

Response to April 2020 Governing Body questions

Questions received from Mr Gordon Cairns, Co-Chair West Cheshire Mental Health Partnership Board and Secretary West Cheshire Mental Health Forum:

- 1) Can you tell me why the quarterly report for Transforming Care has only one mention of autism on the title page and nothing in the paper (all learning disabilities in paper) when big things have gone on in local Autism Service in Cheshire?
- 2) Breaches of 62 day waits for cancer treatment across Cheshire up again and 104 week waits up with more in all areas worse than when my last question went in 2 months ago action plan doesn't seem to have worked.
- 3) There seems to have been a miraculous increase in health checks for people with learning disabilities. I notice a caveat that these might not be right data.
- 4) Nothing about mental health again in the papers.

Responses of the Governing Body

Question 1

On this occasion an autism update was not included within the Transforming Care report, however the team will continue to report to the Governing Body on a quarterly basis and there will be more of a focus on autism in the coming months.

As the report was presented, information was provided with regard to an autism hub in Chester which is in development. The CCG will co-produce this with service users in terms of how the building is designed. The CCG is also working closely with various partners, including the National Autistic Society.

Question 2

The 62-day performance is most challenged at East Cheshire Trust with diagnostic CT particularly impacting on the delivery of the standard. The Trust had

attempted to obtain a mobile CT scanner on-site but, unfortunately, the Christie building work meant they were not able to position the van where planned and the back-up plan, which was by A&E, was also unavailable due to the COVID pod location. External premises were explored near to the hospital but resus facilities are required due to the nature of some of the CTs and they are not available. The Trust continues to explore options for a second scanner.

The Head and Neck pathway is also causing breaches at East Cheshire Trust. Plans for revisions to the model have been delayed due to the COVID pandemic, however background work is underway so that once out of the COVID response this can be taken forward quickly.

Across the three Cheshire Hospital Trusts the number of cancers on each pathway is small, so a level of caution should be applied when analysing the data. It must be noted that performance and capacity issues aren't always the main drivers for under-performance and one additional breach in a month impacts significantly on figures.

All Trusts are working collectively with the appropriate cancer alliances to improve performance and cancer alliances, working with the CCGs, have been putting significant resources and programmes of work in place to make improvements.

In light of COVID, Trusts are now following the national guidance for cancer as much as possible and are working with the appropriate cancer alliance to support centralisation of surgery during the COVID pandemic.

PET CT has been a cause of delays for many pathways across all Trusts. This is due to radiopharmacy shortages. NHS England (the commissioner) have advised that the situation has now improved. Clearly we will continue to monitor the situation and particularly as activity levels increase again following a reduction in patients presenting with cancer during the COVID- 19 pandemic.

It is recognised that the CCG's performance is not to the standards we aspire but equally the challenges faced locally are in line with peers. Our performance is not an outlier compared with Cheshire & Merseyside and significant work / transformation is taking place to address this across pathways. The 2020/2021 Cancer work plan has several diagnostic pathway transformations to support improved performance.

Question 3

It is really important to meet – or exceed – the 75% target for Learning Disabilities Annual Health Checks. All four 'outgoing' Cheshire CCGs had achieved the target

for 2019/20, and some had exceeded this figure – an improvement on previous years.

The caveat was provided because practice data was used rather than data generated through the Business Intelligence team. There may be some adjustments to make, but the Business Intelligence data from March 2020 indicates that our performance in ensuring annual health checks are completed were on track.

Question 4

Work is in progress around the Mental Health Investment Standard. Details will be included in the Accountable Officer's Report in May 2020 with regards to an Investment Plan for Mental Health. In addition, there are some very positive new mental health developments, particularly in light of the increased pressure due to coronavirus which will also be discussed more fully at the meeting in May.