

HEALTH AND CARE GENERAL UPDATE PAPER

Joint report from the Director of Integrated Adult Social Care at DCC, the Director of Public Health, Communities & Prosperity at DCC, and the Chief Medical Officer of NHS Devon

1) Recommendation

That the Committee be asked to note this report.

2) Background / Introduction

The report contains updates on key and standing items, and general information including on responding to specific actions, requests or discussions during the previous Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee meeting.

3) Devon County Council Integrated Adult Social Care updates

3.1 Update on the IASC consultations

3.1.1 Wellbeing Exeter

Following the draft Cabinet paper being discussed at the Special Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee in July, which provided committee members with the opportunity to comment, the paper will then be taken to Cabinet on the 13 September for decision.

Given the timings of Scrutiny and Cabinet, any decision made by Cabinet will take place between publication of Scrutiny papers and the Scrutiny committee. A verbal updated can be provided at the Scrutiny committee meeting on the 21 September.

3.1.2 North Devon Link Service

The Council intends to hold a further consultation to seek views on the proposals to close the Link Service and the three remaining Link Centres. When the consultation dates have been finalised we will ensure Members are made aware. When the Council comes to make a decision following the further consultation, all feedback and responses already provided from the existing consultation will be taken into consideration.

3.1.3 Learning Disability and Respite Centres

The Council is considering options in relation to day services, and it is anticipated future options for consultation will be available for public comment in the Autumn.

3.1.4 18+ Homelessness contract

Following the Special Scrutiny Committee Meeting on the 27 July the consultation has been paused. Contracts with providers have been extended until the end of March 2024. The

Council will continue to talk to Devon's eight District and City Councils, working together to agree a way forward that ensures ongoing homelessness support across the county.

3.1.5 Carers contract

The Council is beginning the preliminary work ahead of a process of recommissioning for the future and will advise as that work develops.

3.2 Devon County Council Integrated Adult Social Care 2022-23 budget update

3.2.1 The Councils Month 4 Budget Monitoring Report will be discussed at Cabinet on the 13 September. Members of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee can read the [report](#) in that was published on the 5 September.

3.2.2 A verbal update at the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee can be provided to Members on the 21 September if requested.

3.3 Winter preparations taking shape

3.3.1 In July, Local Authorities and care providers received the [annual adult social care winter letter](#) from Helen Whately, Minister of State for Social Care. The letter sets out the key steps needed so that adult social care systems are resilient and able to provide people and their carers with the support they need this winter. The letter also sets out the expectations for how NHS organisations will work with adult social care in both the planning and delivery of support.

3.3.2 The letter confirms how the £600 million of funding announced in the [People at the Heart of Care publication](#).

3.3.3 Local authorities are required to provide by 28 September 2023 a summary description, aligned to NHS winter surge plans, of how they will ensure sufficient capacity to meet potential adult social care surges in demand over winter, including through use of this fund.

3.4 Devon Multi Agency Systems Review – Devon County Council update

3.4.1 A [review](#) was commissioned by NHS England and Improvement to provide an independent, multi-agency systems review of the safety and quality of emergency mental health care provisions in Devon. The review scrutinised and assessed areas of concern identified following five homicides committed in Devon in 2018 and 2019 by individuals who had been under the care of mental health services. The primary focus of this review was on learning from three of those homicides that occurred in 2019 in Exeter, committed by the same individual.

3.4.2 Much has been done since then to improve the partnership working between Devon County Council, Devon Partnership NHS Trust and Devon and Cornwall Police. In terms of the DCC response the following has taken place:

- Out-of-hours capacity has been increased in response to increasing demand and working procedures have been improved and further enhanced officers training and development has been established.
- A review of the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) rota took place August 2019 and this provided additional temporary capacity through increased efficiency. The new rota was implemented April 2020 and an additional Service Manager was recruited to lead on mental health within the EDS.
- The EDS Governance Board was established in February 2020.
- A joint review was undertaken, and an EDS Options Report presented to the EDS Governance Board in August 2020.
- A decision was made to replace the generic service for children, adults and mental health into separate specialisms.
- Additional funding was agreed to enable the separation of services, this will increase AMHP provision in the out of hours service by 300%.
- A campaign was launched to recruit to all posts. The new rota commenced on the 31 October 2022.
- There is an in principal agreement for DPT to host the out of hours mental health service and become a 24-hour service.
- The Multi-Agency Protocol was approved and implemented for the EDS, who provide the out of hours Approved Mental Health Professional Service, in November 2022.

4.1 Update of the delivery of our vision and strategies

- 4.1.1 We are starting to develop the approach and resources and that will help us to deliver our vision and strategy and to refocus on to how we promote people's independence, working with people to better understand their strengths and what they want to achieve and to reduce dependency on statutory service.
- 4.1.2 We have a clear narrative on our challenges, and on where we want to get to, the work taking place now is to link these together with co-produced action plans and a clear communications plan so that staff across IASC and the wider council understand our approach and can see what we are trying to do.
- 4.1.3 Members have an important role to play in helping us share our messages and approach in communities and neighbourhood. We will support Members to do this.

4.2 Update on CQC Assurance and DCC preparedness

- 4.2.1 [CQC published an update](#) on its approach to local authority pilots on 15 August. Most notably this update includes confirmation of the delay to the start of formal baseline assessments from September 2023 to later in the year. The delay is welcomed as it provides an opportunity for reflection post pilots and any changes to the approach to be communicated to councils.
- 4.2.2 It's likely that CQC will write to the first tranche of the councils that they select to be part of the formal baseline assessments nine weeks in advance of fieldwork taking place.

- 4.2.3 New burdens funding for Assurance of £27k per LA has now been approved by the Minister. The funding is now going through the various approvals before it can be announced and the given to local authorities.
- 4.2.4 The CQC has also published its guidance on the [Operational framework for adult social care intervention in local authorities](#). This framework sets out the DHSC approach to enhanced monitoring and support, and statutory intervention post a local authority going through the CQC Assurance process.
- 4.2.5 The DHSC priority will remain supporting authorities to lead their own improvement wherever possible but, where there are serious and persistent failures, the DHSC will offer 'enhanced support and monitoring', asking authorities to produce and implement an improvement plan.
- 4.2.6 New powers provided through the Health and Care Act 2022 mean that the Secretary of State can intervene if satisfied that authorities have failed or are failing to discharge Care Act functions to an acceptable standard.
- 4.2.7 Following the Local Government Association Peer Challenge here in Devon this July, we will shortly be publishing the final report on our [Peer Challenge webpage](#). The report will form the basis of our improvement planning as we prepare for participation in the CQC Assurance process likely at some point over the next 12 months.
- 4.2.8 In order to ensure Scrutiny Member contribution and oversight of the improvement plan, and to support Member participation when the CQC Inspectors are in Devon, we will be holding a Scrutiny Masterclass session on the 27 September to set out our draft improvement plan, seeking feedback and contribution ahead of bringing the subsequent iteration of the plan to the formal Committee Meeting in November and then to Cabinet in December.

4) Devon County Council Public Health updates

4.1 Oral Health

- 4.1.1 At Home Dental a Devon based company won the tender for the new NHS Supervised Toothbrushing Scheme in the South West region. There will be a phased roll-out starting with Devon, Plymouth and Torbay who are the pilot sites. It is called The Big Brush Club and will start this academic year. Their team of fully qualified and experienced Facilitators, will be going into schools and nurseries in areas of greatest deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 1-6 deciles) to deliver oral health education, provide training to school staff and facilitate the roll out of toothbrushing daily for children aged 3-5 years attending nursery or Reception Class in schools. They will be supplying free toothbrushes and home packs for schools and nurseries and will offer ongoing support.
- 4.1.2 Local authorities have specific dental public health functions and are statutorily required to provide or commission oral health promotion programmes provide or commission oral health surveys and to participate in any oral health survey conducted or commissioned by the Secretary of State

- 4.1.3 Public Health Devon commission Royal Devon University Healthcare to provide Devon's Oral Health Improvement Service, which delivers oral health education to professionals working with children and vulnerable adults across Devon. Public Health work with the Community Dental Services to support them to deliver the National Oral Health Survey in Devon. The 2023/24 Oral Health Survey will be in 5 year olds.
- 4.1.4 With the delegation of the commissioning responsibility for dentistry to NHS Devon, Public Health Devon support NHS Devon as a member of the Peninsula Oral Health Steering Group to develop strategy, plans and oversee implementation to firmly embed dental and oral health services within the health and care system infrastructure, realising the significant opportunities to further address health inequalities and support the significant pressures on the urgent and primary care systems.

4.2 New Stop Smoking Service Provider

- 4.2.1 On 1 November 2023, a new Devon Specialist Stop Smoking Service will be launched, provided by [ICE Creates](#). It will pick up and develop the current stop smoking support available through the OneSmallStep service when this contract expires at the end of October. This new service will provide specialist behavioural support and stop smoking products (such as nicotine replacement therapy and e-cigarettes) to smokers looking to quit. The service will also provide free specialist training and support to community stop smoking advisors and wider workforces.
- 4.2.2 The OneSmallStep service has been effective at supporting many people to quit smoking; the new stop smoking service will build on this success and contribute towards the aspirations set out in the new [Smokefree Devon Alliance strategy](#). ICE Creates values the input of local partners and will therefore be approaching organisations over the next few months to co-create the new service, so it is tailored to the needs of Devon and the people it hopes to reach.
- 4.2.3 Referrals can continue to be made to [One Small Step](#) for residents who would like help with stopping smoking, and clients will be transitioned to the new stop smoking service when it is launched. People seeking information around topics other than smoking cessation can access support via the national NHS website 'Better Health' www.nhs.uk/better-health, which has lots of information and tools to help support health behaviour changes. Devon County Council are also exploring a universal digital offer to support Devon's residents with localised information and advice around lifestyle behaviours.

4.3 Sexual Health Services

- 4.3.1 Devon County Council and Torbay Council Public Health Teams have awarded a new contract for the C-Card (condom distribution) Scheme, aimed at young people (13-24) across Devon and Torbay to Preventx Limited. This service will be a primarily digital offer targeting sexually active 16–24-year-olds, ensuring condom distribution is the standard prevention offer to young people, although the service will also support younger people most at risk of poor sexual and reproductive health

outcomes. The service should help young people make informed and responsible decisions about healthy consensual relationships, safer sex and condom use and all aspects of sexual and reproductive health.

- 4.3.2 During the discovery and design process, there will be an initial period of engagement with stakeholders and coproduction with the target audience. This will shape and develop the digital condom distribution service to ensure it meets the needs of the local users. The contract will commence on 1st October 2023 and fully operational from 11th December 2023.
- 4.3.3 A PIN notice was also issued declaring Public Health's intention to recommission its main sexual health service in 2025. Pre-market engagement conversations are taking place and insight work, benchmarking and other assessments are underway to ensure an affordable service, meeting the sexual health needs of the local population is commissioned. Public health is responsible for commissioning health services related to STI testing and treatment, contraception services and sexual health advice, prevention and promotion activities. Separate contracts are in place for sexual health services in primary care.

5) NHS Devon updates

5.1 Finance

- 5.1.1 As at the end of May 2023 One Devon is reporting a year to date £17.6m deficit against a planned deficit of £17.4m. The reported forecast is a deficit of £42.3m which is on plan.
- 5.1.2 The Devon ICS had made efficiency savings of £26.14m which is ahead of plan by £7.1m. Forecast savings are behind plan by £1.5m.

5.2 Performance

- 5.2.1 Operationally, prolonged industrial action by frontline staff has had an impact on performance. The recovery period after these spells of industrial action also impacts performance. Patients continue to be affected by long waits within planned and urgent care.
- 5.2.2 One Devon partners are working together to improve the planned care position for patients. Progress is being reported through the Elective Care Board. Within urgent care, workstreams are also in place to drive improvement across the whole pathway.

Urgent and Emergency Care

- 5.2.3 Urgent care performance has seen no sustained improvement during Q1 of the 2023/24 financial year or into July 2023. Ambulance handover delays above the 15-minute target reduced (improved) in July to 6384 from 6804 hours, however this remains behind our trajectory. Current ambulance handover data is unreliable due to the ongoing reporting issues at SWASFT, and solutions are being discussed. 4-hour performance improved from 60% in June to 63.8% in July but remains below our trajectory.

- 5.2.4 Category 2 ambulance response times improved from 45 minutes in June to an average response time of 36 minutes in July, against the national target of 30 minutes.
- 5.2.5 In July we welcomed Sarah Jane Marsh (National Director of Urgent and Emergency Care and Deputy Chief Operating Officer of the NHS) to Devon to talk her through our work to improve urgent and emergency care. She was joined by Neill Moloney (Director of UEC Tiering) and they met with Jane Milligan (Chief Executive) and Anthony Fitzgerald (Chief Operating Officer) from NHS Devon. They had visits to Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, South Western Ambulance Service HQ, Devon Partnership Trust in Exeter and Derriford Hospital.

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- 5.2.6 Almost 33,000 calls were made to NHS 111 in Devon during June. Some of these calls are being taken by other providers due to an agreement with NHS England to provide planned mutual support across the country. Due to there being a mix of providers handling calls across the country the performance data is limited.
- 5.2.7 For the calls handled by our Devon provider, Practice Plus Group (PPG), the average speed of answering was 286 seconds. This was 107 seconds above the national average but an improvement on the previous month for PPG. Call abandonment was 17%, 6% above the national average but again an improvement on the previous month for PPG.
- 5.2.8 Since taking over, PPG have made notable improvements and are heading towards meeting all parts of the integrated urgent care service contract. There are still areas within the out of hours service that need improvement, such as clinical staffing for the Out of Hospital (OOH) face-to-face element of the service, which can lead to delays.

Elective Care – progress on waiting lists

- 5.2.9 We continue to make progress on elective (planned) care recovery over the past couple of years.
- 5.2.10 Like all areas of the country, the pandemic had a major impact on our ability to carry out elective procedures and resulted in thousands of people waiting over two years for treatment.
- 5.2.11 However, thanks to determined and sustained work by staff within our providers and our own organisation, there are now no patients waiting more than two years for treatment at Royal Devon or Torbay.
- 5.2.12 The Nightingale Hospital continues to support the reduction in elective long waiter position and has now undertaken 1000 cataract operations.
- 5.2.13 There is still more to be done to reduce our waiting lists, but this is an important milestone that is making a big difference to our patients.

Hospital discharges

- 5.2.14 The number of patients occupying a hospital bed in Devon who are medically fit to be discharged, known as No Criteria to Reside (NCTR), has improved since March 2023. As of 24 July, the average weekly percentage of general and acute hospital beds that were occupied with patients who had NCTR was 10% (231), although falling short of the 5% (110) target. Providers are implementing actions to reduce NCTR patients.
- 5.2.15 Average non elective length of stay has reduced by a day across the system and ranges between six and seven days between providers.

Primary and Community Care

- 5.2.16 NHS Devon continues to exceed three out of five access targets - access to general practice within one day of request, number of online/video consultations and clinical team appointments at pre-pandemic level. The target of 35% of appointments occurring within one working day of request continues to be met with 49.9% seen within one working day during June 2023 (compared with 50.1% national average).
- 5.2.17 GP appointments occurring within two weeks was 82.3% against an 85% target but better than the national average of 79.7%. Local implementation of the national 'Delivery Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care', published in May, will include focus on meeting this target.

Mental Health

- 5.2.18 The system has committed to continue progress with [national NHS Long Term Plan](#) ambitions in mental health, learning disability and neurodiversity, as agreed in the local plan for this year. This includes ensuring more people are able to access support through talking therapies and community mental health services, including perinatal mental health. The offer for children and young people as well as adults continues to be expanded.
- 5.2.19 Regular annual health checks for people with learning disabilities and physical health checks for people with serious mental illness (SMI) are important and essential, alongside access to care and treatment.
- 5.2.20 Furthermore, the ambition is that care and treatment is provided within the local area wherever possible – with a drive to ensure that there are no inappropriate out-of-area placements for adults with serious mental illness.
- 5.2.21 There continues to be a national focus on dementia diagnosis and this is mirrored in Devon. There is a need for local systems to work across health and care partners and communities to ensure appropriate dementia care and support. Demand in many other areas of care continues to grow, notably in autism diagnosis for children and young people.

5.2.22 Provider collaboration is focused on some key areas of development locally, such as the national '[Right Care, Right Person](#)' initiative, led by Devon and Cornwall Police; urgent and crisis care; national inpatient quality transformation; housing and investment in new regional inpatient mental health services for people with a learning disability and/or autism.

CQC concludes inspections at the Royal Devon and highlights improvements needed

5.2.23 The Care Quality Commission has published a [report](#) following inspections across medicine, surgery and diagnostics in November 2022 and a well-led inspection in May 2023.

5.2.24 This report collates both inspections and has resulted in the CQC giving the Trust an overall rating of 'requires improvement'. The report is posted [here](#). There are three new 'must-do' actions following the well-led inspection:

- The Trust needs to ensure its systems and processes support it to oversee and respond to issues and risks more quickly and ensure learning from incidents, including never events and data issues.
- The Trust must ensure the information reported from its electronic patient record system is accurate and properly analysed to support regular audits to improve the quality of care.
- The Trust needs to achieve a stable financial position and continue to manage pressures so they do not compromise the quality of care.

5.2.25 We know work is already underway to address these issues, in addition to the 'must do' actions set out in the May service inspection reports. The Trust has developed action plans to address all of the areas of improvement identified, which will be published on the Trust website once approved.

Industrial action

5.2.26 The outcome of the latest junior doctor ballot was announced on the 31 August. Across September and October, for the first time in the history of the NHS, there will be four days in which junior doctors and consultants coordinate their industrial action. This is in addition to other days on which just junior doctors or just consultants will be on strike, the BMA has confirmed.

Consultants industrial action:

- 19 and 20 September
- 2, 3 and 3 October

Junior doctor industrial action:

- 20, 21 and 22 September
- 2, 3 and 4 October

Further details can be found on the [British Medical Association website](#). Updates about services in Devon and advice to patients during strike periods will be posted on the NHS Devon website: [Health Pressures - One Devon](#)

6 Latest News

6.1 Covid and Flu Vaccination Programme

- 6.1.1 Eligible people in Devon will now be offered a Covid vaccine from 11 September, in line with the latest expert guidance on the new Covid variant.
- 6.1.2 This change follows an announcement by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) on the risks presented by the new BA.2.86 variant and pre-emptive measures the NHS has been asked to take.
- 6.1.3 The adult Covid and flu vaccination programmes had been due to start in October to maximise protection over the winter months, but now those most at risk including adult care home residents will be vaccinated from 11 September.
- 6.1.4 Residents of older adult care homes and those most at risk including those who are immunosuppressed will receive their covid vaccine first.
- 6.1.5 Carers, pregnant women, and health and social care staff will all be among the other groups to be offered a Covid jab early this winter, as well as adults aged 65 and over.
- 6.1.6 From the 18 September, the NHS will start to invite people in priority order of risk and those eligible will be able to book an appointment on the National Booking Service
- 6.1.7 Where people had already booked an appointment for their flu vaccination earlier in September with their local provider, these appointments can go ahead. Wherever possible, vaccinations for flu and Covid-19 should still be offered at the same time, making it easier and more convenient for people to get vital protection from both viruses ahead of winter. Those eligible for an autumn Covid vaccine are:
 - residents in a care home for older adults
 - all adults aged 65 years and over
 - persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as laid out in the Immunisation Green Book, COVID-19 chapter (Green Book)
 - frontline health and social care workers
 - persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts (as defined in the Green Book) of people with immunosuppression
 - persons aged 16 to 64 years who are carers (as defined in the Green Book) and staff working in care homes for older adults.

6.2 Successful international recruitment programme run by NHS Devon welcomes its 1,000th nurse from overseas

- 6.2.1 A project set up to tackle workforce shortages in Devon's NHS is celebrating recruiting its 1,000th nurse from overseas.
- 6.2.2 Workforce challenges are at the root of many of the issues faced by the NHS in Devon and across England. Staff shortages can lead to urgent care facilities, such as Minor Injury Units, having to run a reduced service or closing temporarily, which has an impact across the health and care system and on the experience of patients. Similarly in social care, a shortage of qualified care workers leaves many care providers in Devon unable to expand their services to meet additional demand, or it can lead to delays in the provision of care to people living at home. There is also a shortage of qualified nurses in care homes and we are also encouraging nurses to join this vital sector.
- 6.2.3 The success of Devon's international recruitment programme, known as the Devon Alliance for International Recruitment, has seen it expand from recruitment for nurses in acute NHS hospitals, to cover other parts of the workforce where staff shortages are having an impact on patient care every day. The NHS Devon team are also helping to recruit allied health professionals, such as paramedics or radiographers, and social care workers.
- 6.2.4 Devon is one of only a few systems working with local authorities on international recruitment for adult social care, and the collaboration has been very successful. Since December 2022, 117 international care workers have taken up a post, providing domiciliary care, residential care, and supported living to people in Devon.
- 6.2.5 The Devon Alliance for International Recruitment are ethical recruiters who adhere to the World Health Organisation (WHO) code of ethical practice and only recruit nurses working in 'green list' countries – the places where staff can emigrate to work elsewhere without impacting the healthcare service in that country.
- 6.2.6 Further information can be found on the NHS Devon website: [Programme welcomes 1,000th nurse from overseas - One Devon](#)

6.3 Learning from the Lucy Letby case

- 6.3.1 The Lucy Letby case has horrified everyone, and our thoughts are with the families of the babies who have died and others who were so cruelly affected.
- 6.3.2 The Government has ordered an [independent inquiry](#) into the circumstances behind the horrific murders and attempted murders of babies at the Countess of Cheshire Hospital, to help ensure families get the answers they need, following the guilty verdict in the trial of former neonatal nurse Lucy Letby. The inquiry, [which will now be statutory](#), will look at the circumstances surrounding the deaths and incidents, including how concerns raised by clinicians were dealt with.
- 6.3.3 NHS England has since published [this letter](#) for ICBs and Trusts. We will be carefully reviewing the actions in this letter with our system partners and discussing this as a Board.

6.3.4 Finally, if any of your constituents have been affected by the issues raised by the Lucy Letby case, there are some organisation who can provide support [listed on our website](#).

6.4 GP Patient Survey Results – Devon rated second best in England for GP satisfaction

6.4.1 Patients across Devon have had their say on local access to general practice in the latest national GP Patient Survey, published by NHS England in July.

6.4.2 The results show that almost 8 in 10 people are satisfied with their local practice, some of the highest achievement seen across the country.

6.4.3 Satisfaction rates overall have decreased slightly from last year, but Devon is still performing better than other areas, with 78% of people describing their experience of their GP practice as good.

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