

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children Update</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	The Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2015

**Purpose of Report:** The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on the progress of Health Assessments for Looked After Children, subsequent to the Health & Wellbeing 'Hot Focus Session' that took place on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

**Recommended Action:** To note the limited success at progressing this matter and to consider approaches being undertaken to ensure priority is given to the Health of our LAC in West Berkshire.

<i>When decisions of the Health and Wellbeing Board impact on the finances or general operation of the Council, recommendations of the Board must be referred up to the Executive for final determination and decision.</i>		
<b>Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council's Executive for final determination?</b>	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Is this item relevant to equality?</b>	Please tick relevant boxes		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:				
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Outcome</b> Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality. In this instance please give details of how the item impacts upon the equality streams under the executive report section as outlined.				

<b>Health and Wellbeing Board Chairman details</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Graham Jones – Tel 07767 690228
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:gjones@westberks.gov.uk">gjones@westberks.gov.uk</a>

<b>Contact Officer Details</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Mac Heath
<b>Job Title:</b>	Head of Children and Families Services
<b>Tel. No.:</b>	01635 519735
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:mheath@westberks.gov.uk">mheath@westberks.gov.uk</a>

# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Children Act 1989 clearly sets out the need for children who enter into the care of the local authority, to have an initial health assessment at the point of coming into formal care, and then dependent on their age, a follow up review health assessment at either six or 12 monthly intervals. The guidance is clear that this assessment then informs the child's statutory care plan. It informs and advises of the child's state of health and the health care needs that the local authority will need to attend to whilst the child is in the care of the local authority.
- 1.2 It was acknowledged that there were significant challenges in this expectation being met within West Berkshire and a 'Hot Focus' session was undertaken on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015 to highlight this challenge and seek partnership commitment to evidence improvement.
- 1.3 This report sets out to update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the progress made and to highlight the need for this matter to remain a priority for the Board.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 At the point of the Hot Focus session in June 2015, it was confirmed that Health Assessments are commissioned by Berkshire West CCGs and the BHFT West Looked After Children Team are responsible for ensuring that:

- Looked After Children experience high quality care in line with the NICE Quality Standard for the health and wellbeing of Looked After Children and young people
- Looked After Children access timely initial and review health assessments resulting in timely and appropriate access to health services
- To ensure all Looked After Children and eligible care leavers have a health care plan that is designed to meet their individual health needs

Specifically the service is contracted to provide:

- 100% of Initial Assessments and the resulting care plan of children placed by the six local authorities up to 20 miles of the Berkshire boundary are completed within 20 working days of a child becoming looked after. This assumes and is dependent upon the timeliness of the notification from children's social care, and the timely completion of medicals by primary care and community paediatricians in Berkshire West.
- 100% of Review Health Assessments of children placed by the six local authorities within the Berkshire boundaries and for children placed up to 20 miles outside the CCG boundaries, are completed by the appropriately trained practitioner within the required timescales (child five years of age six monthly, child > five years of age annually). All assessments completed have a clear and outcomes led healthcare plan identifying any health needs for each individual child.

- The healthcare plan is completed and shared with children's social care once completed.
- Evidence of improved health outcomes through ensuring that health care plans are updated and any gaps in the child's health records are closed.

2.2 At the point of the June Hot Focus Session, it was identified that of our total LAC population in West Berks of 164, only 51% had completed health assessments on time.

2.3 This figure was identified against a National Average of 88% but a commitment given that all the LAC in West Berks should be offered a timely Health Assessment and a success of over 90% was achievable by Christmas 2015.

### **3. Hot Focus Session on LAC Health**

3.1 The session was convened on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and well attended by a range of agencies and partners.

3.2 The session consisted of a presentation by Mac Heath, Head of Service for Children and Families from the Local Authority with Ginny Garnett, Locality Lead Children's Services (West) Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, giving a brief overview of the LAC system from the BHFT perspective. The session was then divided into two groups to map concerns and barriers and highlight comments or key issues. Notes of the session and issues raised are included in Appendix A.

### **4. Actions undertaken subsequent to the Hot Focus Session**

4.1 Significant commitment, activity and focus has continued on Health Assessments for LAC in West Berkshire since June 2015 by both the Local Authority and Health Services. This has been evidenced through:

- Regular meetings between BHFT and the LA to monitor progress.
- Correspondence between Chief Exec of West Berkshire Council and BHFT to identify three specific priorities for improvement.
- Renewed process, flowchart, system and escalation policy on notifying, identifying and completing health assessments (see Appendix B).
- Corporate Parenting Panel presentation in September 2015.
- Regular contact between to the Locality Manager for Health Visiting and School Nursing, Locality Director (BHFT), Service Manager (LAC) within West Berkshire and West Berkshire Head of Children and Families Service.
- New systems monitored by identified points of access within Health and Children's Social Care.

### **5. Progress Report June - October 2015**

5.1 Through renewed commitment to this priority, gradual but consistent improvement has been achieved on both Initial and Review LAC Health Assessments.

- 5.2 In June 2015, 51% of 164 LAC had Health Assessments completed on time. In September 2015, 73% of 172 LAC were achieved within timescales. The invalidated figure for October 2015 shows 81% having been achieved.
- 5.3 This data would suggest that partners have ‘turned the curve’ on this issue but progress has not been without determined focus and scrutiny. It will need to continue if we are to achieve the commitment we set out in June, as we still fall below the national average of 88% and outside of our set target of over 90%.
- 5.4 If the current trajectory continues this should be achieved by December 2015.
- 5.5 It is clear from analysis of the data, there is a good success rate on those LAC placed within our West Berkshire borders and within the Berkshire Authorities. However, when a child is placed over 20 miles from our home authority this continues to be the most challenging, and continues to offer concern as those children placed at a distance are frequently the most vulnerable.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 This report contextualises the approach undertaken since June 2015 and confirms:
- The renewed systems and approaches put in place to address the issue of LAC health assessments are working.
  - The level of Health Assessments within timescales is an improving picture
  - Focus will need to continue on this matter to achieve complete success
- 6.2 It is accepted that the responsibility and success of this matter can only be addressed through close partnership working and the continued focus this is given by Health Services and the Local Authority.

## **Appendices**

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Appendix A – Notes of Hot Focus Session held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Appendix B – Procedures of Initial & Review Health Assessments for Looked After Children

## **Consultees**

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**Local Stakeholders:** Ginny Garnett

**Officers Consulted:** Sandi Dopson