



## Safest People, Safest Places

### Human Resources Committee

27 September 2024

### Additional Health Care Benefit

### Report of Director of People and Organisational Development

#### Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Human Resources Committee (HRC) on the implementation of the trial of an additional workforce healthcare benefit, through Benenden Health.

#### Background

2. A paper was presented to the HRC on the 5 September 2023 outlining the Service's intention to trial the use of Benenden Health care to offer both a cost-effective solution to reduce sickness absence and to support the wellbeing of the workforce.
3. Sickness figures across the Service over recent years have been steadily increasing and are above the target for the number of shifts lost, per person, in a year. The target set by the service is currently 7 shifts per person, and the average over the last three years is 9.5 shifts lost per person.
4. Benenden Services is a not-for-profit healthcare provider which is complementary to the NHS, where NHS waiting times are longer than 5 weeks. It allows for pre-existing conditions (which is contra to private healthcare providers), with services being immediately accessible upon joining where the Service opt for a fully funded provision. The scheme provides for diagnostic treatment up to £2,500 per condition.
5. The Service went live with the Service on 1 January 2024. Of the workforce, 531 have signed up as well as 120 family members.

#### Services used to date

6. Quarterly reporting is provided to outline which services have been accessed and total corporate usage per period. Table 1 below shows the usage from January to August 2024:

**Table 1**

Service used	Number of cases
24-hour GP Advice	63 (+28)
Care Advice	1
Diagnostics and Tests	25 (+8)
Mental Health Services	12 (+1)
Physiotherapy	27 (+12)
Treatment and Surgery	4 (+2)

<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>
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7. In terms of diagnostics and tests, the data shows the following types are being explored:

**Table 2**

<b>Service used</b>	<b>Number of cases</b>
Orthopaedic Surgery	13 (+6)
ENT	2
Gastroenterology	1
Gynaecology	2 (+1)
Rheumatology	1
Urology	2 (+1)
Neurology	1 (+1)
Dermatology	1 (+1)
Endocrinology	1 (+1)
General Surgery	1 (+1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

8. Sickness levels over the past 9 months are outlined below in Table 3. Whilst a reduction in shifts lost was seen over quarter 4 of the last reporting year, sickness levels have increased over quarter 1.

**Table 3**

<b>PI</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>WT &amp; Control</b>	910	651.5	646.5
<b>WT, Control and NU</b>	1072.72	819.68	867.71
<b>All Staff</b>	1341.59	1266.98	1390.52

## Conclusion

9. Benenden Health is one of many initiatives the service has in place to support the workforce when they are suffering from an illness which impacts on their ability to undertake their role. Whilst sickness levels are increasing, the Service have several cases where this initiative has assisted individuals with diagnostics or brought forward surgeries which would have instigated absence at some point. The above data will form part of the evaluation of the trial in early 2025 along with staff views and case studies.

## Recommendations

10. Members are requested to:

- a) Note the contents of the report and receive further updates in due course.

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