quality assurance works. It also affects the robustness of the provider market. Despite the pandemic, and even because of it, the work to sustain and commission sufficient levels of high quality, needs-led services in the community must continue, in order to address the service pressures and gaps already identified prior to the pandemic.

Conclusion

- 38 Progress on meeting the Transforming Care trajectories has been impacted by the Covid pandemic and the change in scope. This is likely to continue into the next financial year, and further progress may also be affected by additional requirements placed on commissioners by the NHS Long Term plan requirements, Quality Assurance guidance and changes to the Integrated Care System.
- 39 However, the political focus on Transforming care and the current local strategic priorities means that work to develop appropriate community services has continued over the last year. This has resulted in two business cases being approved for longer term and step-up/step down provision within supported living and residential care planned for 2022-2023. In-depth review work is helping to inform commissioning plans for the short, medium and long-term.
- 40 When these developments come to fruition, the broadening of appropriate community support and improved pathways will help facilitate hospital discharges and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions in the future.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Legal advice continues to be sought on all key aspects of new service developments.

Finance

Capital and revenue requirements are incorporated into detailed business cases for new service developments

Consultation

Consultation and coproduction approaches will be followed as part of new services developments and ongoing involvement in strategy implementation.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The strategic work outlined in this report aims to improve services for all people with learning disabilities and/or autism who may also experience mental health issues.

Climate Change

No implications, climate change will be reference in service specifications for new services

Human Rights

New developments and Quality assurance aims to ensure the human rights of people with learning disabilities/autism/mental health issues are protected.

Crime and Disorder

No implications as a result of this report.

Staffing

No implications as a result of this report.

Accommodation

Referenced within the body of the report. New service developments may involve DDC owned land or buildings, as detailed in relevant business cases.

Risk

Risks of not delivering Transforming Care include poor outcomes for individuals and their families, unnecessary admissions to hospital, poor inpatient care, delayed discharges, increased costs to local health and social

care system. Risks to completion/success of new developments required- impact of pandemic on timescales and commissioner and provider market capacity, workforce issues, political risks and financial risks (significant capital monies required dependent on successful bids).

Procurement

Contract Procedure Rules will be followed for all new services.