

Reforming Community Services

Service Reconfiguration Task Group

Interim Report – For Information

Purpose of Report

1. To update members about the Task Group meeting which took place on 22 June with representatives from the Wiltshire PCT to look in more detail at the development of the Neighbourhood Teams and the work they will do.

Background

2. The Neighbourhood Teams, made up of nurses and therapists, are seen as the lynchpin of the new community services that will be provided by the PCT and crucial to its success.
3. The Task Group had requested a special meeting with the people responsible for putting the Neighbourhood Teams together, to develop a greater understanding of how the teams are being put together and their responsibilities. This meeting took place on 22 June 2007.

Findings from the Meeting

4. The Task Group heard that although beds in Devizes hospital were due to close on 1 July, the Neighbourhood Teams were not going to be operating on a 24 hour basis until October.
5. The Task Group was concerned that this would be a temporary reduction in service until October, but the PCT gave reassurance that beds would still be available in Melksham, Chippenham, Savernake, Trowbridge and Warminster and that no further closures were due to take place until the Neighbourhood Teams had begun to operate over 24 hours.
6. Any patients in Devizes that needed inpatient care would be able to use the nearest available bed in a community hospital in another town.

7. The Task Group also heard that recruitment to the Neighbourhood Teams had gone extremely well and that all teams were fully staffed with staff members now going through a process of training needs assessments to ensure they have the right skills to perform carry out their new roles. Appendix 1.
8. The Task Group explored the various roles of social services and NHS staff who would be providing services in the community and found that when a member of the Neighbourhood Teams attends a patient in their own home at night, that person would also be able to fulfil a number of what could be classed as social care functions, such as making a drink for the patient.
9. The staff members working the night shift will be made up of registered and unregistered nurses who will be based at three locations and will attend patients as a pair.
10. There will also be a number of Emergency Care Practitioners working closely with the Neighbourhood Teams providing urgent care when needed. Further details of which are contained within the urgent care strategy.

Conclusions from the Task Group Meeting

11. The Task Group was satisfied with the information received and will continue to monitor the implementation of all the new and reconfigured services as agreed by the Committee.

Events since the Task Group Meeting

12. The Neighbourhood Teams went live on 1 July and at the same time the beds in Devizes Hospital, including maternity, closed. However, it has become clear that, despite assurances from the PCT that recruitment to the teams had been good, only eight of the eleven teams were ready to start work on 1 July.
13. The PCT has met with staff representatives in an effort to resolve this situation and progress has been made. Appendix 2.

Conclusions after the Task Group Meeting

14. There are clearly some teething problems with the neighbourhood teams that need careful attention and continued work by the PCT to resolve.

Recommendations

15. That the Task Group receives weekly updates, by email or telephone, on the situation with the neighbourhood teams.

Financial Implications

16. There are no financial implications in this report.
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