



*Although a formal committee of the city council, the Health & Wellbeing Board has a remit which includes matters relating to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Local Safeguarding Board for Children and Adults as well as Healthwatch. Papers come from a variety of sources. The format for Health & Wellbeing Board papers is consequently different from papers submitted to the city council for exclusive city council business.*

## **1. Integrated Community Equipment Service Update**

- 1.1. The contents of this paper can be shared with the general public.
- 1.2. This paper is for the Health & Wellbeing Board meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017
- 1.3. Authors of the Paper and contact details:

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## **2. Summary**

- 2.1 The Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES) service supplies equipment and fittings to adults and children in their own homes and/or within intermediate settings (such as care homes or nursing homes), supporting timely discharge from hospital and helping people to maintain their independence at home.
- 2.2 The report provides information on the performance and spend of the Integrated Community Equipment Service during the last year. The

equipment provider, NRS continue to provide an excellent service and the actions put in place last year have reduced the spend on equipment whilst the demand for equipment continues to rise steadily.

- 2.3 The report also provides information on a very positive evaluation of the effectiveness of the service undertaken by Healthwatch in April 2017.

### **3. Decisions, recommendations and any options**

- 3.1 This paper is for information only.

### **4. Relevant information**

#### **4.1 Background Information**

- 4.1.1 The Equipment Service is jointly funded by Brighton & Hove City Council and Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and since October 2015 has been provided by NRS Healthcare.
- 4.1.2 A report was presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board in November 2016, the first anniversary of the contract award. At this time commissioners informed the Board that there was a significant overspend forecast on the equipment budget and the reasons for this were outlined. It was recognised that the budget had been under resourced at the outset of the contract but there were some areas where it was anticipated savings could be achieved.
- 4.1.3 Members were informed that NRS Healthcare had exceeded their performance targets and that feedback from users of the service was good. An action plan was presented that focused on reducing the costly same day deliveries, increasing the amount of equipment collected, reducing unsuccessful deliveries and agreeing a realistic budget.
- 4.1.4 Members were concerned that the reduction of same day deliveries did not have an impact on timely transfers of care, that a budget was agreed that allowed for growth and that there are lessons learnt for the future redesign and tender of complex commercial services.

## **4.2 Performance from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

- 4.2.1 NRS continue to provide an excellent service with 99.21% of deliveries and 99.93% of collections made on time. In March 2017 NRS carried out a telephone survey of equipment users and 94% of people were very satisfied or totally satisfied with the service.
- 4.2.2 The total number of orders for deliveries and collections in the past year was 52,312 and the total number of complaints was 3 (0.005%) with 70 compliments received by the service.
- 4.2.3 The target of reducing same day deliveries to 15% has been exceeded. Last year 21% of deliveries were delivered on the same day and this has reduced to 14% by introducing a less costly next day delivery option. As a result of this, delivery costs have reduced by 7% on average per week since October 2016.
- 4.2.4 The number of Delayed Transfers of Care days attributed to 'Awaiting community equipment and adaptations' continue to be low at 0.91%.
- 4.2.5 On average the value of equipment collected is 58% of the value spent. There is an action plan in place to improve this rate as the Council and CCG receive 80% of the value of the item every time it is collected and recycled. Further details on actions are set out below.
- 4.2.6 Whilst the number of unsuccessful deliveries has reduced to around 5% of the total deliveries they still cost on average £4,400 a month (£52,800 per annum). The reasons given are: the client is not home, refused the equipment or asked for an alternative delivery time, the wrong product was prescribed or the client was still in hospital. Reports on unsuccessful deliveries and collections are sent to managers each month to discuss with their teams.
- 4.2.7 The demand for non-standard 'special' equipment remains high as more people with complex conditions are cared for at home but due to additional scrutiny of prescribing the average spend has reduced by 15% since last year. This is equipment that is not on the standard catalogue as it is usually bespoke for an individual client and is therefore more difficult to recycle.

## **4.3 Spend to Save Project and ICES Action Plan**

- 4.3.1 Commissioners from the CCG and Council continue to meet monthly with Prescriber Managers and NRS representatives to drive forward



the Action Plan identified last year. Progress on actions are reported to the ICES Board.

4.3.2 A 'Spend to Save' project has been agreed and a part time nurse and occupational therapist are currently being recruited and will ensure that:

- High value standard and non-standard equipment is reviewed and retrieved when it is no longer needed from care homes and from the community
- High cost repairs are assessed and only carried out on equipment that is still needed and beneficial to the customer
- Pressure care equipment is reviewed and retrieved when no longer needed from care homes and from the community
- The spend on deliveries and collections is reduced through focused work with teams and prescribers to ensure that unsuccessful activity is reduced.

4.3.3 Additional actions to increase collections include the following:

- A letter has gone out to all charity shops and furniture recycling centres to ask them to return equipment
- The website has been reviewed to ensure that there is very clear information available about how and where to return equipment

4.3.4 To reduce the spend on non-standard equipment further regular reviews of equipment take place. As a result of this it has been identified that it would be better value to add a small stock of 'riser recliner' chairs to the standard catalogue, making it quicker to purchase and saving on procurement fees and bulk buying. Brighton and Hove and West Sussex have also agreed to share the non-standard equipment that is currently sitting on a shelf at each other's depots at no cost other than delivery charges.

4.3.5 There are a number of initiatives to enable faster discharge from hospital:

- Community short term units will be supplied with appropriate pressure care equipment, as currently mattresses and cushions are supplied on loan and the time and money spent on the delivery and collection of this equipment is significant. It has also been proposed that a bariatric room is set up in one of the units to ensure prompt discharge for bariatric patients.
- A pilot to train home care staff to be able to prescribe equipment will be extended to include home carers working under the Home First model.



- 4.3.6 There is also a new option for people who do not meet the eligibility criteria or for those that want to buy their own equipment and keep it. In November a self-assessment website called 'Safe & Well' will be launched that offers information, advice and a retail service by phone and website. Customers can complete an online or telephone assessment as well as ask for a visit from an Occupational Therapist if wanted. Safe and Well offer:
- Free telephone and online advice about equipment and telecare
  - An assessment in person from an Occupational Therapist if needed (for a fee of £99)
  - A choice of equipment from a range of suppliers, prices vary according to the type of equipment
  - A choice of purchasing equipment by telephone, catalogue or online

#### **4.4 Healthwatch patient engagement**

4.4.1 Healthwatch Brighton and Hove surveyed people using aids provided by the Integrated Community Equipment Service, early in 2016. The purpose was to gather consumers' views of the service and to suggest ways in which the service might be improved in quality and cost effectiveness.

4.4.2 Participation in the survey was good with 581 responses representing 22% of all the people surveyed and 8% of all the people using the service. The survey was designed to allow comparison with two earlier similar surveys.

4.4.3 Findings:

- Overall satisfaction = 97%
- Equipment delivered and installed without any problems = 83%
- Minor problems with delivery and installation = 14% serious problems = 3%
- No follow up check on use and usefulness of the equipment = 3% and 6% people were no longer using the equipment because they had a problem using it
- 97% people said the equipment had improved their quality of life
- 34% of people said the equipment had led to them needing less help from other people

4.4.4 Recommendations:

- The service maintains strong customer relations taking time to understand users' needs and working with them closely to identify appropriate equipment.



- The service allows users' choices where appropriate in selecting equipment.
- Increased attention to efficient and timely delivery aiming to minimise problems experienced by users waiting for equipment.
- A more consistent aftercare service ensuring all users receive a follow-up check to monitor use of equipment.
- Frequent and clear communication to users and carers about how to return equipment when no longer needed.
- It may be useful to note the high response rate to this survey, twice what might normally be expected. Healthwatch Brighton and Hove often achieve higher than average response rates to consumer surveys and engagement activities. This may indicate a greater willingness on the part of local people to share their experiences with an independent 'watchdog' in preference to service providers and commissioners.

4.4.5 In response to the patient engagement the following actions have been taken:

- NRS drivers were accompanied for a day to see how they inform service users about equipment and how to return it. Information is always supplied about how to return equipment but this information is being simplified to promote better understanding.
- Aftercare is not a service that NRS are contracted to provide other than to maintain and repair equipment and prescribers rarely revisit patients to review equipment. The 'Spend to Save' project will therefore concentrate on reviewing and retrieving equipment to ensure that more is collected.

4.4.6 The full Healthwatch report is attached as Appendix 1.

## **5. Important considerations and implications**

### **5.1 Legal:**

There are no legal implications arising from this report which is for information

Lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 23 October 2017



## 5.2 Finance:

5.2.1 Accountants in the CCG and BHCC carried out detailed modelling and the budget setting process for 2017/18. As a result of this the budget increased from £1.3m to £2.3m.

5.2.2 This budget assumes:

- An average financial recycling rate (as opposed to number of units) of 73% across the whole year April to March 2018, but increasing gradually on a per month basis to 80% by March 2018.
- That there will be a reduction in annual average delivery charges of 10% across June to March 2018. This was calculated using the assumption that 50% of "Same Day" deliveries are instead made as "Next Day".

5.2.3 The projected net spend for 2017/18 against the NRS contract is £2.4m, based on the spend over the last 9 months. As the budget was set at £2.3m this is a potential overspend of £0.1m.

5.2.4 In summary the overspend is due to the following reasons:

- The financial recycling rate has been less than budgeted at 58% to date compared to the 68% budgeted rate for April to September. The recycling rate is being forecast for the second half of the year as 63% increasing to 65% by the end of the year. This is a significant reduction on the budgeted recycling rate for the second half of the year of 75% increasing to 80% by year end.
- A growth in demand for equipment. National statistics indicate average annual growth of 13% for equipment services as there is a drive to care for people with higher dependency levels at home.
- The demand for non standard equipment remains high but has reduced from this time last year.

5.2.5 Actions are being put in place to manage the overspend and it is anticipated that these measures will save £200k - £300k per annum.

Finance Officer consulted: Sophie Warburton

Date:20/10/17



### **5.3 Equalities**

5.3.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed at the time of the transfer and the new service was not found to have a negative impact on any protected characteristic as the service was looking to improve outcomes for local people by improving deliveries, collections and access to the service.

5.3.2 The provision of a self-assessment option for people has in other areas attracted a more ethnically diverse population and also provided a preventative service by attracting a younger, more able population.

### **5.4 Sustainability**

5.4.1 The actions in the report above and in the action plan aim to ensure that the service is more sustainable by increasing collection and recycling levels and moving to a more standardised product range to mitigate the cost of purchasing expensive non-standard equipment.