



21 December 2018

Dear stakeholder,

This letter provides you with an update on behalf of Herts Valleys CCG and we hope that you find it both informative and helpful.

Carers approach wins national award

Partnership work led by Herts Valleys CCG to find and support carers across Hertfordshire and west Essex has scooped a national Health Service Journal award. It was one of three awards that the CCG was shortlisted for.

The 'System led support for carers' award recognised work by health, social care and charities across our STP area to identify carers who are looking after friends and family under the radar of local services and help them get the support and advice they need. The HSJ judging panel was impressed that all health and social care organisations were working closely with community and voluntary organisations like Carers in Hertfordshire and Herts Help to ensure all services reach out to carers and support them.

Carers' champions working in GP practices and social care, libraries, community nursing and also the fire service are helping to identify and support those who are caring for a relative or friend. As well as making sure that carers get flu jabs and health checks from GP surgeries we can also help carers access advice, practical help, support from social care or simply help them to meet with other carers socially to break down their sense of isolation. The approach is already showing positive results with a 40 per cent increase in carers taking up GP health checks and a third more taking up the offer of a flu jab.

Hertfordshire and west Essex is one of NHS England's first 'Carer Exemplars', sharing best practice nationally.

The CCG was also shortlisted in the categories of 'Chief Executive of the Year' for Kathryn Magson and for 'Optimisation of medicines management' – a joint approach with Central London Community Healthcare to improve home oxygen services.

We have been thrilled for our teams here – to have their hard work recognised by being finalists in three categories in these prestigious national awards.

Participation strategy

Following input from patients, Healthwatch Hertfordshire, clinicians and other stakeholders, including our Patient and Public Involvement Committee, our refreshed participation strategy has been agreed by our board.

A number of key elements characterises our approach. We are broadening the range of people who we actively engage with, seeking contributions from those whose voices are generally less often heard or those groups that experience health inequalities and poorer health outcomes.



We are also building up our bank of 'community health ambassadors' who help us share key information across the patch and in their communities.

Evaluating our engagement work more effectively is another key strand of our refreshed strategy.

Let's get connected

We recently held an event called 'Community support: let's get connected'. The purpose was to bring members of GP practice patient groups (PPGs) together with representatives from a range of community support groups to discuss ways that these groups might work together to:

1. Raise awareness of local community groups and the range of support on offer
2. Discuss ways how these groups can encourage their members / clients to input into patient groups and influence the way that local health care is provided.

Our investment for winter

NHS Herts Valleys CCG has invested over £1.4 million in additional funding to help reduce pressure on the health system over the winter and provide a safer and better experience for patients. This funding is supporting two programmes, new for the 2018/19 winter period, aiming to make sure that patients' accessing hospital care have their needs quickly identified and met.

The first programme aims to speed up patients' discharge from hospital and arranges continued care outside of hospitals for elderly people. We know that patients regain independence and overall health better if they can return home for rehabilitation rather than endure lengthy stays in hospital. So, we have allocated special beds in care homes for those who are fit to leave hospital but need some rehab before returning home.

Additionally, we are expanding our 'discharge home to assess' model and increasing the number of vulnerable patients who can receive care and therapies in their own homes once they are fit to leave hospital.

On top of this investment we have re-introduced the GP service in Watford General's A&E department. The aim is to reduce pressure on A&E services by giving patients who would benefit from it, the opportunity for a consultation with a GP.

We are also promoting the 'extended access' scheme across our patch whereby local people can get an appointment with a GP in their locality during evenings and at weekends.

And we are piloting extended access in-hours for Dacorum patients within the urgent care centre following the closure of West Herts Medical Centre. This means that there are extra appointments that patients can book into during the day, between Monday and Friday.

Revisiting acute hospitals strategic outline case

We are working with West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust (WHHT) on a refresh of the strategic outline case (SOC) for hospital redevelopment following feedback and discussion with our regulators (NHS Improvement and NHS England) in recent months.

Regulators have acknowledged the need for funding to invest in hospital estate in west Hertfordshire. At the same time, they have been clear that public money for hospital redevelopment is limited and there is strong competition for funding from a number of other hospital trusts.



In response, we are working with the Trust on an updated SOC that will look at how development could be achieved within constrained financial parameters.

Following the well-attended engagement events in the autumn, we are preparing further public engagement towards the end of January to update local people and gather views as we head towards evaluating options. We are convening special evaluation panels, meeting in late February/early March, to assess options and help us develop preferred options. Evaluation panels will have representatives from local communities alongside clinicians, senior representatives from other NHS organisations and key stakeholders.

The preferred options will then be assessed by the WHHT and CCG boards in May 2019 before the refreshed SOC is submitted to regulators.

***Your Care, Your Future* - new community services**

We have made good progress in developing the new community services that help deliver our plans – discussed over some time now with local people – to deliver more care outside of major hospitals and closer to where people live. These also contribute to more self-care, which is another key feature of our *Your Care, Your Future* programme.

A new **integrated nutrition and dietary support service** for people living in west Hertfordshire launched in November. We selected Hertfordshire Community Trust (HCT) to be the lead provider, working with four partner organisations to deliver the service which focuses on helping people of all ages to have good nutrition and giving them the right support to manage their dietary needs.

The priorities of the new service are:

- Preventing malnutrition and promoting good nutrition through education, community support, public health and social care services;
- Providing education and training for health and social care workers; and
- Providing specialist care and support for people with specific conditions such as coeliac disease, or for people who need to be tube fed.

HCT is working with four organisations to deliver the new service. Each will focus on specific aspects of care and support:

- West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust – specialist multi-disciplinary support for children and adults with nutrition and dietetics needs, including cancer patients.
- Hertfordshire Independent Living Service (HILS) – training carer agencies and home care teams to recognise and treat malnutrition.
- Age UK – social support and nutrition awareness for people with or at high risk of malnutrition.
- Luton and Dunstable NHS Foundation Trust – specialist multi-disciplinary weight management services for obese patients, often with more complex needs.

New services for ophthalmology and **ear nose and throat (ENT)** patients will also start in the new year.

The community **ophthalmology service** provided by Community Health & Eyecare Limited (CHEC) starts on 7 January 2019. Patients can be referred directly from their optometrist into the new service where they will be treated by a team of qualified staff including diagnostic technicians, optometrists and ophthalmology consultants. Sending referrals directly will free up GP capacity in primary care and reduce unnecessary delays in patients' care. The new service will also provide advice and guidance to queries from GPs and optometrists.

The **ENT service** provided by Communitas Clinics Ltd will provide a community consultant-led service to diagnose and treat a range of ENT conditions. Patients will be referred directly into the service by the GP. It will offer patients a 'one stop' service delivered by a range of trained and accredited clinicians, making sure patients have timely access to diagnostics and treatment.

We're also making good progress with planning and setting up **new frailty and falls services** to support an ageing population, in line with wider STP plans. About one in ten residents over 65 are living with frailty and that rises to 25 to 50 per cent for over 85s. There'll be 60,000 more over 65s in west Hertfordshire by 2035 – a 66% increase.

Health and social care providers working across primary, community and acute settings are coming together in local delivery groups. Each is developing locality transformation plans, including support for frail patients.

Successful **Primary Care Frailty TARGET events** took place in each locality during the autumn. Practices are starting to use a clinical tool to identify patients with moderate frailty who would benefit from further support so that they can be looked after in the community.

The **Emergency Care Practitioner (ECP) Car** project that provides an urgent response to patients in care homes in order to avoid hospital admissions is to be extended to support patients in their own homes from 7 January. The service that will be provided by Herts Urgent Care (HUC) will target patients who have had a fall but who have been assessed as not needing acute hospital care by sending out a vehicle that will have an ECP, paramedic and therapy equipment such as chair risers and toilet seats. The team will provide immediate therapy or personal care to stabilise the patient, assess their medical or care needs and refer them to community services for ongoing support. This will include helping them stay well and out of hospital by linking them to care navigators, social care or postural stability classes with Connect.

The service will operate as a four month pilot. From 7 January there will be one car operating from 7am to 7pm five days a week and there are plans to increase this to two cars.

Supporting schoolchildren on mental health

Hertfordshire has just been named as one of just a few areas nationally to launch mental health support teams for school children (MHSTs) in 2019. The new initiative will see 40 schools across our county being supported by two teams of support workers, including youth workers and mental health expert practitioners.

We are also planning to hold parent education programmes provided by the voluntary sector as part of this programme.



The MHSTs will provide early help to pupils, support school staff and ensure children and young people with more severe needs access the right support by providing a link to specialist NHS services.

Parents and pupils have told us they want more mental health support provided within schools and locally. School staff see young people day in, day out and are there for them at tough times, of course, but with these new teams we will be even better placed to help pupils in need.

The new service will be provided by HPFT – our local provider of mental health services.

Success in providing psychological support for diabetic patients

A pilot service providing psychological support for people living with diabetes is making a real difference to patients 18 months on from its launch. The service is being delivered by Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust using NHSE transformation funding secured by the CCG. It integrates mental health support for diabetes patients accessing physical healthcare services in GP surgeries, community clinic settings and local hospitals.

Over 1500 patients with diabetes have accessed the service in that time, and the service now regularly supporting over 120 new referrals a month. Most patients have accessed treatment within six weeks and over half have recovered from their depression or anxiety, and on average their use of other NHS services has reduced by about a third.

The success of the service is due to a commitment by providers to work together to provide integrated care and to champion improved access to psychological therapies (IAPT) to support patients.

Successful move for vulnerable patients

A group of vulnerable patients who experience issues with homelessness, alcohol and substance abuse and mental health have seen their primary care safely transferred to another practice following the closure of Meadowell surgery.

The CCG needed to find new accommodation for the service when the Meadowell lease came to an end this autumn. The partners at Upton Road Surgery agreed to re-register the 571 patients at their practice with support from the CCG. This also enable the dedicated clinical and management team to transfer to Upton Road with the patients ensuring continuity of care. The CCG helped manage the move and funded internal premises work to enable Meadowell patients to have their own discreet waiting room, reception and clinical rooms. The service went live on 1 October.

As a result Upton Road Surgery is temporarily sharing premises with Cassio Surgery until further work can take place in the building. Their combined willingness to support patients and practices across Watford has ensured continuity of care and a safe transition for these vulnerable patients.

Office move

We have recently announced to staff, that following a staff consultation and review of office premises, we will be relocating to an office in Hemel town centre in spring 2019.





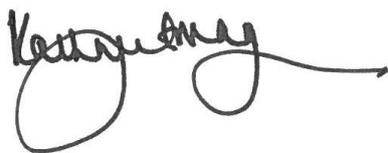
We are very pleased to have finalised negotiations with Dacorum Borough Council to take up space within their Forum premises in the town centre. We think it is great news that local public sector organisations will be supporting each other in this way and very much look forward to moving into the Forum at the end of March.

Finally we would like to thank everyone for their support in 2018, a good Christmas break and a very happy and successful 2019 to you all.

Best wishes



Dr Nicolas Small, Chair, Herts Valleys CCG



Kathryn Magson, Chief Executive, Herts Valleys CCG

