

Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

20 November 2008

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**Reforming Community Services (RCS) Task Group – Update report**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update the Committee on the RCS Task Group's activity, and to submit Recommendations to the HOSC as appropriate.

**Background**

2. The RCS Task Group has held its six weekly meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> September and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2008, at which the PCT provided written and verbal updates on Services.
3. The Task Group made recommendations to the 17<sup>th</sup> July 08 Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), regarding the Melksham Minor Injury Petition, and the outcome of this has now been discussed by the group.
4. The future role of the Task Group has also been addressed as the Reforming Community Services programme is now core business for the PCT.

**Melksham Minor Injury Unit (MIU) - responses to letters sent to GPs and the PCT**

5. The Melksham MIU Petition was considered by the Task Group in July, and a recommendation was then made to the HOSC to write to the PCT and three Melksham GP practices to find out what it might take to provide an MIU service in the town. All the responses to these letters (copies attached) had been received and the Group approached the issues raised from a number of angles which are summarised here.
6. There was no evidence to suggest that the new MIU services are not working, and the GP surgeries have said they will not provide MIU services unless commissioned by the PCT.
7. The PCT letter includes statistics on MIU activity from October 07 to September 08, and this is showing that, in the last 6 months, the combined average weekly attendance of Melksham residents at Trowbridge and Chippenham MIUs has increased, compared with the previous six months. This is taken to indicate that Melksham residents are accessing the care they need. We are also told there has been no significant increase in complaints from Melksham citizens.
8. The PCT has been given a 'Best performing' rating in the Healthcare Commission 'Review of Urgent and Emergency Care' including the indicator on 'Provision of

information'. The PCT are continuing to publicise the services, and also intends to be participate in the Department of Health's 'National Access Number' research.

9. The PCT is distributing information in leaflet form and on the web etc, but, for whatever reason, the public do not seem to be getting a clear message about how to access services appropriately, nor about the compliments and complaints procedure through the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). Our Town and Parish councils (as stakeholders) should be encouraged to have greater involvement in disseminating this information.
10. Transport to MIUs in other towns is heard to be a problem for residents, especially the underprivileged. As the Overview & Scrutiny (OS) Management Committee already looks at Transport, it would be a duplication for the Task Group to do the same. However, it was felt to be an issue that needed to be addressed in some way so a recommendation has been made to refer this to the OS. In a wider perspective, there are also two initiatives pending that are seen as encouraging in this respect:
  1. Wiltshire County Council is to form a 'Transport Alliance' next year and will be asking stakeholders such as the PCT to engage with then on this.
  2. The PCT response referred to the DH White paper, 'Our Health, our care our say'. In this paper there is an intention to extend eligibility for the patient transport service, and hospital travel costs scheme to Primary care. Extracts are included below for information, but for full details see [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4127453](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4127453)

#### EXTRACTS

[...]

6.67 To tackle this, we will extend eligibility for the patient transport service (PTS) to procedures that were traditionally provided in hospital, but are now available in a community setting. This will mean that people referred by a health care professional for treatment in a primary care setting, and who have a medical need for transport, will receive access to the PTS.

6.68 We will also extend eligibility for the hospital travel costs scheme (HTCS) to include people who are referred by a health care professional for treatment in a primary care setting, providing that they meet the existing low-income criteria. [...]

#### **Chippenham Hospital Beds- Presentation by Dr N Brown- July 08**

11. As the PCT Board agreed to retain 20 general medical beds, the Task Group decide to take no further action in respect of Dr Brown's concerns. A letter was sent to Dr Brown to advise him of this.

#### **Future of the Task Group**

12. As the Reforming Community Services agenda is operating as it should, the Task Group felt that, having tackled some difficult issues, it had completed its work and could be disbanded after the next meeting. The HOSC would then generate new groups as required.

### **Risk Assessment**

13. There are no risks to the County Council in this report.

### **Financial Implications**

14. There are no financial implications for the County Council in this report.

### **Conclusions**

15. Having reviewed the GP and PCT responses to letters sent out by the HOSC regarding the Melksham Minor Injury Unit, the RCS Task Group felt there was no evidence to suggest the new MIU services are not working. The Task Group would therefore take no further action, but felt it was necessary to make recommendations to the HOSC as set out below.

16. Chippenham Hospital Beds

17. Future of the Task Group

### **Recommendations**

18. To recommend the HOSC to:

- a. note the update report and in particular
  - i. the current MIU performance, especially when viewed in the context of the county as a whole;
  - ii. the PCT 'Review of Urgent and Emergency Care' Best performing rating;
  - iii. the 'Our health, our care our say ' white paper intention to extend travel scheme;

And

- b. write to the PCT and GPs thanking them for their responses;
- c. receive the outcome of the PCT review of MIUs, scheduled for December 2008, at its next meeting;
- d. recommend the OSMC, in the light of views expressed during consideration of the petition on Melksham MIU, to review the transport provision to health services facilities in the county, especially now that services have been reformed;
- e. encourage the full participation of town and parish councils in the dissemination of communications, on reformed services, from the PCT. This recommendation is made in the light of comments made during consideration of the petition on Melksham MIU;
- f. support the views of the task group that its work will be concluded after its next meeting on 28 November 2008.

Report Author

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