

Title of Report:	Continuing Health Care (CHC) Update
Report to be considered by:	Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Meeting:	8 April 2014

Purpose of Report: To update Members on the current position regarding the Continuing Health Care waiting list in West Berkshire following a presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission on the 10th December 2013.

Recommended Action: To note the progress that has been made since the presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission on the 10th December 2013.

Key background documentation:

Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman	
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Executive Report

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 NHS Continuing Health Care is a package of continuing care arranged and solely funded by the National Health Service (NHS) where the individual has a primary health need. There is statutory guidance in place regarding its application. The Council has been concerned for some time that the national guidance was not being applied properly at a local level, resulting in the Council funding clients who should instead be funded by the NHS through Continuing Health Care. This ongoing dispute has to a degree been exacerbated by the NHS (CCG) struggling to find staff able to process CHC applications. This has led to a backlog.
- 1.2 In June 2012 an independent review was undertaken by the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) into the processes and practices supporting the delivery of Continuing Health Care commissioning in Berkshire. The subsequent report identified 5 key areas for urgent action and a further 54 recommendations to improve working arrangements between the NHS and Social Services. An action plan was subsequently produced and agreed by all of the unitary authorities in Berkshire for implementation.
- 1.3 On the 19th March 2013, the Health Scrutiny Panel examined progress with the implementation of the Action Plan, noting that it was taking longer than originally anticipated. The Primary Care Trust (PCT) was abolished on 31st March 2013 and replaced by Clinical Commissioning Groups on 1st April who assumed responsibility for CHC commissioning and implementing the action plan.
- 1.4 Remedial action was undertaken to accelerate implementation of the Action Plan which included the training of both WBC and NHS staff in the implementation of the newly agreed policy and procedures. This was eventually completed in October 2013 at which point it was agreed that the impact of the newly agreed policies and procedures could only be properly assessed by the end of March 2014 (six months from that date).
- 1.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission, at its meeting on 10th December, received presentations from both Council and NHS Officers, highlighting the current situation regarding CHC. It was resolved at that meeting that;
 - the CCGs would be asked to confirm the total value in which the percentage forecast and overspend had been measured;
 - Sam Ward would ask NHS England to provide the comparative data to show the number of assessments conducted within 28 days of the checklist being issued in Berkshire West and neighbouring local authorities;
 - David Lowe would identify, and then communicate to the Health Service representatives, measures of CHC performance for consideration at the Commission's February 2014 meeting.

2. Progress since December 2013

- 2.1 Significant progress with addressing the backlog in CHC cases has been made since the OSMC meeting in December and a joint presentation will be made by senior officers from the Council and CCG at your meeting. A copy of that presentation is attached for information and to help with any queries that Members may wish to raise.

Key points to highlight are;

- the jointly agreed policies and procedures have bedded down well and the Council and NHS are happy with how they are being applied;
- the NHS has outsourced the processing of the backlog in the CHC review process to address the staffing issues highlighted earlier. This has had a positive impact on the backlog. The NHS has agreed to keep this additional resource in place until they are confident that they can manage the workload going forward;
- this report relates only to CHC cases involving the Berkshire CCGs. There are a number of West Berkshire cases which involve various other CCGs across the country.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 Significant progress has been made in reducing the historical backlog in CHC cases. The newly adopted policy and procedures have proved effective in moving the process forward along with additional resources deployed by the NHS.
- 3.2 There is confidence from both the Council and NHS that the current backlog can now be removed in a matter of weeks and future new cases managed in an efficient and effective manner.

Appendices

Presentation to be given at the meeting

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: n/a
Officers Consulted: Corporate Board
Trade Union: n/a