

Public Engagement Panel

Summary report

8 January 2019 – Torridge Room, County Hall

Executive summary

The Public Engagement Panel met on 8 January 2019, chaired by Nick Pearson, head of communications for NEW Devon and South Devon and Torbay CCGs.

The panel reviewed engagement activity in relation to:

- (STOMP) stopping over-medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both.
- Individual funding policy
- Maternity services case for change

STOMP (for panel approval)

The panel heard from Jonathan Taylor, complex care policy manager for the CCG, who came to explain some of national changes being rolled out around STOMP - stopping over-medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both. It is also part of the NHS long-term plan.

He shared some early thoughts about how we could start to engage with people locally about these changes, sharing the thoughts of the policy and commissioning teams involved.

National clinical research shows that there is a need to reduce over-reliance on psychotropic medicine as it can cause severe side-effects as well as long-term future health risks. People within this patient group are often heavily medicated and not always appropriately.

We need to engage with patients who fall into this category and their families, including their wider support networks i.e. health professionals, carers and GPs.

Actions agreed:

- A focus group should be set up with some service users and professionals to help design the engagement approach taken with patients involved. Need to ensure it is inclusive of all groups and covers a range of needs.
- People will need to be continuously monitored throughout the process and we need to be responsive to any issues that arise.

- GPs need to be part of early conversations around engagement approach
- The group agreed that STOMP required a Level 2 engagement process which is 'Inform and Engage'. A communications and engagement lead was identified to take this work forward with the policy team.

Individual funding policy (for panel approval)

Dr Alison Round attended the panel to discuss the individual funding policy process.

Dr Round talked through some of the changes NHS England has made to their policy which will have implications for the existing one that covers Devon.

The two areas of change outlined are;

1. A more fair and equitable process for all – in terms of review panels
2. Ensuring our policy meets national guidance around exceptionality.

Equitable process for all

Our existing policy has been reviewed and the recommendation is that equity could be improved, especially regarding the panel reviews. At present some patients are better able to represent themselves than others and some can afford legal representation.

In addition to this, many patients believe the panel can overturn a decision, this is not the case. The role of the panel is to review the process, not to overturn the decision for patients. This can be a very distressing experience for the patient.

Ensuring our policy meets national guidance around exceptionality.

The need here is to ensure that our policy makes it clear that exceptionality is in relation to clinical exceptionality, not social or work-related.

Actions agreed:

- The draft (re-written) local policy should be sent to Healthwatch and they should help us develop an equitable process with the public.
- It was agreed that this work would be a level 2: 'Inform and engage'. A communications and engagement lead was identified to take this work forward with Dr Round.

Maternity Services case for change (for panel information)

The panel asked for the children's commissioning team to provide an update on maternity services work across Devon. Sharon Matson, head of commissioning for

children and young people attended and talked the panel through the following items:

- Better Births in Devon engagement 2018.
- The current configuration of maternity services – what do we have and where is it.
- What do we know from local data – intelligence gathering.
- Next steps for engagement.

Sharon gave an overview of what choices are currently available to women across Devon when deciding where to give birth, however depending on where they live those choices might be reduced – largely due to location and availability. The places women are supported to have their babies include; at home, freestanding midwifery-led units, alongside midwifery-led units (run by midwives but next to an obstetric-led unit) and obstetric-led units based within the four main general hospitals in Devon.

Better Births in Devon

She advised the panel that during the summer of 2018, 2,267 people gave their views about maternity services across Devon, focusing on the main recommendations that came out of the national Better Births strategy. The team are keen to continue building on the momentum of that engagement.

Understanding what services we have and where, usage and data

We know that in some of the places where women can give birth, rates of usage are low. This means in some areas we are staffing and funding units that have low use and are only accessed by a small proportion of our population. We need to provide equitable choice for all and widen access.

People should have access to the same options, wherever they live in Devon. We know at present that in Plymouth and North Devon women are only offered home births or obstetric-led care, the other options are currently not available in those areas.

There is a need to consider what options could be developed, including pop-up birthing units (which have been well received elsewhere in the country), as well as potential development of alongside midwifery-led units at some of the other main hospital sites. However, investment is significant and would need to be factored in.

Actions agreed:

- A maternity transformation plan is to be produced and published – April 2019
- We need to have further conversations with the public around choice of birthing options and preferred locations, and their views on equitable choices
- It was agreed at this stage level 2: 'inform and engage', to gather feedback and develop options. A communications and engagement lead was identified and will work with the children's commissioning team to develop an engagement plan.

Any other business and next meeting

- A review of the form used for the gateway was discussed with a view for making it clearer for people coming to meet with the panel.
- Next meeting is on Tues 5 March at 9.30am – 11.00am in the DART room at County Hall.
- It was noted that Nick Pearson was standing in for Andrew Millward, who will chair future meetings.

END OF MEETING

This report has been approved subject to amendments as an accurate record of this meeting.

Signed: ...Nick Pearson.....
Chairman

Date:12 February.....