## One Halton Newsletter

### 01 July 2020

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<tr>
<th>Halton Borough Council</th>
<th>NHS Halton CCG</th>
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| **Adult Social Care**  | Patient Advice Line  
There are a number of changes Adult Social Care have had to make over the last few months in response to the pandemic. See pages 3 and 4 for further details on those changes, innovations and good practice that have been taking place across Halton. | The COVID Patient Advice Line launched on the 6th April 2020 and has taken over 1500 calls, the vast majority within the first 5 weeks. As the COVID infection rates continue to fall and as lockdown eases, the number of people requiring support via the advice line has also reduced. The calls have dropped significantly to around 40 per week. As a result, the service is able to transfer back to the mainstream CCG Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). With effect from 5 pm Friday 5th June, all calls and emails have been redirected to PALS. |
| **Response to Covid-19** | **Local Situation**  
In response to COVID-19, health and social care services have had to drastically change the support they offer the public. During April and early May, Healthwatch carried out an online survey asking local people to provide feedback on how the Covid-19 was affecting them. In total 191 people responded to the survey and a feedback report is available here which highlights some of the themes and issues raised. Results and findings from this survey are shared with service providers, with NHS Halton CCG, and with Halton Borough Council to help make sure that their response to the pandemic takes into account the needs and experiences of local people as the situation progresses. A follow up survey is currently being undertaken during June 2020. | Locally the situation remains relatively stable, with a continued reduction in the growth of infection levels. As at 26th June, the number of confirmed cases in Halton was 418. Both CCGs and the Local Authority Partners continue to work together to provide support to Care Homes and a local Care Home Board has been established to oversee a number of actions and activities to continue to support care homes in the coming weeks and months. As at 26th June, there have been 113 confirmed cases within care homes in Halton. |
| **Annual Report**  
The Healthwatch Halton Annual Report for 2019-2020 has recently been published and is available to view on their website here | **Cancer Symptoms Awareness Campaign**  
A new radio advert aims to encourage more people to go to their GP with potential cancer symptoms. On Friday 26th June, the CCGs are launching a new radio advert on WIRE FM, to promote the importance of people contacting their GP with any potential cancer symptoms. The advert will run every hour for the next four weeks on the station. | It builds on previous promotions that have been carried out over the past few months, including news articles in The Runcorn and Widnes World, a radio interview on Wire FM and a social media video from our local GPs. |
| **Voluntary Sector**  
Staff at the Deafness Resource Centre have been finding new ways to interact with their service users; some examples include:  
- GP Practices embracing three way video consultations to include an interpreter.  
- Use of Video Conferencing via WhatsApp, Zoom and Skype.  
- Halton Hospital providing replacement batteries direct to the Deafness Resource Centre, who were then able to post directly through the patient’s door. | **Re-Starting of Services**  
In response to the national guidance regarding Phase 2 of the Pandemic and the re-starting of services, the CCGs Integrated Management Team are overseeing the Phase 2 implementation plan, working closely with providers where services were stopped or scaled back during the Phase 1 response to ensure they are restarted. |
| **Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group**  
Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group offers emotional and psychological support for anyone affected by cancer including patients, carers, family and friends. Throughout Covid-19, all services are available via telephone or online services. A support line is available from 10 am until 3 pm Monday to Friday, offering telephone counselling sessions and web chats. Service users are offered regular weekly telephone contact calls.  
The group are also now trialling online counselling sessions via Zoom. Peer support and activity groups have moved on-line to keep people connected and engaged which are full of fun, support and activities. There is a weekly peer support Zoom meeting allowing service users to connect with each other. Contact them directly on 0151 423 5730 or email info@widnesandruncorncancersupport.uk  
An online registration is also available here |  |
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<th><strong>St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals</strong>&lt;br&gt;NHS Trust</th>
<th><strong>Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals</strong>&lt;br&gt;NHS Foundation Trust</th>
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<td><strong>Cancer Services Information</strong>&lt;br&gt;Medical teams at the Trust are working together with all of their cancer partner organisations to keep delivering cancer care as a top priority. Although the local Macmillan Information Centre is closed to visitors, they are still operating a support phone line by calling 01744 646985. Pat Gills, Cancer Service Manager has recorded a video message for cancer patients who may be concerned about Coronavirus and this can be viewed here.</td>
<td><strong>Attendances</strong> at A&amp;E continue to rise steadily with a daily average number of patients through A&amp;E of 205. Similarly, the Runcorn Urgent Care Centre is also seeing a continuous rise in average daily attendance, with an average of 54 per day this week compared to 46 last week. (As at 26 June.)</td>
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<td><strong>North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recovery Trial</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Trust was pleased to be an early participant in the RECOVERY Trial where dexamethasone was trialled to treat Covid-19 positive patients with severe respiratory complications. Dr Mithun Murthy, consultant and respiratory clinical lead, enrolled the first patients from Warrington and Halton on 21 April. He was delighted that the enrolment and trial at the Trust was set up and deployed at incredible speed, with results showing that for patients receiving oxygen alone, the risk of death was reduced by 20%, and among participants receiving ventilation on ITU, the risk of death was reduced by 35%. He notes that the results are very significant with immediate implications around the world for the clinical treatment of many thousands of patients currently in hospital receiving oxygen. It is highly likely that such treatment will be recommended as standard care for hospitalised patients with COVID-19 receiving oxygen.</td>
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<td><strong>24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line</strong>&lt;br&gt;Northwest Boroughs have upgraded their existing 24/7 mental health crisis lines to freephone numbers. 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line</td>
<td><strong>Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Primary Care</strong></td>
<td><strong>Innovations</strong>&lt;br&gt;In conjunction with IT, the team developed an initiative to offer video consultations to parents and carers to support the Children’s Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Service, enabling the service to continue providing a quality service to families during lockdown. The system has enabled the team to triage patient referrals and also work with children and their parents virtually on whatever issues they are experiencing. The response to video consultations from parents has been overwhelmingly positive. Bridgewater recently launched Qlik Sense to enable the processing of data from all of the major Trust systems. This visually interactive solution allows clinicians, managers and the Board to access the data in a self-service, intuitive and user-friendly manner.</td>
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<td><strong>Standard Operating Procedures</strong>&lt;br&gt;NHS England has released version 3 of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The total triage system continues to be in place across all practices along with patient zoning for COVID and non-COVID symptoms. The SOP also details how practices should be focused on the restoration of routine chronic condition management and prevention wherever possible, including vaccination and immunisation, contraception and health checks.</td>
<td><strong>Restoration</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Trust has received national guidance on the restoration of community health services for children and young people and will be seeking to work within this framework to ensure that children, young people and families receive the care and support they need. The Trust’s 0-19s services and specialised children’s services are currently in the process of reinstating more of their regular activities in line with the recent national guidance. Staff are currently returning from services where they have been redeployed and it is anticipated that the Trust will have the majority of these services reinstated, as described in the guidance by 1 July 2020. The specialist community dental service, which receives referrals from high street practices for children and adults, as well as providing dentistry for patients with additional needs, is undertaking a phased, staged restart. Where treatment is needed under conditions of general anaesthetic at Whiston Hospital, the aim is to resume this service by 13 July 2020.</td>
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<td><strong>GP Practices in Halton</strong>&lt;br&gt;GP practices in Runcorn and Widnes have had to change the way they deliver services during the Coronavirus pandemic, but they are still working hard to support patients with any health concerns. For a news article giving further details on how GP surgeries in Halton are dealing with the Coronavirus Pandemic, please click Here.</td>
<td><strong>Community Pharmacy COVID-19 Urgent Medicines Delivery Service</strong>&lt;br&gt;A new Community Pharmacy COVID-19 Urgent Medicines Delivery Service is now in operation across Halton. The aim of the service is to provide a fast track delivery service (within one hour) during agreed times for patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 requiring urgent medicines, primarily those to treat and manage end of life care symptoms during the COVID-19 outbreak from designated community pharmacies when directly requested by a Halton clinician.</td>
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### Community-based Services
Some of the Council’s community-based services, including day care activities and the adult placement service have been temporarily halted as ‘non-essential’ under government guidelines.

During these service interruptions, regular contact has been made with service users and their carers to ensure they are managing and staying well. Where potential concerns have been raised, they have been passed on to relevant teams to conduct follow-up and take appropriate action.

One of the Adult Placement carers took an innovative approach to keeping in contact with the people she usually supports, producing a monthly newsletter with updates, quizzes and colouring sheets. All service users under her care have dementia and she has kept them informed of changes in her garden over the lockdown period. This has included pictures of a tree outside her house now in full foliage since they were last there.

Plans are now being put in-place to re-open services while maintaining everyone’s safety. Initially this will see reduced service capacity with social distancing measures in place.

### Domiciliary Care
Domiciliary care in Halton has helped reduce pressure on local hospitals, and in some cases prevented admissions during the pandemic. Meeting the capacity and demand for social care delivered in people’s own homes has been managed in partnership with Halton’s commissioned domiciliary care provider, Premier Care, who have in turn sub-contracted for additional support as needed.

A ‘rapid response’ flexible 500 hour run was commissioned prior to the pandemic to support flow. This has proved to be invaluable during this period when person centred packages of care have enabled people to stay at home, being stepped up and stepped down in accordance with needs.

Jackie Barber, Branch Manager, from Premier Care said: "People who are receiving these services become more confident and recover more quickly in their home environment. This service has also reduced stress for families, reducing carer and family breakdown, and has been a source of comfort for families knowing that their loved ones are visited daily, giving peace of mind in the lockdown process.”

### Lillycross
Lillycross, a former care home which closed in 2015, was refurbished and opened with just a month’s turnaround, thanks to a partnership approach including Halton Borough Council, Halton Clinical Commissioning Group, Catalyst Choices and Eric Wright Health & Care and Capacity Lab. The site offers 60 hospital discharge transition and community beds to be used for short-term care including management of recovering Covid19 patients, for Cheshire and Merseyside.

To support the new facility, the Care Provider, Catalyst Choices has recruited over 60 people from both the local community and the healthcare sector. The first service users were welcomed to the facility during week commencing 18th May 2020.

### Provider Support
Good communication, close collaboration and co-ordinated contingency planning have all been cited as success factors in managing adult social care services during the pandemic.

Halton Borough Council’s Quality Assurance team kept daily contact with commissioned providers throughout this period. Welfare calls have supported services to proactively consider emergency planning for emerging situations where delivery could be interrupted. Conversations have included looking at staffing levels, any outbreaks or contact with Covid19, and maintenance of stock levels for PPE.

The daily calls to services have been backed up by a daily update brief summarising any new government guidelines and changes which need to be made. The Council have also backed the financial stability of services with support to access relevant Covid19 funds, and updates on other grants and provision.

Assuring market stability has been the primary aim of support and responses to any escalation of services needs have been tailored to requirements.

### Caring for Carers
As face-to-face contact has become more difficult Halton Carer’s Centre have increased their contact using different technologies. The service, supported by a Council’s commissioned contract, was in touch with over 3,000 carers between March and May, including over 600 young carers.

Keeping in touch with carers during lockdown has provided a valuable lifeline to ensuring continuity of care. Carers have received updates and wellbeing calls, been in contact on social media and online support groups have been held. The Centre is now planning focussed mental health and wellbeing support sessions to be held via Zoom.

### Responsive And Accessible Care
Adult social work teams adopted a single ‘front door’ access point at the crisis intervention phase of the pandemic, working in partnership with health colleagues to be able to achieve timely responses to demands.

The models of service delivery were quickly altered so that appropriate and proportionate care could be accessed seven days a week. This included altering operational patterns to cover longer days and weekends.

Courses of action taken have proven pivotal in building better communication across the system, particularly on an integrated health and social care basis. They are now looking to ease the 7-day working as demand settles. Some changes to elements of practice will be retained following review.

### ‘Be a Care Hero’
Staff shortages, as a long-running issue across the adult social care sector as a whole and as a result of those testing positive for Covid19 or self-isolating, have caused concern to service capacity.

The North West Association of Director of Adult Social Care initiated a rapid recruitment campaign in early April to encourage ‘Care Heroes’ into the sector. The campaign covered all North West local authorities, signposting potential recruits to their most local offer. Backed with social media promotion Halton led the way after the first two weeks with a steady flow of applicants.

Applications were promptly ‘passported’ to social care providers for job matching and selection. Work is now underway to capture the results of the innovative approach.
Protecting Our Staff
Halton Borough Council deliver frontline adult social care services across the community, including running four of the borough’s older people’s care homes. Protecting staff with appropriate PPE has been paramount to the continuity of service delivery and has required a rapid mobilisation.

The Council’s Health, Safety and Risk Management team quickly setup and managed a dedicated PPE hub at Widnes Stadium taking daily orders from different settings and services. The hub utilised personnel from different parts of the Council, where services had been interrupted or altered, to support sourcing, order taking and delivery of relevant equipment.

Volunteer redeployment was also utilised across the Council where staff were absent as a result of testing positive for Covid19 or being exposed to it and needing to self-isolate, having been unwell with symptoms or having been asked to shield. Managing capacity within services has required constant vigilance and receptiveness to new ways of working. All frontline adult social care services have been maintained throughout the period.

Across Halton

A gentle reminder . . . . . .
Face Coverings
In line with national guidance, since 15th June, face masks and coverings are to be worn by all NHS hospital staff and visitors. Outpatients and visitors are asked to plan ahead and bring a face covering with them if possible; however masks will be provided if necessary. It has been agreed by the Cheshire and Merseyside Directors of Nursing that visiting restrictions will remain in place at all hospitals across Cheshire and Merseyside for the time being.

NHS Birthday
On 5 July, it will be 72 years since the NHS began. This year, the NHS Birthday is about saying thank you back

Contact Us:
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