

April 2017

## PSNC Briefing 027/17: Update on the Health and Care Landscape

This briefing is part of a series issued regularly by PSNC to inform pharmacy contractors and LPCs of developments in the wider health and care landscape beyond community pharmacy. It builds on the Health & Care Review articles which are published on the PSNC website every week.

### Next steps on the NHS 5YFV: NHS sets out action to deliver NHS care fit for the future

Two and a half years after the [NHS Five Year Forward View](#) (5YFV) was published, NHS England has published a [report](#) detailing what has been achieved so far and which changes will be taking place across the health service.

The plan sets out how practical improvements in areas such as cancer, mental health and GP access can be delivered while transforming the way that care is delivered to take pressure off hospitals by helping frail and older people live healthier, more independent lives.

The key planned changes include:

- improved cancer care aimed at saving an extra 5,000 lives a year through new one-stop testing centres, screening programmes and state of the art radiotherapy machines;
- boosting mental health services by increasing beds for children and young people to cut out of area care, more beds for new mothers and more mental health professionals in the community and hospitals to prevent crisis admissions;
- better access to GP services with everyone benefitting from extended opening in the evenings and weekends, newly designated 'Urgent Treatment Centres' and an enhanced NHS 111 service to ease pressure on A&Es;
- better care for older people by bringing together services provided by GPs, hospitals, therapists, nurses and care staff, cutting emergency admissions and time spent in hospitals; and
- driving efficiency and tackling waste to make money invested in the NHS go further in delivering the services and staff that patients want, including the latest treatments and technology.

### NHS England to issue new guidance on low value prescription items

NHS England has [announced](#) that it will be conducting a review of low value prescription items from this month (April 2017) and introducing new guidance for Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) as part of a national approach to reduce NHS expenditure in this area.

The announcement follows extensive work by NHS Clinical Commissioners which found that potential savings of £400 million per year could be made.

NHS England will be carrying out consultations and work with CCGs to develop guidelines initially aimed at a set of ten medicines which are ineffective, unnecessary, inappropriate or unsafe to be prescribed on the NHS which currently cost £128 million per year. The views of patient groups, clinicians, commissioners and providers across the NHS will be sought.

An NHS England spokesperson said: “New guidelines will advise CCGs on the commissioning of medicines generally assessed as low priority and will provide support to Clinical Commissioning Groups, prescribers and dispensers. The increasing demand for prescriptions for medication that can be bought over the counter at relatively low cost, often for self-limiting or minor conditions, underlines the need for all healthcare professionals to work even closer with patients to ensure the best possible value from NHS resources, whilst eliminating wastage and improving patient outcomes.”

## Encouraging healthier ‘out of home’ food provision

Public Health England (PHE) and the Local Government Association have published [Strategies for Encouraging Healthier ‘Out of Home’ Food Provision](#), a toolkit that has been developed to encourage more local intervention that will further increase the opportunities for communities to access healthier out of home food.

This toolkit has been created to help local authorities (LAs) across England work with owners and staff of smaller food outlets such as takeaways, restaurants, bakers, mobile traders, market stalls, corner shops, leisure centres, children’s centres and private nurseries – to help businesses offer healthier food and drinks. The toolkit mainly focusses on outlets serving young children, young people and their families with the intention of addressing concerns about childhood obesity.

## Guidelines on reducing sugar in food published for industry

PHE has [announced](#) that [guidelines](#) aimed at all sectors of the food industry on how to achieve a 20% reduction in sugar have been published.

The nine food categories covered by the guidelines include biscuits, breakfast cereals, confectionary and yoghurt.

The guidelines for each food category detailed in the report include:

- overall levels of sugar per 100g of products needed to achieve the 5% and 20% reductions; and
- average and maximum calorie or portion size guidelines for products likely to be consumed by an individual at one time.

The three approaches outlined by PHE that the food industry can take to reduce sugar are to reformulate products to lower the levels of sugar present; reducing the portion size, and/or the number of calories in single-serve products; and shifting consumer purchasing towards lower or no added sugar products.

## Health matters: obesity and the food environment

PHE has launched the latest edition of its [Health matters](#) series, this time focussing on obesity and the food environment. The publication discusses the scale of the obesity problem, factors behind the rise in obesity levels, improving everyone’s access to healthier food choices and national policies to tackle obesity.

## Salt reduction: targets for 2017

PHE has published a [report](#) which outlines targets for levels of salt in food products and drinks as part of PHE’s sugar reduction and reformulation programme.

There are two sets of targets contained in the document; one outlines salt targets for 2017 and the second one outlines eating out of home maximum per serving salt targets.

## Government is missing important opportunities to tackle childhood obesity

The House of Commons Health Committee has published a report, [Childhood obesity: follow-up](#) which looks at the Government's childhood obesity plan. The report critically analyses the Government's plan and expresses its disappointment that several key areas for action that could have strengthened the strategy were not included.

The report calls on ministers to set clear targets for reducing all levels of childhood obesity as well as goals for reducing the unacceptable and widening levels of inequality.

An in-depth analysis is included of the soft drinks industry levy, reformulation of products, discounting and price promotion of products, advertising, the out-of-home sector and measurement of success.

## An analysis of NHS finances and consultant productivity

The Health Foundation has published a report entitled [A year of plenty? An analysis of NHS finances and consultant productivity](#) which looks at the financial pressures on the NHS so far since the publication of the NHS 5YFV.

Key points raised in the report include:

- rising costs outstripped growth in funding for NHS providers, whose financial position continued to worsen;
- demand for care is rising faster than NHS provider income, with emergency admissions crowding out elective admissions;
- efficiency gains are becoming increasingly difficult and are below target;
- the number of consultants has increased but productivity has fallen; and
- the NHS does not operate in isolation; system change is needed to tackle its financial problems and their root causes.

## The social care funding gap: implications for local health care reform

The Health Foundation has published a [briefing](#) which analyses the size of the gap in adult social care funding in England, based on information provided on the position of social care funding in 25 of the 44 [Sustainability and Transformation Plans](#) (STPs).

Key points from the briefing include:

- successful implementation of STPs will require a robust social care sector;
- the analysis of STPs suggests that the funding gap for adult social care is at least £2 billion in 2017/18, which is in line with other estimates;
- many of the STPs include proposals to improve the care of older people, often requiring effective and accessible social care;
- from interviewing local STP leaders, it was found that the size of the social care funding gap identified in STPs may be an underestimate; and
- the 2017 budgets need to provide significant additional funding for social care to ensure proper support for those people and their families who are struggling to manage, and to protect the NHS from inefficiency.

## Everybody active, every day: 2-year update

PHE has published a progress [report](#) which reviews the progress made since the 2014 publication, [Everybody Active, Every Day](#) (the national physical activity framework for England).

The document reviews the progress of the framework's four areas for action:

- active society: creating a social movement;

- moving professionals: activating networks of expertise;
- active environments: creating the right spaces; and
- moving at scale: scaling up interventions that make us active.

The report concludes that there has been significant progress to tackle inactivity since the publication of the framework in 2014; the framework has informed local and national strategy and delivery plans and has made a visible difference to the approach across England.

## Survey of public health content of STPs

The UK's Faculty of Public Health has published the [results](#) of a survey it conducted with directors of public health in England, intended to gauge the level of involvement in STPs of key local public health staff in LAs and the NHS. The survey was conducted between December 2016 and January 2017.

Key points identified in the report include:

- the level of involvement and support from clinicians, patients, carers, and the public were all disappointingly low and, unless improved, will prevent success for the programmes;
- the ambition to strengthen intervention has also been limited by the year-on-year budget cuts to the public health budget; and
- the survey found a failure to tackle the wider determinants of health.

## Survey shows public satisfaction with NHS remaining steady

The King's Fund has published the [findings](#) of the British Social Attitudes survey which asked members of the public about their views on, and feelings towards the NHS and health and care issues in general.

The survey took place between July and October 2016 and includes a sample of nearly 3,000 people who gave their views about their overall satisfaction with the NHS, and of nearly 1,000 people about their satisfaction with individual NHS services.

Key results include:

- among the 63% of respondents who said they were satisfied with the NHS in 2016, the most frequently cited reasons were the quality of care (65%), care being free at the point of use (59%), and the range of services available (47%);
- among the 22% who were dissatisfied with the NHS, the most frequently cited reasons were waiting times (54%), lack of staff (48%), and lack of funding (45%);
- satisfaction with GP services was 72%, which, as in previous years, is higher than for any other NHS service;
- in 2016, there was no statistically significant change in satisfaction with the three hospital-based services covered by the survey compared to 2015; and
- 54% of respondents were satisfied with A&E services, 60% with inpatient services, and 68% with outpatient services.

## Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework 2017 to 2019

The Department of Health (DH) and the Department for Communities and Local Government have published a [briefing](#) which sets out how the [Better Care Fund](#) (BCF) can aid the integration of health, social care and other public services. It is intended for use by those responsible for delivering the BCF at a local level, such as CCGs, LAs or Health and Wellbeing Boards.

It includes the policy framework for the implementation of the statutory BCF in 2017 to 2019 and sets out proposals for going beyond the Fund towards further integration by 2020.

## Major reform of social care funding and provision needed

The House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee have published a [report](#) that examines how social care is funded in the long term and potential challenges to effective social care provision.

The report discusses the impact of funding pressures on the adult social care system, organisation of social care services and future funding.

Key facts in the report include:

- 28% of care services are inadequate or require improvement;
- 8% of care workers leave within a year of starting;
- 27% of care workers received no dementia training and 24% of those who administer medication were not trained to do so; and
- one in five unpaid carers providing 50 hours or more of care each week receives no practical support from the LA.

## Does the primary care home make a difference?

The National Association of Primary Care (NAPC) has published an early [analysis](#) of three rapid test sites of the [Primary Care Home \(PCH\) vanguard](#).

NAPC worked with the Beacon Medical Group (Plymouth), Thanet Health Community Interest Company (Thanet) and Larwood & Bawtry practices (South Yorkshire). These sites have all used the PCH model to meet local need, and the NAPC work focussed on identifying the initiatives they had undertaken as part of the PCH and to analyse data to understand the impact of these initiatives.

Key benefits identified in the analysis include:

- £27,000 of savings each year, enabled by providing extended primary care access in Thanet;
- £295,000 of savings from reduction in A&E admissions driven by Thanet Health;
- 330 GP referrals to hospitals avoided, a slowdown in the growth rate, demonstrated by Beacon Medical Group; and
- 6-day reduction in the average time patients wait to see their GP at Beacon Medical Group.

## Prescription Cost Analysis, England – 2016

NHS Digital has published the [Prescription Cost Analysis](#) (PCA), which provides details on the number of items and the net ingredient cost of all prescriptions dispensed in the community in England in 2016.

Key facts include:

- in 2016, £9.2 billion was the cost of prescriptions dispensed in the community. A decrease of 0.67% from £9.27 billion in 2015; and
- in 2016, 1.1 billion prescription items were dispensed in the community, an increase of 1.89% from 1.08 billion in 2015.

Further analysis of the PCA data will be published later in the year in the *Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community* publication.

## Testing times for many living with diabetes, says Diabetes UK

Diabetes UK has published a [report](#) highlighting the problems many people with diabetes experience with obtaining test strips on prescription.

Diabetes UK has been conducting surveys since 2013 to monitor restrictions with test strips and meters, and previous surveys found that the restrictions had negative impact on the ability of people to manage their diabetes. This report features the results of the 2016 survey, which shows that 27% of people had been refused a prescription for blood glucose test strips, or had the number of test strips prescribed reduced or restricted.

The report also discusses how this may affect people with diabetes such as their ability to drive, their ability to decide when to test, and the impact on primary care.

It concludes with recommendations to NHS England and other organisations across the UK.

## Consultation launched on prescribing of gluten-free foods

DH has launched a [consultation](#) on its proposals to end gluten-free prescribing as it believes this can save £25.7 million a year for the NHS. DH says an additional £10 million could be saved through patients no longer needing to attend GP appointments in order to get their gluten-free prescriptions.

The consultation papers highlight that staple gluten-free foods are readily available in supermarkets, and many CCGs have already stopped providing gluten-free foods on prescriptions.

The consultation will close at midday on 22nd June 2017.

## A further 62 CCGs took forward delegated commissioning arrangements for primary medical services on 1st April 2017

NHS England has announced that a further 62 CCGs have taken on delegated commissioning responsibilities for primary medical services, bringing the number of CCGs with full delegation to 176, representing 74% of CCGs.

The full list of CCGs can be viewed on the [NHS England website](#).

## Inhaler prescribing resource launched by RightBreathe

RightBreathe has published a new [resource](#) to help with the selection, prescribing and on-going use of inhalers. The resource covers inhalers, spacers and pathways linking to different guidelines; the resource is interactive and contains videos on how to correctly use the different devices.

## Health and care of people with learning disabilities

NHS Digital has published [experimental statistics](#) relating to key health issues for people who are recorded by their GP as having a learning disability in 2015/16.

Key facts include:

- compared to the life expectancy of the general population, females with a learning disability have a life span shorter by 18 years, and males 14 years;
- the percentage of patients known to their GP as having a learning disability who received an annual learning disability health check increased to 46% from 43% in 2014/15; and
- obesity is twice as common in people aged 18-35 with learning disabilities, being underweight is twice as common in people aged over 64 with learning disabilities, compared to patients with no learning disabilities.

## Mental health patients set to benefit from pioneering new digital services

NHS England has [announced](#) new funding designed to improve care for patients experiencing mental health issues, to be trialled in seven mental health trusts.

For the first time, all key professionals involved in a person's care will have access to real-time records from triage and initial assessment to follow up care.

The trusts will have up to £70 million to invest in digital services – consisting £35 million with additional match funding from themselves of £35 million – in order to become 'Global Digital Exemplars for Mental Health' helping the organisations become world-leading in the use of IT, providing knowledge and expertise to the wider NHS in order to reduce time and costs for others.

## Best and worst areas for care home quality in England revealed in new research

Independent Age has published a [report](#) highlighting regional and LA differences across England in the quality of care home services. The analysis is based on Care Quality Commission inspections which rate homes as either Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate.

Key findings in the report include:

- the North West contains seven of the eight worst performing English LAs on care home quality, with one in three care homes across the region performing poorly;
- the North West, Yorkshire and The Humber and South East are the worst performing regions of England for care home quality; and
- London, the East of England and the South West are the best performing regions for care home quality.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Zainab Al-Kharsan, Service Development Pharmacist](#).