

Health Policy and Performance Board

Annual Report

April 2017 - March 2018



In last year's annual report, I referenced the fact that I was looking forward to 2017/18 and the continued challenge of ensuring that the quality of health and social care services within Halton continues to be of the highest standard; this has certainly been the case!

During the course of the year, the Board have continued to be actively involved and consulted on a range of issues including a number of proposed changes to services. This has included changes to Stroke Services available to Halton residents and the work undertaken to align General Practice to Care Homes in Halton.

The Board have also had the opportunity to comment on a number of proposals and developments including the work being undertaken to develop One Halton Place Based Care and we will continue to follow developments associated with this very closely.

Visits to Learning Disability Services took place during April 2017 – I would personally like to pass on the Board's thanks to everyone working in Learning Disability Services for all their hard work, commitment and dedication to delivering high quality services.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the help and assistance the Board receives from our Lead Officer, Sue Wallace Bonner and recognise the work of Council Officers and those in Partner organisations, who provide the Board with reports and information throughout the year in support of the Board scrutiny role.

Finally I would like to thank all Members of the Board for their valued contribution and support to the Board's work over the last 12 months, particularly in respect to this year's Board scrutiny review in relation to the Health Improvement Team Service.

It has certainly been a very busy year! However you can be assured that during 2018/19, we will continue to work across the health and social care economy to foster a culture of quality and continuous improvement for the residents of Halton.

Cllr Joan Lowe, Chair

Health Policy and Performance Board Membership and Responsibility

The Board:

Councillor Joan Lowe (Chair)
Councillor Shaun Osborne (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sandra Baker
Councillor Mark Dennett
Councillor Margaret Horabin
Councillor Charlotte Gerrard
Councillor Stan Parker
Councillor Martha Lloyd Jones
Councillor Ellen Cargill
Councillor Pauline Sinnott
Councillor Marjorie Bradshaw

During 2017/18, Tom Baker was Halton Healthwatch's co-opted representation on the Board and we would like to thank Tom for his valuable contribution.

The Lead Officer for the Board is Sue Wallace-Bonner, Director of Adult Social Services.

Responsibility:

The primary responsibility of the Board is to focus on the work of the Council and its Partners, in seeking to improve health in the Borough. This is achieved by scrutinising progress against the aims and objectives outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan in relation to the Health priority.

The Board have met four times in 2017/18. Minutes of the meetings can be found on the [Halton Borough Council website](#). It should also be noted that the Board, at each of their meetings, receive and scrutinise the minutes from Halton's Health and Wellbeing Board and monitors work/progress within this area.

This report summarises some of the key pieces of work the Board have been involved in during 2017/18.

GOVERNMENT POLICY- NHS AND SOCIAL CARE REFORM

Physician Associates

The Board received an interesting presentation from Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust regarding the background to the development and use of Physician Associates within the Health Service. Physician Associates (PAs) are typically life sciences graduates (with a pre-medical degree) who move on and do a two year postgraduate clinical diploma course.

The Board were keen to get assurances that the PAs are not taking the place of doctors. PAs are working alongside doctors and when on duty work under the direct supervision of doctors and they are actively contributing to the skill mix of professionals within the Health Service.

SERVICES

Homelessness Service

In June 2017, the Board received an update on the work of the Council's Housing Solutions Team which focused on recent developments within the homelessness service and details of recent/anticipated legislative changes and the impact this would have in Halton, particularly in respect of the Homelessness Reduction Bill, which is to be introduced from April 2018.

The Team continue to proactively work with individuals and families in assisting and preventing people from becoming homeless in the Borough.

Councillor Ron Hignett was in attendance for the update to the Board and he conveyed his thanks to the Homelessness Housing Solutions Team for their hard work and dedication to the service; this was echoed by members of the Health PPB.

NorthWest Ambulance Service (NWAS) NHS Trust

The Board received a presentation from NWAS, updating them on the key issues arising from the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) inspection report published in January 2017, together with specific issues in respect of Halton.

The Board were keen to hear about the progress being made to address the recommendations within the CQC report, especially in respect of the recruitment of additional paramedics, and how work is continuing on improving performance in relation to responses times to calls within Halton.

Halton Urgent Care Centres (UCCs)

The Board was pleased to receive an update report on the activity being undertaken at Halton's UCCs since they opened in 2015. Information was provided which

outlined an increase in the utilisation of the UCCs by local people since their opening.

Both UCCs are well within the A&E 4 hour wait targets, with in excess of 99% of patients receiving treatment within 4 hours.

Each of the UCCs obtain feedback from Service Users via the completion of patient satisfaction questionnaires. These questionnaires are then used to generate a Friends and Family score for each Centre. The Board was pleased to hear how the score for both UCCs has been consistently above 90% since their opening, as well as the fact that over the last two years A&E attendances to Whiston and Warrington A&E Departments have fallen by 5.8%.

General Practice Alignment to Care Homes

In 2016/17, the Board received details of the work proposed on aligning care homes within the Borough with identified General Practices. As outlined in last year's annual report the consensus of the Board was that this was a good idea, however wanted to see the results of the public consultation.

A report was presented back to Board in June 2017 which outlined that overall there had been overwhelming support for the proposals following the extensive consultation exercise. A number of individuals responded that they didn't agree with the proposals due to patient choice around registered GP. However, the proposal maintained that patient choice is paramount. Residents in Care Homes will not have to change registered GP, if they do not wish to do so. The Board gave their formal support to the proposal.

Windmill Hill General Medical Services

The Board welcomed a report from NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in June 2017 which outlined the outcome of the work undertaken to support the transfer of patients to alternative practices as a result of the GP practice at Windmill Hill having to close at the end of March 2017.

The Board were pleased to hear that the transfer of patients was a success with no problems being reported and as such NHS Halton CCG conveyed their thanks to the residents of Windmill Hill and others affected, as they had completely embraced the changes, which contributed to the success of the process; this thanks was echoed by the Board.

Stroke Services

Members received an update on the Stroke Reconfiguration that was taking place in Mid-Mersey.

The Board were informed about the extensive Patient and Public engagement sessions that had been held across, Warrington, Halton and St Helens localities regarding the changes and were provided with details regarding the main themes of the concerns raised by people; these included concerns over the loss of local services and ability to travel.

The Board acknowledged that the changes had been made without undertaking formal consultation because of a risk to the safety and welfare of patients in respect of the current service delivery model.

However, the Board will continue to monitor developments in this area to ensure that our residents receive high quality services in relation to Stroke Services.

Halton Older People's Empowerment Network (OPEN)

The Board received a presentation from representatives of Halton OPEN regarding the valuable work that they do in the Borough. Halton OPEN was established in 2001 and has become the collective voice of people aged 50 plus who live and work in Halton. Presently the membership is over 1,100 members. Their aim is to influence and encourage the development of services which can help to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of all older people in Halton. Halton OPEN work with other agencies in the Borough including Age UK Mid Mersey, NHS Halton CCG and Halton Partners in Prevention. The Board heard about and discussed the main issues affecting older people in Halton such as access to public transport; financial issues such as pensions, fuel bills and benefits, isolation/loneliness and health and wellbeing.

Halton Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) Annual Report 2016/2017

The Board received information, from the Chair of the HSAB, regarding activities during 2016/17 and the work priorities for 2017/8 as follows:-

1. Creating a safer place to live for all adults living in Halton;
2. Providing the skills and knowledge to enable genuine care and understanding for adults at risk of harm; and
3. Gaining a greater understanding of how mental health can impact adults at risk being protected and cared for in the best way possible.

One Halton Place Based Care

David Parr, Chief Executive of Halton Borough Council attended the Board to outline plans in relation to One Halton Place Based Care.

The Board was advised that the aim of One Halton was to deliver a single fully integrated place based health, wellbeing and social care system for the people of Halton, that had wellness at its heart but also addressed the health and social care

needs of the local community of Halton, wherever possible from within Halton, and was easy to access, cost effective, high quality and clinically robust.

The plan is in its development phase and would build on the health and social care expertise that already existed in Halton. As part of David's presentation the Board also heard about the development of the Healthy New Town Wellness Centre. This is one on 10 demonstrator sites selected by NHS England but was unique, as it was the only site with a hospital at its centre. This opportunity was highlighted, in that it would enable Halton to create a Health and Wellbeing Campus at the very heart of Halton Lea.

The Board will be closely following developments in this area.

Domiciliary Care in Halton

In February 2018, the Board welcomed John Regan, the Director of Premier Care Limited, who following an extensive re-procurement exercise of domiciliary care provision within the Borough, had since October 2017 became the lead contracted domiciliary care agency for domiciliary care provision in Halton.

The presentation given by John provided the Board with details of how the current system of Domiciliary Care provision worked in Halton, an overview of implementation of the new contract arrangements, challenges being faced and how Premier Care and the Council were working together to maintain the delivery of high quality services.

Older People's Mental Health & Dementia Care

Following two reports presented to the Board in 2016 regarding the changes to the Northwest Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust inpatient services for older people and adults in Halton, the Board were keen to understand the impact that these changes have had, as the new arrangements had now been in for approximately 12 months.

The Board were pleased to receive information to say that the changes were proving to be successful and that the mitigations planned to support the transport needs of families to ensure access for visitors had been successful and were still in place, along with the addition of the Admiral Nurse Service and a Care Home Liaison Service.

POLICY

Referral Facilitation System

During 2017/18 the Board received updates from NHS Halton CCG regarding the introduction of a Referral Facilitation System (RFS).

RFS is a process where primary care referrals are made to secondary care via a secure electronic Integrated Care Gateway. The patient is then offered a choice of

secondary care provision via use of the national e-referral system. As part of RFS's implementation a clinical triage process was also to be introduced.

The Board were pleased to hear how the new process will ensure that all referrals are securely communicated to secondary care with all the correct information provided thus avoiding delays. The new process will also provide much more assurance for patients that they will be booked into the appropriate clinic, as this is specified as part of the referral process, thus reducing the occurrence of inappropriate appointments and the potential for multiple clinic visits prior to getting the treatment needed.

Medication Policy

The Board was very pleased to receive details of the new overarching Medication Policy for the Borough Council. The Medicines Management Team of NHS Halton CCG led the development of the policy due to the technical knowledge required to appropriately advise services of safe and effective practice.

Blue Badge Policy

The Board received details of the review that had taken of the Blue Badge Policy.

Details were provided to the Board on the changes that had been made to the Policy as a result of the review and how it had been amended to take into account two key issues that had arisen during the review process, as follows:-

- Enforcing the correct use and tackling abuse of the scheme; and
- The eligibility requirements for organisational badges

Procedures of Lower Clinical Priority

The Board received details of the work taking place across a number of CCGs in parts of Cheshire and Merseyside regarding the development of a core set of Procedures of Lower Clinical Priority (PLCP). At the moment, the criteria for these procedures vary between areas, which can cause differences in availability for patients. Nationally, the NHS believes that by having a more standardised set of policies, which are more consistent across the region, a more equal service for patients can be delivered.

PLCPs are routine procedures that have some clinical value, but only in certain circumstances, and so might not offer the best medical outcomes to patients - they are known to have medical benefit only in very specific situations or for a small group of people.

As a result, some of the criteria has/will be reviewed and may mean that fewer patients have access to these services, as their clinical circumstances will no longer meet with the evidence base for revised clinical eligibility for treatment.

There are more than a hundred policies being reviewed and the Board will keep this review under close scrutiny and be requesting that NHS Halton CCG report back to the Board in 2018/19 regarding progress in this area.

Halton Gypsy Travellers Pitch Allocations Policy

The Board noted that the Policy is reviewed annually to ensure it is current and fully compliant with legislation. In addition to the Allocations Policy, the Board were provided with an update with regards to the current accommodation sites within Halton that were owned and managed by the Borough Council in addition to privately owned sites. In addition to the Allocations Policy, the Board were provided with an update with respect to the illegal encampment procedure which had been jointly devised between the Borough Council and the Police.

Halton Suicide Prevention Strategy

The Director of Public Health attended the Board to provide members with an update in respect to Halton's Strategy, its vision, areas for action, outcomes and key achievements.

The Board acknowledges that suicide is a major public health issue and each suicide in Halton is an individual tragedy and a terrible loss to our local families and communities. Although it is reported that the numbers of people who take their own life in Halton each year are low, those ending their own life should be viewed as the tip of the iceberg, and as such the Board appreciate that locally levels of distress and suicide attempts would be much higher and as such there is still a need for continuing vigilance and action around suicide prevention.

Telecare Charging Policy

The Board were provided with details on the updated Telecare Charging Policy and Procedure. The Halton Telecare Service (formally Lifeline) has now been established for over 27 years. During this time, the Telecare service has grown from a static onsite warden service to a fully operational, assessment, installation and response service. Telecare has the potential to benefit people who may need care and support by increasing their confidence and helping them to remain in their own homes. The service is for people who feel at risk or vulnerable in their own homes and people chose to use the service for a variety of reasons as discussed in the report.

All Age Autism Strategy

The Board welcomed an update on the Halton All-Age Autism Strategy.

The original Autism Strategy was developed back in 2012 and since this there had been a number of national publications relating to Autism that needed to be taken into consideration. Members were pleased to see how the new All-Age Autism

Strategy in Halton aims to take a more joined-up and holistic approach to developing opportunities and realising potential for people with Autism at every stage in their lives.

Top Up Fees

In February, the Board received details of the new Policy for 'Additional Payments for Accommodation in Residential Care' (Top-Up Fees).

A 'top-up fee' is basically the difference between what a local authority would usually expect to pay (depending on a person's care needs) and the extra cost of a specific care home. The additional cost is reflected in an additional service or added value.

Members of the Board were advised that the Care Act now included a framework for the implementation of Care Home top-up fees. The top-up fees could apply if a person chose a care home that was more expensive than the Council agreed rate, including circumstances where a person had been paying for their own care under a private arrangement.

The Board were advised that 9 Care Home providers in the Borough have implemented 'top-up fees' so far.

SCRUTINY REVIEWS

Health Improvement Team Service

The Health Improvement Team service scrutiny topic examined the work of the division, its contribution to health and wellbeing outcomes, how priorities are determined, what performance measures were made and how success is celebrated.

As a result of the scrutiny review, the Board concluded that the Health Improvement Team was a well-run, effectively structured and widely respected service.

Recommendations made by the Board revolved around minimal service improvement opportunities, but identified a clear need for wider strategic focus on maintaining services into the future. These recommendations will now go forward to the Council's Executive Board.

PERFORMANCE

The Health Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring and scrutinising the performance of the Council in delivering outcomes against its key health priorities. Therefore, in line with the Council's performance framework, during the year the Board has been provided with thematic reports which have included information on progress against key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health.

INFORMATION BRIEFING

During 2017/18 the Board continued to receive an Information Briefing Bulletin in advance of each of the Board meetings.

The Information Briefing is a way of trying to manage the size of the agendas of the Board meetings better. Including information on topics which were previously presented to Board as reports only for the Board's information now into the Information Briefing bulletin allows the Board to focus more on areas where decisions etc. are needed.

Example of areas that have been included in the Information Briefing over the last 12 months have included:-

- Local Account 2016/17
- Community Pharmacy Update
- Quality Accounts Event: April 2017
- Adult Social Care Charging Policy
- Tobacco Control Plan for Halton
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)

WORK TOPICS FOR 2018/19:

At the Board's meeting in February 2018, a number of topics were considered for scrutiny.

However, due to developments and challenges faced by the Care Home sector, the Board agreed that during 2018/19 they would examine the funding and sustainability of Care Homes in Halton.

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