



Merton

Clinical Commissioning Group

Report to the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body

Date of Meeting: 19th September 2013

Agenda No: 8.4

ATTACHMENT: 12

Title of Document: Winter Preparedness	Purpose of Report: To Receive and Note
Report Author: Adam Doyle, Director of Commissioning and Planning	Lead Director: Adam Doyle, Director of Commissioning and Planning
Contact details: adam.doyle@mertonccg.nhs.uk	
Executive Summary: Merton CCG, as a local leader of the NHS, has a leadership role to ensure that the health and social care systems across the system are co-ordinated to respond to the increased needs and/or service demands throughout the winter period. The purpose of this paper is to outline the processes in place across the system to support existing arrangements to ensure an effective whole systems approach where required to respond to winter pressures.	
Key sections for particular note (paragraph/page), areas of concern etc: N/A	
Recommendation(s): The Merton Clinical Commissioning Group Executive Management Team is requested to review, and comment upon, the Winter Preparedness paper.	
Committees which have previously discussed/agreed the report: N/A	
Financial Implications: N/A	
Other Implications: The risks have been highlighted on the organisational risk register with the appropriate assurances put in place	
Equality Analysis: N/A	
Information Privacy Issues: N/A	
Communication Plan: Winter communications plan to be signed off on 20 th September 2013	

**Merton*****Clinical Commissioning Group*****Winter Preparedness – Merton CCG****1.0 Introduction**

Winter is not an emergency. It is an annual event and for the most part we can forecast the pressures and to some extent the weather and the nature of prevailing infectious diseases. NHS commissioned services are required to maintain clear business continuity plans and escalation procedures, to maintain the quality of service provided to the public whilst managing increases in patient activity whatever the cause. This year brings with it additional challenges linked to the recent changes within the commissioning landscape.

Merton CCG, as a local leader of the NHS, has a leadership role to ensure that the health and social care systems across the system are co-ordinated to respond to the increased needs and/or service demands throughout the winter period, particularly where there is increased activity exceeding the seasonal norm and where response and recovery is beyond the internal capabilities and escalation procedures of an individual NHS commissioned service. If normal co-ordination does not provide a satisfactory response, an integrated emergency management approach is triggered. This will involve appropriate local Health and Social Care organisations as necessary, in order to effectively and efficiently respond. All NHS commissioned services will be expected to cooperate and work flexibly to support an overall health response and divert resources to those areas in most need.

The purpose of this paper is to outline the processes in place across the system to support existing arrangements to ensure an effective whole systems approach where required to respond to winter pressures.

2.0 Winter Meetings, Planning Processes and Co-ordination

Communications from NHS England will be directly with the CCG and CSU. Where any national, regional or local action is required, this will be communicated through the NHS England London Office to constituent organisations.

Merton CCG has been working with Wandsworth CCG and Sutton CCG to assist with their local Urgent Care plans around the acute providers. These have both been approved by NHS England. The Urgent Care Boards in Sutton and Wandsworth are currently reviewing the appropriate services to commission with the Non Elective Threshold Adjustment (NETA) fund. It is important to note that there does not appear to be any central Winter Pressures Initiative funding that will be allocated to Merton CCG which means no extra resources for our system in the way we have received them in previous years.

**Merton*****Clinical Commissioning Group***

Merton CCG has commissioned the co-ordination of winter services for its acute providers from SLCSU.

1. Situation Reports (SITREP) and Winter Reporting

In order to manage the day to day activity, daily SITREPs will commence on 1 November 2013. The daily reporting covers activity relating to the previous day. Non Non-Foundation Trusts (FTs) have arrangements in place to ensure that reports are signed off and submitted by 11.00 each day to NHS England. As in previous years, host commissioning CCGs sign off SITREPs relating to their FTs, picking up any issues of concern with the FT directly. In the event of significant issues being reported, the NHS England London Office will also be notified at the same time as the SITREP is submitted.

2. Escalation

Each provider within the system has their own operational escalation policies, which include alert status triggers related to bed capacity. Within individual escalation policies there are actions identified alongside alert levels specific to the trust concerned.

Host commissioners will be aware of Trust alert status on a daily basis and follow up any changes to alerts and confirm action is being taken to improve the situation as quickly as possible. Executive Directors (through their designated leads) will manage all winter pressures in their locality.

In the event that further escalation may be necessary, ie support from other areas may be needed, host commissioners will escalate issues to NHS England via the CSU through established communication routes both in and out of hours.

Regional escalation should only be invoked when Trusts and commissioners have exhausted both internal systems as well as local health and social care plans to meet demand.

The Director of Commissioning and Planning will be involved in twice weekly conference calls with acute providers and community providers. The Director of Commissioning will then hold local conference calls with appropriate providers to ensure that services are being managed in a robust fashion.

The Chief Officer, Director of Commissioning and Planning, Chief Finance Officer and Director of Quality take part in the shared CCG on-call process.

**Merton*****Clinical Commissioning Group*****3.0 Seasonal Flu**

Vaccination of front line health and social care staff is a key strategy in the mitigation against seasonal influenza and pandemic influenza. All health trusts are required by the Department of Health to make a monthly return of the cumulative number of staff, broken down into key at risk groups, who have received the seasonal influenza against the vaccination schedule.

GPs in all localities are implementing a programme of vaccination which will be subject to data returns for the following at-risk groups:

- People aged 65 and over
- People aged over 6 months with a chronic condition
- All pregnant women

4.0 Communication Strategies

All CCGs are developing Winter Communication plans. The range of plans will include messages on: alternatives to A&E, Norovirus prevention, access to GP out of hours services and pharmacy services, “Choose Well” campaign, “Keep warm, Keep Well” campaign, infection control and the importance of flu vaccinations. Merton CCG is currently working with the communications team to finalise the Winter Communications plan. This will be finalised on 20 September 2013.

5.0 Cold Weather Plan

The DH published the last Cold Weather Plan for England on 26 October 2012. The purpose of the plan is to mitigate the effects of cold weather on health. The plan introduces a new cold weather alert service operated by the Met Office. It is expected that the 2013 plan is published at about the same time this year.

Adam Doyle
Director of Commissioning and Planning
Merton CCG