

Report of the Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Health Services

Introduction

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 21 April 2021:

1. By Councillor Ackland on the consequences of the White Paper: 'Integration and Innovation' and a report on Devon's Health System's up to date plans on ICS governance.
2. By Councillor Ackland as follows: The Proud to Care Campaign has been running for some time now. Could we please have a report that updates Members on the impact it has had on the provision of the domiciliary care market across Devon and the adequacy of the workforce to fulfil the needs of our residents.
3. By Councillor Hannaford as follows:

The Laurels NHS gender identity clinic (GIC), is one of only seven in the entire country, and has assessed just two patients in a year, with one person left on the waiting list for almost six years. The shocking figures were revealed when a service user submitted a Freedom of Information (Fol) request to the Devon Partnership NHS Trust, which runs the West of England Specialist Gender Identity Clinic in Exeter.

The Fol response by the NHS trust showed that between 1 December, 2019, and 30 November, 2020, 495 referrals for new patients were accepted by The Laurels, yet just two patients were assessed by the clinic. However, there are currently 2,592 people on the waiting list for the clinic, with one patient having been on it 2,092 days, almost six years. This is 17 times the NHS legal guideline for waiting times of 18 weeks. At its current assessment rate, it would take The Laurels 1,296 years to assess every patient on its waiting list.

Can the Cabinet Member please confirm what work we are doing with key partners, including local members of parliament, to lobby for more resources to effectively deal with these serious issues, to help those who rely on our own services such as children's services and the wider community.

Response

1. Devon's Health System's up to date plans on ICS governance.

- In February, the Department of Health and Social Care published the legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill.
- Measures to be brought forward include to place Integrated Care Systems (ICS) on a statutory footing. An ICS will be comprised of an ICS Health and Care Partnership and an ICS NHS Body. Further details are set out within the [white paper](#).
- The white paper is in line with the recent national policy direction and builds on the closer working and collaboration between the NHS and local government at a system level.
- On the 1 April 2021 Devon was approved by NHS England and NHS Improvement to be designated as an Integrated Care System for Devon (ICSD).
- Significantly more detail is pending including guidance on key undertaking such as the arrangements and establishment of the ICS Health and Care Partnership and an ICS NHS Body. We expect to receive this guidance throughout the year.
- The ICS Devon Partnership Board has established a [task and finish group to develop a proposed governance model](#) that will help in this next 12 months of transition and be ready to potentially take on statutory functions next April. The Task & Finish Group is scheduled to complete during Q1 21/22.
- Currently the up-to-date ICS governance arrangements remain the same as those presented to the [Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee in March this year](#)

2. The Proud to Care Campaign

Introduction

[Proud to Care Devon](#) has a number of aims:

- To attract job seekers to jobs, education and careers in care and health in Devon.
- To raise the profile of the care and health sector in Devon, particularly for those new to the sector.
- To work with a range of partners, including Department of Work and Pensions and Learn Devon, to offer CV preparation, interview skills and information sessions on opportunities in the sector (e.g. to support those who have been made redundant or are changing careers).

- To bid for funding as a partnership of Devon health and social care providers (e.g. European Social Fund Health and Social Care Skills Accelerator Programme)

Impact

Over the last 12 months, Proud to Care trialled a new matching service to match job applicants with provider vacancies in order to provide better evidence of success. This approach was devised after research into different schemes, including [Kirklees council's award-winning In2Care](#).

In the last 12 months, 302 job seekers have been recruited through Proud to Care for the [Devon Integrated Care System area](#), including 85 in domiciliary care in Devon County Council's geographical area, 65 in residential care, 4 in social care reablement and 13 in a care hotel in Devon County Council's geographical area (Total of 167). The remainder have been recruited to work in the NHS in Devon (59) and with adult social care providers in the Plymouth area (52) and Torbay area (24).

In addition, many job seekers have continued to apply directly to providers for vacancies advertised on the [Proud to Care jobs board](#).

On-going challenges

The significant efforts of the Proud to Care team including the numerous campaigns are having an impact as detailed above. That said, on-going workforce sufficiency challenges are continuing.

Over the last year we have contained a potentially worsening situation rather than reducing overall sufficiency challenges; in Devon there is persisting domiciliary care worker shortage of c90-100 staff as well as challenges in wider markets.

As the economy starts to open up, particular hospitality and tourism in the South West, recruitment and retention challenges within the caring workforce will re-emerge as new and competing employment opportunities become available.

On-going response

The Workforce Development Commissioning (Care and health) team is continuing to look at new ways to support care providers with meeting their recruitment and retention needs:

- Using the Workforce Capacity Fund to pilot the Care Friends App Employee Referral scheme
- Working with the Department of Health and Social Care to maximise the benefit of the national Every Day is Different campaign
- Promoting value and reward of care workers, including fair pay, as part of the new Love Care work
- Working as a Devon Integrated Care System to hold joint virtual recruitment and careers events.

3. The Laurels NHS Gender Identity Clinic

This service is not commissioned by Devon County Council. It is an NHS service commissioned directly as part of the NHS's arrangements for specialist services. Locally, charitable organisations provide social and wellbeing support for people waiting for an appointment, but are unable to provide the medical support such as hormone replacement or blockers, or diagnosis to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate.

The Laurels is the only NHS service of this kind in the South West. There are other clinics across the country and people will often travel around to try to find shorter waiting times. People are also privately funding due to the NHS waiting times, but the costs are very high meaning this isn't an option for everyone and can often result in financial hardship. There are still waiting times in the private sector due to a shortage of clinicians and specialist medics.

The local charitable organisations providing social and wellbeing support include Devon Youth Service who run X-Plore LGBT Youth Group which helps provide a safe space for young transgender people and the Intercom Trust who run a help and advocacy service. In addition, DCC has produced [an LGBT Toolkit](#) to help services understand and meet the needs of transgender people.

This is an important issue and as a Council we will do what we can to work jointly with partners for additional resources where appropriate.

Councillor Andrew Leadbetter
Cabinet Member
Adult Social Care and Health Services