

Chair's Position Statement

Health & Wellbeing Board: 29th February 2024

NHS Update

The LLR health and care system continues to work collaboratively to provide efficient and effective services to the people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The winter pressures have, as expected had a negative impact in areas where we had been showing improvements last quarter, and ongoing periods of industrial action have further contributed to system pressures. Understanding the reason for the deterioration in performance of ambulance response and ED waiting times is complex but is mainly attributable to the following factors:

- 1) Increase in Emergency attendances.
- 2) Increase in Emergency admissions.
- 3) Delays with complex discharge
- 4) Bed capacity deficit

The senior management and system executives meet regularly to respond to these system challenges and to agree and implement mitigation where we can do so. Actions taken include increasing urgent care capacity in the community and for patients to be streamed into from the Emergency department. Push targets and improvement programmes along with additional patient transport to support timely discharge, and an increase in community bed capacity.

We are not hitting the national targets for ambulance response times, ED 4 hour waiting times, and Acute bed occupancy and continue to strive to do so. Each of these metrics is however showing an improvement from our 2022/23 figures.

From an elective care perspective, UHL delivered zero 104+ week waits, expect zero 78+ week waits by March and for 65+ week waits expect to have less than 200 patients at the end of March.

Whilst health and care remain committed to working in partnership, the financial position of each organisation across the public sector remains under significant strain. The system will continue to work together to mitigate these pressures as best it can and any impacts noted, either on people or system partners will be fed through to the HWB and individual partners as required.

Whilst the improvements outlined are of great significance to our population, we must acknowledge that delivering these services remains a challenge for all colleagues across health and care and the experience of all our patients is not the same. We will continue to work in partnership to address these challenges.

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care services continue to face high demand, which is presenting a challenging position for the Council, to meet statutory requirements for assessment and review alongside funding pressures. However, positive inroads have been made into numbers of people awaiting an assessment.

Recruitment and retention remain a challenge for many adult social care providers supporting people in Leicestershire, but are mitigated in part by international workers carrying out social care work through the sponsorship scheme. 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 remains very low due to good capacity in the market, and the in-house HART service has been able to deliver increased reablement support to people over recent weeks, supporting both increasing numbers of people in the community and to facilitate hospital discharges. The service now undertakes visits to UHL and community hospital wards to ensure that the right people are being provided with reablement which in turn reduces demand for ongoing need.

Limited capacity of older adults nursing care placements persists, alongside low numbers of people assessed as being eligible for Continuing Health Care and Funded Nursing Care. The Council has implemented a new nursing fee band which was introduced in October 2023.

The autumn and winter COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccination programme began in September, with 85% of care home residents receiving one, which is in line with the expected take up. 86% of care home residents received a flu vaccination. The eligible cohorts for the COVID-19 spring vaccination programme have been announced availability of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine is being promoted to the social care workforce. A new local vaccination service is available to help the local population find vaccination sites offering COVID-19, flu or MMR vaccines.

The Council will shortly be releasing its annual uplifts for its rates paid to external adult social care providers, following a robust process which will ensure that the Council can continue to meet its statutory responsibilities despite the very challenging budgetary position.

The current financial situation remains a challenge but measures are in place to ensure fair outcomes for people who draw on services and cost effectiveness of support. Staff are well engaged and committed to providing a consistent approach within the restrictions agreed.

JSNA Reference Group Update

At the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) meeting on 31st October 2023, the Board approved the proposals to re-establish the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Steering Group. The purpose of the JSNA Steering Group will be to agree and align the chapters within each JSNA cycle in accordance with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) priorities. Once completed, each JSNA chapter will be presented to the HWB with a list of recommendations to take forward. The Board will delegate responsibility to the relevant HWB subgroup or appropriate partner to deliver against the recommendations and report back on progress.

Membership of the JSNA Steering Group has been finalised, with good representation from a range of key partners and stakeholders. The first meeting is due to be held on 7th March

2024. Consideration will be given to the progress with the current JSNA cycle, agency needs assessment priorities and the forward work plan.

Health & Wellbeing Board Development Sessions

Following discussions and feedback from Board members it was agreed to hold a number of development sessions in between the formal HWB meetings. This was to create an opportunity to unpick the challenges and barriers being faced and how the HWB can support and add value.

A forward plan has been developed to deliver sessions themed on each life course priority, within the JHWS, over the next 12 months. The aim of each session is, not to duplicate the fantastic work already going on across the subgroups and partnerships, but to understand the priorities driven by national policy at system level and how that impacts on place, as in Leicestershire and the local neighbourhoods.

The first session was held in December 2023 and themed on Mental Health, a cross-cutting theme. An update report summarising key points and outcomes will be presented as an item in this agenda. The second session, themed on the End of Life/Dying Well priorities, is scheduled in for end of March 2024. The HWB can expect an update report at the next Board in meeting in May 2024.

Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy Refresh & HWB Annual Report

Strategy Refresh

As we are entering year three of the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) it seems timely to highlight to our Board members and partners that we will be looking to review and refresh the priorities to ensure they are still relevant. As outlined in the JHWS it was agreed that a refresh of priorities would be carried out after the first three years.

Through the update reports we receive from the subgroups; it is evident a lot of good work is happening across Leicestershire to deliver the strategic priorities and improve the health outcomes of the population. It is worth pointing out that the JHWS a long-term strategy to be delivered over ten years.

Between now and the next Board meeting in May, the outlines of a plan will be drawn up with clear deadlines and milestones. It is anticipated that the refresh will be carried out through this coming financial year, including any appropriate consultation, ready to be presented at the May 2025 Board. It will be the responsibility of the subgroups to review the JHWS priorities within the relevant life course stages, whether that by way of a workshop or by other means, to ensure they are still current, making any adjustments as necessary.

Annual Report

The HWB Annual Report covering 2023/24 will also be due to be published in May 2025. This is a real opportunity for partners and subgroups to highlight their work and good practice, whilst acknowledging the challenges faced through the cost of living and recent pressures around flooding and gas supplies affecting parts of Leicestershire.

Healthwatch

Healthwatch continued with their Enter and View visits over the summer across GP surgeries and care homes. The aims of the visits are to highlight good practice that can be celebrated and shared with others, and to identify any issues service users feel concerned about.

The recently published reports can be found on their website or accessed via the links below:

<https://healthwatchll.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Waring-Close-Care-Home-Enter-and-View-report-Aug2023.pdf>

<https://healthwatchll.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Glenfield-Surgery-Enter-View-Report-Sept-2023.pdf>

Chair's Engagement

I have attended a number of community events over the past few months, such as the Blaby Health and Wellbeing Festival, presented Food for Life awards to two local schools, including the launch of the Timebank project in Charnwood: <https://charnwoodtimebank.org.uk/>

Timebank's mission is about "Strengthening communities and building skills one hour at a time". Time4Leicestershire co-ordinates the community timebanks across Leicestershire, with an overall vision to have active timebanks in every District of the county.

Timebanking is the process of exchanging time and skills with other people in your local community. Everyone's time is valued equally – an hour of time equals one time credit. You spend time sharing a skill or helping someone and in return you earn time credits – it is a two-way process of giving and receiving time, skills and knowledge. More information about timebanking via Time4Leicestershire can be found here <https://time4leicestershire.org.uk/guides/timebanking> .

I have also been involved in several partnership events and was recently interviewed by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) regarding the positive impact of social prescribing - an approach that connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing.

The UKSPF is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and will provide £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. For more information, visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus.

PRESS RELEASE: Care experienced children and young people given 'protected characteristic' status

A move has been made to ensure children and young people in Leicestershire who are care experienced face less of a disadvantage in life.

Leicestershire County Council has committed to making being 'care experienced' a protected characteristic, following a unanimous vote by councillors at the Council meeting on 21 February.

It recognises that experience of being a child in care can be a potential source of discrimination similar to other protected characteristics under the Equalities Act, such as race or disability.

This includes discrimination which results in disproportionate negative outcomes across a range of areas such as employment, education, and exposure to the criminal justice system. All of which have an impact on overall health and wellbeing.

The council now joins 80 other local authorities who have also voted to make being care experienced a protected characteristic.

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