

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **COMMENTS ON NORTH EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 2023/24**

The Committee welcomes North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Account 2023/24 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.

In considering the performance information provided by the trust, members noted that NEAS continues to be one of the best performing ambulance trusts across England and Wales in respect of responsiveness across all categories when compared to National average response time. However, members remain concerned that performance was outside the national targets for all categories but acknowledge the increasing demands being placed upon the Trust. Members also note that the performance reported are for mean ambulance response times across the NEAS footprint and there remains concern about performance specifically across County Durham.

In considering performance against 2023/24 priorities, members noted that all of the priorities were partially achieved. In respect of reducing handover delays the collaboration with system partners is welcomed as is the reviewing procedures between NEAS and each Emergency Department within the region. Ongoing commitment to reducing patient harm resulting from handover delays is also welcomed for 2024/25.

The importance placed on learning from incidents by the trust is supported and the principle of putting patients and families at the heart of any patient safety incidents and associated learning also welcomed. The development of the patient safety incident response plan is noted and the reduction in the number of never events and avoidable patient safety incidents welcomed.

Members are pleased to see the success of the implementation of clinical supervision leading to a reduction of harm to patients and increase in safe care; reporting learning and confidence amongst staff. This is borne out by improved staff survey results particularly relating to motivation at work.

The Trust has also widened/increased public involvement in the development and monitoring of patient safety and experience services. The involvement of patient and staff in service change, delivery and redesign is welcomed along with the involvement of patients with the Trust's safety and quality committees to review and analyse safety data.

In considering the trust's proposed priorities for 2024/25, the Committee supports the standardisation and improvement of the way the Trust identifies; reports; reviews and investigates all deaths to improve learning from such events. The work to improve compliance with the national infection prevention control guidance is also welcomed as part of a system wide push to reduce healthcare acquired infections. Priority 3 has been derived from the learning from deaths and a need to improve early recognition of the deteriorating patient. The Committee supports this approach. Further work by the Trust in improving learning from incidents/complaints and lived experience to improve patient care and experience is also noted.

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 the 2024/25 priorities and performance targets within the Quality Account.

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **COMMENTS ON COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 2023/24**

The Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Account 2023/24 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.

During the past year the Committee has specifically engaged with the Trust in respect of Shotley Bridge Community Hospital; winter planning/preparedness and the work of the Local Accident and Emergency Delivery Board, the CQC Inspection report into Maternity Services within CDDFT and the Trust's associated improvement action plan. Members have also engaged with the Trust following concerns raised last year around the Trust's performance in addressing Sepsis and the procedures in place to ensure prompt delivery of antibiotics where necessary.

In terms of performance against the 2023/24 priorities the Committee notes improved performance in terms of patient safety in respect of reduced harm from inpatient falls; implementation of improved maternity standards; the prompt recognition and action on patient deterioration and the improved timeliness of administration of antibiotics for patients with suspected sepsis. The improvements delivered across the patient experience priorities are also welcomed particularly in respect of those with additional needs including patients with dementia, learning disabilities, autism and mental health support needs. The Committee notes that whilst work is ongoing to ensuring appropriate access to private rooms as part of palliative care the ability to deliver this may be dependent on resourcing and capacity. In terms of effectiveness of services, the Committee acknowledges that some improvements have been made in respect of A&E waiting times noting that it has been another extremely busy year in terms of demand and presentations.

The Committee is concerned that although there are so few pressure ulcers the report appears to indicate that initial assessments were not carried out in some cases although there was no fault in care delivered. In one or two cases this may have affected the outcomes and it is important that staff recognise that at times the documentation of treatment is almost as important as the care delivered. The Committee are pleased to note the references within the report to the widespread use of specialised education programmes across services to enhance patient care, safety and experience.

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 engage with the Trust in terms of performance. As in previous years, the Committee would request a progress report on delivery of 2024/25 priorities and performance targets within the Quality Account.

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **COMMENTS ON TEES ESK AND WEAR VALLEYS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNT FOR 2023/24**

The Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust's draft Quality Account 2023/24 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 Adults Wellbeing and Health OSC has engaged with the Trust in respect of inpatient adult learning disability services in County Durham and Darlington; the reconfiguration of community mental health services for Older People in County Durham and Darlington; the Trust's CQC Inspection results and associated Improvement Action Plan and the Trust's Community Services Transformation Plan. Additional engagement with the Trust has been undertaken by the Council's Children and Young Peoples' OSC in respect of CAMHS demand for service access, assessments and waiting times together with an evaluation into a pilot for Mental Health support in schools in the Consett area.

The Committee considers that the Quality Account is clearly set out and that progress made against 2023/24 priorities is clearly identified. The Committee welcome the inclusion of the patient's story within the document and also the information regarding the CQC inspection results. The positive initiatives referenced within the document are noted alongside the Trust's success in terms of recruitment and staff training and development.

With reference to the Improved Care planning priority the implementation of the CITO and DIALOG+ care planning systems are welcomed alongside appropriate staff training on the systems which aim to put patients at the centre of their Care. Regarding the feeling safe priority the Trust's work in improving the ward environment and increasing staff visibility on the wards is welcomed alongside the discharge planning improvements made and improved patient safety performance indicators.

The third priority for 2023/24 in embedding the national Patient Safety Incident Response Framework has been delivered and supported by an increase in the number of staff undertaking level 1 and 2 training.

In respect of the proposed Quality Account priorities for 2024/25, the Committee notes and supports the trust's plans to utilise patient experiences of service to improve access and early intervention. The second priority of

implementing timely relapse intervention is also welcomed as a means of minimising harm to patients and improving mental health and wellbeing. This is especially important given the reports fed into the Committee of continuing pressures experienced in respect of access to crisis support. The priority to improve personalisation on urgent care by using the “my story once” approach is supported and the Committee notes the initiatives links to the ongoing community transformation work on which the OSC has already engaged with the Trust.

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 progress report on delivery of 2024/25 priorities and performance targets.