

Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update – 6 December 2022

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.

NHS Dentistry

NHS England at present is responsible for providing NHS Dentistry. Funding is agreed nationally, but local contracts are managed locally. Dental practices are independent businesses operating under contracts with NHS England. Many offer private dentistry alongside. NHS treatment is provided in units of dental activity, with costings for different levels of treatments.

Access to NHS Dental services is limited. Last year there was a slight increase to 29.2% of population being able to access services. This is lower than the national average. 69 practices in Gloucestershire offer a service.

Urgent dental care is provided by Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Trust who will provide urgent care for anyone without a NHS Dentist that needs treatment in an emergency.

Staffing is again the biggest problem. In Gloucestershire there are 31 full time dentists short of what is needed. Work is being done to try to attract newly qualified dentists to the area to salaried posts. Newly qualified dentists don't necessarily want to become a partner in a business with the responsibilities that brings. Few opportunities to develop, as there are limited training hospitals, deters Dentists and Doctors from the South West area generally; cities seem to be the preferred choice.

More NHS dental care is being worked on with recruitment initiatives and more commissioning. The priority area at present is preventative work for 0-2 year olds, as many can't access a dental service at present.

Mental Health Update

General Overview:-

Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Trust is the main Mental Health Provider. A majority of services are reported to have waiting times at pre-Covid levels now. IAPT recovery rates are up slightly to 51.1%. Increased referrals seem to be coming in to certain services e.g. Eating disorders, Crisis team intervention, Child and Adolescence services and Autism resulting in increased waiting times. Referrals seem to be increasingly more complex that require more intensive interventions.

Specialist Mental Health Practitioners are being employed in Primary Care to enable the correct services to be provided at GP Practice level. These professionals have the ability to prescribe and see people with mental health issues more quickly.

The Child and Adolescent service are seeing an increase in referrals and complexity, many needing inpatient beds. This is challenging in Gloucestershire. 91% are being seen within 4 weeks at present.

Performance Reports for Information

For a full picture it is best to look at the reports with graphs on the GCC website.

Gloucestershire Integrated Care System Performance Report

Improving Services and Delivering Outcomes – Key areas (full report on the website)

Diagnostic services will improve with new community hub opening in 2023. More diagnostic scans, X rays etc. will be done more quickly under the same roof, without a need for frequent trips to the hospital for each one.

Newton Europe consultants have assessed the hospital issues and service blockages in the systems around Urgent and Emergency Care, and have identified key work streams going forward. Weekly reviews to check on continued progress are being carried out on:-

- Ambulance call answering times
- Handover delays
- Cat 2 response times
- Bed occupancy and Patients with no criteria to reside.
- There is a slight backlog of Cancer patients waiting for their treatment beyond 62 days. Working on recovery of waiting times standards.

All above areas have improved.

Workforce issues – recruitment and retention impacting on the hospitals performance as a whole. Steps being taken to address these problems

NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board Report (NHS Gloucestershire)

This report provides a general NHS Commissioning Update.

Gloucestershire strategic housing partnership brings together housing, health and care services. Joined up working, integration and collaboration benefits the people of Gloucestershire. As all these areas can overlap e.g. adaptations to the house to enable, more independence and better health outcomes. Pooling of capital budgets can enable such things as: -

- Investments in specialist Housing Occupational Therapists.
- Nursing to work on better outcomes for the homeless
- Setting up two hospital step-down flats, to aid the movement of patients from the hospital, assessment and movement into a needs lead future placement or home.

- Falls prevention work
- Warm and Well (this has been a long-standing partnership)
- Park homes project
- Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator
- Housing Frailty Officer
- Housing Teams helping with hospital discharges and systems flow. The warm home scheme sees that vulnerable people with cold sensitive health issues get their bills paid. Health care teams, GP's and Social Prescribers are working hard to identify these people.

Caring Jobs in Gloucestershire had a major recruitment event in September to all caring roles available. It was a very successful event, finding some 200 jobs for people.

The current deep dive into the diabetes service is now in its third year of delivery against a 10 year diabetes strategy. Good results and progress reported.

Primary Care Strategy – supports the vision for a safe sustainable and high quality primary care service, in modern premises, fit for purpose. The ambition is to support patients to stay well for longer, connect people to sources of community support and ensure people receive joined up out of hospital care.

There are to be more physical checks on people with a severe Mental Illness and annual health check for people with a Learning Disability.

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHSFT

Operationally very busy but maintaining current improvement mentioned earlier in this report in Urgent and Emergency Care.

Cancer performance remains strong in most areas. Only Trust in the region to be achieving the 28 days faster diagnosis standard.

Trust has secured 10.9 million to transform the 1970's Tower Block at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. With another 1.2 m from Capital funding, there is 12.1 million to spend - starting improvements in spring, pending planning permissions. Reducing carbon footprint will be a priority with this work.

More information on the above topics in the full reports.