



Report of Michael Laing, Interim Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services, DCC

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) with a summary of the Better Care Fund (BCF) 2024-25 Quarter 2 Template Report.

Executive summary

- 2 The BCF is the only mandatory policy which facilitates local health and care systems to deliver integration in a way which supports person centred care, sustainability and improved outcomes for people and their informal carers.
- 3 The vision for the BCF over 2023-25 is to support people to live healthy, independent, and dignified lives, through joining up health, social care, and housing services seamlessly around the person. This vision is underpinned by the core BCF objectives:
 - Enable people to stay well, safe, and independent at home for longer.
 - Provide the right care in the right place at the right time.
- 4 The BCF Plan includes the following key metrics which are measured against planned targets:
 - Avoidable admissions.
 - Discharge to normal place of residence.
 - Falls.
 - Permanent admissions to care homes.
- 5 Positive performance is indicated in relation to permanent admissions to care homes which is 'on track to meet target'.

The remaining three key metrics do not have data available to assess progress in order to provide a clear Q2 Position.

Capacity and Demand Assumption

- 6 The Q2 template poses specific narrative questions relating to both hospital discharge and community, which may reflect changes to the understanding of demand and capacity for admissions avoidance and hospital discharge since the completion of the original BCF Plan 2023-25, Actual Activity for April-September 2024 for each service pathway within Hospital Discharge and activity for community referrals are reported in the Quarter 2 Template. The reporting requirements also include a summary of expenditure, in relation to all previously entered schemes from the plan.
- 7 The BCF 2024-25 Quarter 2 Reporting Template was approved under delegated authority to meet the submission date of the 31 October 2024 required by NHS England.

Recommendations

- 8 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:
 - (a) note the contents of this report and the BCF 2024-2025 Quarter 2 submission which was submitted to NHS England on 31 October 2024;
 - (b) agree to receive future BCF performance updates at the Health and Wellbeing Board meetings.

Background

- 9 The BCF is the only mandatory policy to facilitate integration through a pooled budget which provides a mechanism for joint health and social care and commissioning, by bringing together ring fenced budgets from health and funding paid directly to local government to support adult care services.
- 10 The BCF allocation for County Durham in 2024-25 was £107.3m which includes the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), the improved Better Care Fund (iBCF), Durham County Council's ASC Discharge Funding and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) Discharge Funding allocation for County Durham. All of which aim to reduce pressure on the NHS, support and adult care and assist the provider market.

National BCF Metrics

- 11 The BCF 2024-25 sets out the following key metrics for measuring performance:
 - Avoidable admissions to hospital.
 - The percentage of people discharged from hospital aged 65 years and over / 100,000 population.
 - Emergency admissions due to falls for people aged 65 years and over / 100,000 population.
 - Rate of permanent admissions to care homes aged 65 years and over/ 100,00 population.
- 12 Assessment of progress against the metrics for the period is measured through several options 'on track to meet target', 'not on track to meet target' or 'data not available to assess progress'.
- 13 Performance is included in the attached BCF 2024-25 Quarter 2 reporting template (Appendix 2)
- 14 Positive performance is indicated in relation to permanent admissions to care homes which is 'on track to meet target'. Between April and September 2024 there were 421 permanent admissions, which equates to a rate of 351.1/100,000 population. Our annual target is 739.7/100,000 population. The remaining three key metrics concerning 'avoidable admissions', 'falls' and 'discharge to normal place of residence' do not have data available to assess progress in order to provide a clear Q2 position.

Capacity and Demand Assumptions

- 15 The Q2 reporting template introduces set questions relating to both hospital discharge and community, which may reflect changes to the understanding of demand and capacity for admissions avoidance and hospital discharge since the original BCF Plan 2023-25 was completed. Our understanding of demand and capacity remains largely unaltered with due consideration given to the winter period which has been factored in.
- 16 Actual activity for April-September 2024 for each service pathway within hospital discharge and community referrals are reported in the template.
- 17 A summary of expenditure in relation to all previously entered schemes from the plan are also included in the template.

Conclusion

- 18 It is acknowledged that there are problems with the timing of reporting schedules and the availability of accurate data, which pose challenges in demonstrating achievements.
- 19 In County Durham we continue to innovate and develop services which seek to improve performance and outcomes for people through our system wide integrated approach.

Author: Paul Copeland, Strategic Programme Manager: Integration

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Care Act 2014 amended the NHS Act 2006 to provide the legislative basis for the Better Care Fund.

Finance

There is a requirement that the Better Care Fund is transferred into one or more pooled funds established under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006.

Consultation and Engagement

As necessary through the Health and Wellbeing Board and as appropriate with internal and external partners and stakeholders.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 require the Council to ensure that all decisions are reviewed for their particular impact upon people.

Climate Change

Consideration of the impact by climate change in decision making and reporting have been considered.

Human Rights

Not Applicable.

Crime and Disorder

Not Applicable.

Staffing

Staff are required to adhere to relevant legislation and those regulatory requirements relating to their role.

Accommodation

Not Applicable.

Risk

Risk management approaches are outlined within the Section 75 Agreement and managed through the appropriate governance arrangements.

Procurement

Not Applicable.

Appendix 2: Quarter 2 Reporting Template

Please note, there is a 'glitch' in the template which means that after fully completing the 'metrics' TAB , the cover TAB checklist continues to remain 'red'. Please ignore this and be assured that this does not affect the overall functionality or reliability of the template . Given that this is Version 3 of the template the BCF National Team have advised that a new version would not be published.