

Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

2nd March 2021

The meeting was held virtually – As usual, the agenda and various reports can be viewed on the Gloucestershire County Council website. Reading the ones of particular interest is recommended, as this is a brief overview.

Public Representations

Two were made:-

Firstly assurance was sought with regards to external communications with regards to Covid issues. Assurance was given that the information is given in many different languages. The data collected means that Groups can be targeted if for example there is more prevalence of the virus in a certain area or vaccination uptake has been lower in a certain population. This can be seen reflected in the downturn in the figures of Covid incidence and the success of the vaccine roll out programme within Gloucestershire.

The second point raised was with regards to the New Forest of Dean Hospital and the New Medical Facility in the South of the County. The medical facility is to replace some of the services offered when Lydney Hospital closes. It was noted that there looks like there will be a time delay between the New Hospital opening and the Medical Centre some 2 years later.

It was confirmed that local consultation was continuing. The development of the business case lies with the Lydney GP's, as they are all run as independent businesses. Therefore, there is no set timescale, however patients can be assured that services will continue to be provided in the Forest until the New Medical Facility can take over some of these.

Community Phlebotomy Services Update

Primary Care bloods, those requested by the GP's, are offered at all GP practices to individuals over the age of 12 years.

Secondary Care bloods, those required by the hospital, where capacity allows can also be carried out at the GP practices to avoid a trip to the General Hospitals. The uptake of this has been higher with the pandemic. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have now agreed to fund extra staffing to work in the GP practices. People will have the choice as to whether they have the blood taken locally or go to a drop in facility at GRH of CGH, or a session can be booked at Cirencester Hospital, on three days a week.

Covid 19 Temporary Service Change

The hospitals continue to be in an ongoing operational response mode. Changes made are proposed to be continuing for a further 3 months.

These are extension for a further three months of Emergency General Surgery to Gloucestershire Royal Hospital (GRH) from Cheltenham General Hospital (CGH).

Several other service changes will remain as they are for a further three months, these include acute respiratory GRH, Acute stroke CGH, Emergency vascular GRH and Emergency Urology to GRH.

Temporary closure of Tewkesbury Minor injuries unit, Dilke and Vale Hospitals to continue, with reduced hours at Cirencester, Lydney and Stroud .

Staff are still redeployed due to Covid and the vaccine rollout. To change the services back will take additional manpower hours that at present they don't feel they have. A majority of services hoping to be changed back by July 2021. If services can be changed back sooner they will be.

Update will be received between HOSC meetings, like the one Members received last week.

Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Performance Update

Covid Update

There is still a widespread impact of Covid on activity and performance across the system. There is still a steady flow of low level Covid cases through the hospitals.

Performance in Gloucestershire compares well to the National position. Exception in performance, was noted for the 4 hour Emergency Dept performance target and ambulance response times. Cancer figures are good, maintaining all services and work streams going forward.

Work is continuing to encourage people to think NHS111 rather than going to the emergency department.

Cinapsis is continuing to be successful. This is where a Health professional, often a GP can speak to a hospital specialist to discuss and plan a treatment way forward without the need of a hospital visit.

One Gloucestershire Integrated Care System (ICS) Lead Report

This is the report to HOSC from the Health and Care system in Gloucestershire, and provides an update on the key programme and projects across the county. Many have been adapted as a result of Covid. The focus at present is on demand for services, winter pressures and ongoing recovery. This includes a new 'Business as usual,' restarting programmes as appropriate and reprioritising in the light of the new environment that is being operated in.

Quality of Health and Care has been improved with more joined up working. Good practices emerging through the pandemic, will inform the future services.

Covid Vaccination Programme – currently there are 11 approved vaccination sites formed by the Primary Care Networks. Gloucester is performing well nationally and hitting all targets. A Vaccine equality group makes sure there is equity in take up of the vaccination. The data recorded nationally and locally, includes ethnicity, so gaps in up take can be identified and actioned. There is an anticipated risk of lower take up in the younger age groups when they get to vaccinating them.

Commemorating Covid – Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are making plans to recognise the enormous contribution of staff and colleagues in caring for Covid patients and commemorate those who have passed away. A memorial sunken garden is to be designed and commissioned at GRH. This will feature wire dandelions which can be temporarily planted for a few days, similar to the Tower of London poppy display in the past.

Financial support has been gained from the Health Equalities Partnership to enable work to progress around health inequalities. Partners are to come together from a range of agencies to address and look at the resources needed, to improve the health of people at risk of poor health outcomes.

Clinical Programme Groups have all highlighted the impact of Covid-19 on the transformation programmes. These have continued to run where possible and adapted in the light of Covid-19. Cancer, Diabetes and Respiratory Clinical Programme Groups have been prioritised due to the impact of Covid on these conditions.

Other programmes running include discussions on End of Life Care, Living well with Pain and the Cinapsis service. The Cinapsis service is proving successful with 22% of referrals to date being dealt with at the GP's and avoiding hospital visits. There are several more programmes in the report.

GCCG Clinical Chair/Accountable Officer Report

This report has overlaps with the other reports in some areas.

The new Forest of Dean Hospital governing body met at the end of January to discuss the findings of the public consultation. Results of the consultation and services to be provided can be found on www.fodhealth.nhs.uk/consultation.

Hospital due to open in 2023. The 24 bedded hospital will be run by Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, with services provided by their staff, healthcare professionals and Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Gloucestershire is to receive up to £500,000 Healthy Communities Together funding. This programme is funded by the Kings Fund and National Lotteries Community Fund, to improve Health and Care for people with the worse health outcomes.

EU exit planning took place prior to our exit on 31st December from the EU.

Digital implementation in Primary Care has enabled staff to work more flexibly and vulnerable staff to work more from home.

Mental Health Care in Emergency departments. Physical health is being addressed alongside mental health and both aspects of a person's wellbeing are being considered. Mental Health liaison workers are working in the general hospitals to overcome associated issues.

Recruitment drive has seen an increase in 90 Health care support workers, and there are currently 268 apprenticeships in varying roles across the Trust.

The Trust has won a bid to become an endoscopy training academy, one of two in the South West.

Cllr JK Smith 3/03/2021