

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

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

1) Recommendation

That the Committee be asked to note this report.

2) Background / Introduction

2.1 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 Updates

3.1 Update on the IASC Consultations

Wellbeing Exeter

3.1.1 Following contribution from the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee, Devon County Council Cabinet agreed the recommendation to cease the Councils contribution to Wellbeing Exeter. The 30-day notice period of the intention to cease funding was given on the 30 September.

North Devon Link Service

3.1.2 Following feedback that people wanted to have more information to help them give their views on the proposals for the future of the North Devon Link Service, a further public consultation with more details in the documentation is due to begin 6 November 2023, and will include face to face listening sessions at the Link Centres.

3.1.3 Post the consultation period, final proposals will be developed and presented to Cabinet in February. The consultation documentation has now received independent external legal approval, and this is going through final governance approval by DCC and DPT executives. Local MPs and DCC members representing North Devon will be briefed ahead of the consultation launch.

Future of Learning Disability Services

3.1.4 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.

18+ Homelessness contract

3.1.5 Following discussion at the Special Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee in July, a decision has been made to extend contracts with providers until the end of March 2024.

3.1.6 On-going dialogue has taken place between the Adults, Childrens and Public Health directorates at the Council, and district authorities, including through the Team Devon partnership to co-produce a position statement on how district authorities as the local housing authorities, and Devon County Council can continue to work together on this collective agenda.

3.1.7 The position statement is being coproduced and is focussing on understanding the level of need and risk locally and the impact on the system partners. The position statement is also considering how we Devon compares to statistical neighbours and what funding streams and services are in place and the outcomes they are delivering.

3.1.8 The coproduced position statement will be presented to the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee in November pending sign-off by Team Devon on 1 November 2023.

3.2 Significant improvement in personal care market sufficiency

3.2.1 There has been a significant improvement in the availability of personal care since this time last year, with a 93% reduction in the number of care hours that are waiting to be arranged. This means more people are receiving their preferred care, and less people receiving less optimal care such as a short-term care home placement, or additional and unnecessary time in hospital.

3.3 Occupational Therapy Week

3.1.1 This year's Occupational Therapy Week runs from 6 to 12 November and is the chance to raise awareness and celebrate all that Occupational Therapist do and the positive impact they have on people's lives in promoting independence.

3.1.2 Included in the programme for the week are a series of daily sessions for staff to find out more about the work of Occupational Therapists, and for Occupational Therapists to come together and share what they are proud of.

3.4 Safeguarding Adults Week

3.4.1 Safeguarding Adults Week this year runs from 20 to 24 November, led by the Ann Craft Trust is an opportunity for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues. The aim is to highlight key safeguarding key issues,

start conversations and raise awareness of safeguarding best practice. Each day during the week there is different safeguarding theme focus, which relates to how individuals and organisations can safeguard themselves and others.

- 3.4.2** Locally, led by the Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership there will be activity to raise awareness of safeguarding and the sharing of resources to support safeguarding activity.

Monday: What's My role in Safeguarding Adults?

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and individuals within an organisation or the wider community.

Tuesday: Let's Start Talking – Taking the lead on Safeguarding in your organisation

Creating a safer organisational culture is vital in promoting the wellbeing of staff, volunteers and the people they support. It is important that organisations create environments where everyone is confident their concerns are welcomed, listened to and addressed appropriately.

Wednesday: Who cares for the carers? Secondary and vicarious trauma

Anyone who supports others or engages empathetically with people that may have experienced trauma as part of their day-to-day role can experience vicarious trauma as a result.

Thursday: Adopting a trauma informed approach to Safeguarding Adults

Trauma-informed practice encourages practitioners that may be supporting people within their role, to consider how trauma exposure can impact an individual's ability to function and achieve mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual wellbeing.

Friday: Listen, learn, lead – Co-production with experts by experience

Co-production is usually where service providers and users work together to reach a collective outcome. The idea behind co-production is that those who are affected or use a service, are best placed to help design it.

4) Devon County Council Public Health updates

4.1 A smoke free generation

- 4.1.1 In October 2023 the Government launched a Command Paper [Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/stopping-the-start-our-new-plan-to-create-a-smokefree-generation). Tobacco is the single most important entirely preventable cause of ill health, disability and death in this country, responsible for 64,000 deaths in England a year.
- 4.1.2 The independent Khan review: making smoking obsolete (2022) found that, if we do not act, nearly half a million more people will die from smoking by 2030. One of the tools to help people addicted to nicotine to stop smoking is vaping - and because the harms of smoking are so great, it is safer to vape than smoke, but vapes are not risk free.

- 4.1.3 The government has made clear they wish to create a smokefree generation unaffected by the extraordinary harms of addiction-driven smoking, and tackle youth vaping. The Command Paper lays out a route to prevent addiction to smoking before it starts, to support smokers to quit and to stop vapes being marketed to children.
- 4.1.4 Ensuring that vapes continue to be available to current adult smokers is vital to reducing smoking rates. In April 2023, the government committed to support 1 million adult smokers to 'Swap to Stop,' which was the first scheme of its kind in the world.
- 4.1.5 The main announcements in summary are as follows:
- Raising the age of sale for Tobacco (one year each year) so children turning 14 this year or younger will never be legally sold tobacco products.
 - New Stop Smoking Service funding - £70m per year 24/25 to 28/29. Maximum indicative allocations have been published [here](#) and this is a doubling of the stop smoking budget for Devon. It will be ringfenced and cannot replace existing spend.
 - Mass Marketing Campaigns - centrally coordinated national campaign £15m per year 24/25 to 28/29
 - New Enforcement Funding to support Local Trading Standards, HRMC, Border Force to tackle illegal and underage sales for tobacco - £30m per year 24/25 to 28/29
 - On the spot fines (fixed penalty notice) for underage sales of tobacco and vapes
 - Online age verification measures to purchase products online
 - Close loopholes in the law which allow children to get free samples and buy non-nicotine vapes.
- 4.1.6 There is also a consultation on Vaping which closes on 6th December 2023. [Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping: your views - Department of Health and Social Care \(dhsc.gov.uk\)](#) which includes:
- Restricting the flavours and descriptions of vapes
 - Regulating point of sale displays
 - Regulating vape packaging and product presentation
 - Stopping the sale of disposable vapes

5) NHS Devon updates

5.1 Finance update

- 5.1.1 As part of the 2023/24 planning, Devon Integrated Care System (ICS) submitted a deficit plan of £42.3m with a commitment to reach a breakeven position by 2025/26. In August Devon ICS reported a year-to-date deficit of £39.7m against a planned deficit of £32.6m - this is £7.2m over the plan at this point in the financial year. This is due to unmitigated costs from the industrial action and some overspend on drugs. However, the reported forecast is still a deficit of £42.3m which is in line with the plan.

5.2 Performance

- 5.2.1 September was an unusual month for the NHS in Devon. The heatwave at the beginning of the month put huge pressure on the system with hospitals and ambulances seeing a high number of patients suffering from the effects of dehydration. During the period 6 - 11 September demand across the south-west was nearly 13% above the planned amount of activity.
- 5.2.2 In the middle of the month the NHS faced four days of back-to-back strikes by consultants and junior doctors. Consultants undertook industrial action on the 19 – 20 September followed by junior doctors on the 20-22 September. The 20 September was the first time both groups had gone on strike at the same time with a minimum 'Christmas Day' level of medical staffing in place on that day.
- 5.2.3 This led to NHS Devon declaring OPEL 4 – the highest level of escalation in light of the continued pressures on the health system.
- 5.2.4 At the end of September hospital teams had to prepare for the longest period of double strike action by consultants and junior doctors between 2 – 5 October, with radiographers also undertaking industrial action for 24 hours on the 3 October.

Urgent and Emergency Care

- 5.2.5 As a result of the pressures outlined above, urgent care performance saw limited improvement during September 2023. The number of incidents for ambulances in September was 19,924 – an increase on August's figure of 19,713 and the busiest month this financial year (since April). Ambulance handover delays above the 15-minute target worsened in September to 10,761 hours which is almost twice the in-month trajectory 5,419 hours. However, in August (the most recent month we can compare national data) SWASFT call answering times were again amongst the best in England with a 3 second mean call answering time. SWASFT continue their recruitment work to ensure they have sufficient capacity to maintain good performance on call answering.
- 5.2.6 The 4-hour ED target remains below trajectory at 62.2% and has failed to achieve its target for the last 5 months but did show improvement in September, despite the increase in demand in the Devon EDs.

Elective Care – progress on waiting lists

- 5.2.7 The system remains committed to making sure no patients are waiting over 104 weeks by the end of October. There is a risk there may be a few waiting beyond October due to their complexity, patient choice and the result of industrial action backlogs. There were 21 patients waiting over 104 weeks at end of September.
- 5.2.8 The number of patients waiting over 78-weeks continue to fall for the third consecutive month, with 927 patients waiting at the end of September.
- 5.2.9 The improvement we have made to our waiting lists has been acknowledged in the [CQC State of Care Report 2022/23](#) (page 20).

Hospital discharges

5.2.10 The number of patients occupying a hospital bed in Devon who are medically fit to be discharged, known as No Criteria to Reside (NCTR), shows continued improvement since March 2023. As of 18 September, the average weekly percentage of G&A beds that were occupied with patients who had NCTR was 11% (250), although falling short of the 5% (110) target. Providers are implementing a number of actions to reduce NCTR patients including opening discharges lounges and focussing on weekend discharges.

Primary and Community Care

5.2.11 The target of 85% of GP appointments within 2 weeks is showing a deteriorating position and has not achieved target during August when it was at 81.7%. However, it is slightly higher than the previous year of 79.7%.

5.2.12 The target of achieving 35% of appointments within 1 working day of request was at 50.3% in August. This target is consistently being met in Devon.

5.3 Latest News

Unique partnership pilot cutting Devon's waiting lists

5.3.1 The One Devon Elective Pilot is changing the way surgical teams work by widening the use of, and embedding, nationally-recognised best practice processes across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

5.3.2 Those best practice methods – which include surgical teams working from different locations across Devon and making best use of theatres and bed capacity – mean people are now being treated every day across three specialties:

- Orthopaedics – such as hip and knee replacements
- Ophthalmology – cataract procedures and diagnostic approaches for patients potentially with medical retina or glaucoma
- Spinal surgical services – including creating more capacity for less complex procedures such as treatment for herniated or degenerative discs

5.3.3 The project has the backing of NHS organisations in Devon and is supported by NHS England's Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) programme, led by Professor Tim Briggs, Chair of GIRFT and NHS England's National Director for Clinical Improvement and Elective Recovery.

5.3.4 Trauma and orthopaedics and ophthalmology are the initial focus of the programme as they have the highest proportion of patients waiting long periods, but operations and procedures continue in other specialties. Patients are prioritised for treatment based on how long they have been waiting or their clinical need.

5.3.5 Between October 2022 and May 2023 the number of patients waiting more than 78-weeks in trauma and orthopaedics has reduced by 35 % (going from 1,093 to 384, with the total number of patients waiting more than 52 weeks continuing to reduce.

For further information on this pilot, please click here: [Unique partnership pilot cutting Devon's waiting lists - One Devon](#)

Covid and Flu Vaccination Programme

- 5.3.6 Devon is leading the country on the percentage of care home residents already vaccinated against COVID-19 this autumn. Over 76% of care home residents in Devon have received their COVID-19 jab.
- 5.3.7 The winter vaccine roll-out began on the 11 September 2023 and 155,236 COVID-19 vaccinations and 185,492 flu vaccinations have been given in Devon as of the 11 October.
- 5.3.8 GP practices and other local NHS services have been contacting people to offer both flu and COVID-19 vaccines, sometimes in the same visit. Currently over 34% of flu and Covid vaccinations are being administered to individuals during the same appointment.
- 5.3.9 As part of the NHS's commitment to make it ever more convenient for people to book in for their winter vaccines, all eligible adults can book their vaccination appointment through www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well, by downloading the NHS App or by calling 119.
- 5.3.10 People eligible to get the NHS flu and COVID-19 vaccines include those who:
- are aged 65 or over (including those who will be 65 by 31 March 2024)
 - have certain health conditions or a learning disability
 - are pregnant
 - live with someone who has a weakened immune system
 - are a carer
 - are a frontline health or social care worker
 - live in a care home
 - Most children can get the children's flu vaccine. This includes children who were aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023, school-aged children (Reception to Year 11)
 - and children with certain health conditions.

Women's Health Hub and Menopause

- 5.3.11 NHS Devon are receiving £595,000 of funding over the next two years to set up a Women's Health Hub provision in Devon. As part of this process two focus groups were held at the beginning of September for women in Devon and clinicians to share their experiences and provide their views on the draft proposals. The findings from these focus groups have fed into the final proposals for the Department of Health and Social Care which were submitted at the end of September. We will now move forward with developing our plans and there will be future opportunities for people to get involved to help shape the Women's Health Hub model in Devon.

Former Ward Area at Seaton Community Hospital

- 5.3.12 After the beds were removed at Seaton in 2017 following full public consultation, new ways of looking after people in the local community – often in their own home – were brought in and have been very successful.
- 5.3.13 Since then, the ward has sat empty and the void space currently costs the NHS in Devon about £300,000 a year in rent and other charges – poor use of taxpayers’ money at a time when we are forecasting another budget deficit of more than £40 million this year.
- 5.3.14 In recent months, we have been talking to local health, care and community partners to see if they are interested and financially able to take on the space, but no viable schemes have been received and we started the process of handing the ward space back to NHS Property Services (NHSPS) so we can save the money that is currently being wasted on it.
- 5.3.15 We have always been very happy to talk to prospective occupants of the space if they have a financially viable scheme to take it on – and we remain so.
- 5.3.16 No NHS services are affected by this work. All services at the hospital continue as normal and there is no proposal to change any services. Local people should continue to attend appointments at the hospital as normal.
- 5.3.17 The ownership of Seaton Community Hospital transferred from the ownership of the then Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust to NHS Property Services in 2016 when the community services contract moved from NDHT to the then Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust. NHS Property Services charges market rent and other property costs on empty space in its buildings. Where there is no tenant, these ‘void costs’ are paid by the integrated care board, in this case NHS Devon.
- 5.3.18 The current position is that negotiations with NHSPS continue on what will happen next. If the ward was handed back to NHS Property Services, it would be for NHS Property Services to determine what to do with the building.

6) Options / Alternatives

N/A

7) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data

N/A

8) Strategic Plan

N/A

9) Financial Considerations

N/A

10) Legal Considerations

N/A

11) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

N/A

12) Equality Considerations

N/A

13) Risk Management Considerations

N/A

14) Summary

That the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report to support its work.

Name

Tandra Forster, Director of Integrated Adult Social Care, Devon County Council

Steve Brown, Director of Public Health, Communities & Prosperity, Devon County Council

Dr Nigel Acheson, Chief Medical Officer, NHS Devon

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Integrated Adult Social Care and Health: Councillor James McInnes

Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equality: Councillor Roger Croad

Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper Nil

Date

File Reference

Contact for enquiries:

Name: James Martin

Telephone: 01392 38300

Address: Room G38, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD