

Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 14 July 2020

The meeting was held virtually – As usual, the Agenda and various reports can be viewed on the Gloucestershire County Council website:

<https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=772&MIId=9519&Ver=4>

Public Representations

The meeting was started with two public representations:-

1. Wanted to ask for a review of the number of COVID-19 deaths in the Alston and St. Marks Medium Super Output Area (MSOA). As of 31 May 2020, there were 32 deaths in this area, the fourth highest in the UK in this period in one area. It was thought that it may be due to a large number of care homes in that area. A response was provided to confirm that regular contact had been made with the homes. A financial uplift was given to help with COVID-19 needs and increase domicile care provision to prevent unnecessary travel for family members. Training was given to all care providers in the area and delivery of PPE. The review will be allocated to a scrutiny committee to investigate, to prevent similar reoccurrences where possible.
2. Professor from REACH discussed a letter regarding patient safety concerns with temporary service changes at Gloucester Royal Hospital and Cheltenham General Hospital. A response was provided explaining they needed to deliver safe services and a written reply would be issued in response to REACH'S letter. All 13 emergency consultants endorse services as they are. Prior to admission for surgery, swab testing is done for COVID-19, and this needs to be negative prior to admission.

COVID-19-19 Temporary Service Change

Phase 1 - initial response

Extensive re-prioritisation to manage the COVID-19 requirements e.g. using the private hospitals, whole system pulling together across all organisations in NHS and Social Care.

Phase 2 - COVID-19 still with us but infection rates have changed. Looking at using more virtual methods to provide some care. Plans to be ready to respond in autumn should another COVID-19 peak emerge alongside winter flu issues.

It was reinforced that this was a temporary change and not the outcome of Fit For The Future Work. It was agreed that there is potential for some confusion, as some of the temporary changes are similar to those mentioned in Fit For The Future. The outcome of Fit For The Future, will continue in September. The impact of the pandemic has given the opportunity to see what works and what doesn't. It has helped inform Fit For The Future which is still a consultation. Current working practices are to continue for another 3 months. It is a clinically lead temporary change to provide care safely.

There wasn't space at Cheltenham General Hospital to have two entries, one for COVID-19 and one for non COVID-19 related illness, or the staff available. Hence the two entries were only able to be done at Gloucester Royal Hospital.

The winter planning is well underway. The public health management plan is looking at planning for a second peak, full details will be available in September. Looking at driving the flu vaccination, for an increased group, due to fears of the flu coinciding with a second peak.

Fit For The Future

Progressing slowly due to the pandemic. September-December they are hoping to launch the public consultation. There is a virtual consultation of the Citizens Jury set up for November. All the work will be collated and considered with an expected business case in Jan/Feb. And implementation in March/April, as a rough timescale.

But accept this may be delayed if we have a second peak.

Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Performance Report

The key issues have been widely impacted by COVID-19. Nearly all activities and performances have been affected.

Patients behaviours have changed dramatically, resulting in new demand patterns during lockdown. Starting to return to normal activity now. Challenges still remain due to configuration, infection control measures, and staffing. These all contributed to a decline in key performances.

Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group - Clinical Chair/Accountability Report

This report mainly covers three areas.

A - It provides a general NHS Commissioner update incorporating National Consultation.

B - Update focusing on Primary Medical Care.

C - Provides Trusts updates from Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust and Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS foundation Trust.