

Questions from members of the public

Adults and wellbeing scrutiny committee, 29 March 2021

Question

From: Andrea Davis

Question for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group regarding NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC)

On March 2nd 2020 at the Adults and wellbeing scrutiny committee, Herefordshire CCG could provide no credible explanation for the low rates of CHC awarded. This picture has not changed with 2019-20 (pre covid) Q2 Figures with Herefordshire 173rd of 191 CCGs. Herefordshire is 33.65 (59% of England number), England overall is 57.38 and Salford is 211.81, so you're more than 6.29 times more likely to get CHC there than in Herefordshire.

Question: Please provide a specific explanation of why that is the position in Herefordshire accounting for why the rates for CHC are so low.

The source data is available here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/nhs-chc-fnc/>

Response

From: Tom Grove, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Over the past two years, expenditure on Continuing Health Care (CHC) packages in Herefordshire has increased from £11,990,468 to £13,375,592.

There are several factors which contribute to CHC data variation, including differences between local commissioning arrangements in each CCG and Local Authority area. In Herefordshire, in addition to CHC fully funded care packages there are numerous integrated care packages jointly funded between the CCG and Herefordshire Council. Integrated care package data is not nationally captured or routinely consistently adopted by all CCGs and Local Authorities in England and is therefore not reflected in the reported figures.

Although NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG is not considered an outlier in terms of CHC eligibility figures by NHS England, this is an extremely complex area and there can sometimes be differing views. Where there are differences of opinion between Herefordshire Council and the CCG, there is a very clear process in place for reviewing the implementation of CHC practice.

Working in close partnership with Herefordshire Council, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG remains committed to providing the very best outcomes for the population of Herefordshire.

Supplementary question

From: Andrea Davis

Given Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG's assertion that CHC is an 'extremely complex area' and notwithstanding the lack of a comprehensive explanation on the CCG website, (which is normal recognised practice), please explain how the CCG comply with the National Framework requirement at paragraph 21, to promote awareness of NHS Continuing Healthcare, and to thereby ensure members of the public are fully informed of their right to a CHC checklist and assessment.

For clarification, those Roles and responsibilities of CCGs within the National Framework are:

21. CCGs are responsible and accountable for system leadership for NHS Continuing Healthcare within their local health and social care economy (refer to paragraphs 40-41), including:

f) ensuring delivery of, and compliance with, the National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare; **promoting awareness of NHS Continuing Healthcare.**

Response to the supplementary question

From: Tom Grove, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

In alignment with the principles and guidance of the National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing Care 2018, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG cases are considered individually, on a case-by-case basis, according to each individual's needs.

Any members of the public who might be eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare funding are provided with information to explain the process around application and assessment. This initial communication predominantly takes place through conversations with the Health or Social Care professional who submits the referral. NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG makes sure that there is ongoing communication with the patient or their representative during the process, including letters, patient information leaflets and direct communication from the CHC Nurse Co-ordinator.

The CCG has established a CHC Communications Group that meets monthly and which is attended by patient representatives, carer group representatives, Healthwatch, Local Authority officers, CHC managers, the CCG Patient Liaison Manager, and the CCG Communications Manager. This group is focused on all communication aspects of CHC, including wider promotion to members of the public. Most recently this group reviewed all patient information provided by letter and leaflet to ensure they were clear, understandable, and accessible.

The CHC Communications Group is currently working on a CHC webpage that will provide more general information about CHC. This will be complete by the end of April 2021.