

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: 23 FEBRUARY 2023****POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

System Pressures including COVID

**Adult Social Care**

Adult Social Care services continue to face high demand, which is presenting a challenging position for the Council, both in respect to the capacity of providers of some categories of service to meet increasing levels of need and the capacity of the Council to meet statutory requirements for assessment and review alongside funding pressures.

Recruitment and retention remain a challenge for adult social care providers supporting people in Leicestershire. The Council and care providers have continued to maintain services to ensure flow through hospitals and provision for new community requests. The number of people awaiting a home care service is the lowest it has been in recent years, with fewer than 10 people waiting for a service on average.

The in-house service HART has been able to deliver increased reablement support to people over recent weeks and our Crisis Response Service continues to support in relation to the bridging of care to prevent admissions to hospital or to support discharge.

The Council continues to see high numbers of people placed in temporary care home placements, especially when they no longer require a hospital bed, and ongoing assessment is needed. Short term Government discharge grants have been utilised to support discharge and prevent the use of increased numbers of care home beds.

There has been an increase of home closures and limited capacity of appropriate support for people in supported living with learning disabilities, and for older adults nursing care over the last few months.

Despite the best efforts of care home providers in managing infection prevention and control and supporting their workers to take the COVID-19 vaccine and their boosters, outbreaks in care homes continue to occur with six out of 163 operational homes in Leicestershire experiencing an ongoing outbreak in early February. It is worth noting however that mortality rates have reduced and people showing symptoms have reported being less unwell. The autumn/winter COVID-19 booster programme has been delivered to eligible consenting people within care homes by GP-led or pharmacy-led teams to maximise take up and continue protection from vaccination; the take-up in early February amongst care home residents is 91%.

The Council is finalising its market sustainability plan to be submitted to the Government and be made available to the public by the end of March. There has been extensive engagement with adult social care providers on this topic, as well as

the annual uplifts for provider fees applicable from April 2023 to ensure sustainability of the Council's care and support provision.

### **NHS/ICB Update**

The LLR health and care system continues to work in partnership to provide services across the sub-region. Demands on services have been sustainably high over the month of February, with these issues compounded by industrial action across the public sector. Services have planned together across health and care and the additional investment in care outside of hospital has been welcomed by the system. This has enabled out of hospital care to be strengthened, with additional capacity put in pre- and post-hospital services. The additional capacity planned for these winter months within hospitals has also been put into place and further strengthened, leading to improvements in handover delays and patient and staff experience of care.

Whilst the position remains fragile, partners continue to transform pathways to support getting our patients seen in the right place at the right time with the right care. For example:

- Our unscheduled care hub continues to take patients who do not require acute care from the ambulance service, diverting them instead to the right health or care service to meet their needs. This has been strengthened with mental health support since December 2022, enabling parity of esteem.
- Our general practices continue to provide significantly more activity than in previous months, with over 600,000 appointments provided to support patient care
- Our joint health and care discharge services have maintained flow out of hospital through the winter months, with both retention and recruitment improving against last winter.

There is clearly further work to do across the system to support sustainable improvements; the 5-year plan is focused on designing and delivering these types of service changes at scale, ensuring place-based services are right for the people served. We continue to work through the Integrated Care System to improve the experience of delivering and receiving care across the LLR system, in line with the Leicestershire HWB plan and priorities.

### **LLR Integrated Care Strategy**

The initial draft of the LLR Integrated Care Strategy for comment is one of the items on today's agenda. It is another good example of partnership working and we have a real opportunity as Health and Wellbeing Board members to provide feedback and help shape it.

The Health and Wellbeing Board is key in ensuring the System-wide strategy is also reflective of the challenges facing Leicestershire as a Place, and focuses on issues such as mental health, in particular children and young people, cost of living, adult social care, health inequalities and the wider determinants of health.

## **Armed Forces Act 2022 and Armed Forces Covenant**

The armed for covenant is a promise to the nation made to ensure that service families do not face disadvantage in service provision. The County Council first signed the Covenant back in 2013 and refreshed its commitment in 2018. Since 2020 it has been recognised in the MOD Employee recognition Scheme as a gold award holder for its programme of support to the Covenant. We would encourage all organisations round the table to sign the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Covenant has three principles:

- i. the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces;
- ii. the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces; and
- iii. the principle that special provision for service people may be justified by the effect on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

In November 2022 the Armed Forces Act 2021 came into force meaning that organisations within the scope of the legislation are required to demonstrate due regard in decision making in relation to the above principles in the specified areas of housing, education and health.

The Covenant and Act cover the Veterans and Serving Personnel as well as the wider armed forces family, including spouses, children etc.

It is important we work across the sector around health to support this obligation. Work is underway across the ICS to create a single point of contact for veterans health across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Although in the early stages updates on this can be provided at future meetings

Previously the board has seen presentations encouraging GP's to sign up the Veteran friendly accreditation scheme. This is again something we would strongly encourage.

The recent Census captured veterans data for the first time we can now see greater detail in the evidence of need for this cohort across Leicestershire and this should enable us to better plan future service delivery and support.

Further information on any of the above can be obtained from [Sarah.carter@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.carter@leics.gov.uk) Armed Forces Officer for Leicestershire County Council.

## **Time to Talk Day Conference**

The Chair attended the Time to Talk Day conference hosted by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Suicide Audit and Prevention Group on 2 February 2023 with a specific focus on, 'making time to talk'.

Originally planned for 9 September 2022 as part of World Suicide Prevention Day, it was rearranged for February, and followed the same format and schedule. Attended by partners across LLR it was a great opportunity to highlight the importance of

'making time to talk' for our mental health. Simple initiatives such as Run Talk Run, set up by local community members is one example of the support networks available across Leicestershire.

### **Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) – Video**

Following the JHWS design document and Plan-on-a-Page that was brought to the Board in December, the County Council's Communications Team have produced a short video which introduces the HWB and provides a brief overview to the Strategy. This is in addition to the Easy Read document that was produced last year. These will be available to view on the website.

Click on the link to view the video: [Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board - PROOF](#)

