


# Agenda Item 7

		<b>THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE</b>	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

Open Report on behalf of Sue Cousland, Director of Operations,  
Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust

Report to	<b>Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire</b>
Date:	<b>20 May 2015</b>
Subject:	<b>Update on Health Visiting and School Nursing Services</b>

## **Summary:**

This report enables the Committee to gain an insight into the Health Visiting and School Nursing Services, which are provided in Lincolnshire by Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust.

## **Actions Required:**

That the Committee considers and comments on the content of the report.

## **1. Background**

### Health Visiting

Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS) is commissioned to provide a Health Visiting service to deliver the Healthy Child Programme to children aged from 0-5 years, who are registered with a GP practice in Lincolnshire. Health Visitors have a crucial role in ensuring children have the best possible start in life and are the backbone of delivering the Healthy Child Programme 0 – 5 years, in partnership with health and social care colleagues. Unlike the majority of other community-based services, Health Visitors work predominantly with the well population, offering a health promotion and disease prevention service to the child, their families and the communities in which they live. Frequently the service is the link for families to other services and Health Visitors and their School Nurse colleagues are skilled at networking and forming alliances with other statutory and voluntary organisations.

This Health Visiting service is commissioned by NHS England, but commissioning will transfer to Lincolnshire County Council from October 2015. Following this transfer it is anticipated that the Health Visiting service will be delivered to all children who are resident in Lincolnshire.

The Healthy Child Programme is structured to provide four levels of service based on the need of the child and family. These are:

- Building community capacity and ensuring families are aware of the services available to them
- Universal services available to all families to ensure a healthy start in life
- Universal Plus service available to families who need specific expert help in areas such as parenting, weaning or maternal mental health concerns
- Universal Partnership Plus when families need ongoing support from a multi-agency team to deal with more complex issues over a longer period of time.

The universal services element of the Healthy Child Programme includes five universal checks that are provided to every child.

- Ante natal health promoting contact
- New baby review - primary birth visit
- 6 - 8 week assessment
- 1 year assessment
- 2 to 2 and half year review

These five checks are mandated for 18 months following the transition to local authority commissioning in October 2015. In addition, the Health Visiting service provides individual packages of care and safeguarding services where there is an identified need for a child or family.

There are six high impact areas that are the focus on the Health Visiting specification. These are maternal mental health, transition to parenthood, breastfeeding, healthy weight, child development and the management of minor illness/accident prevention.

We are very pleased to have three Fellows of the Institute of Health Visiting within Lincolnshire Community Health Services.

### School Nursing

Lincolnshire Community Health Services is commissioned to provide the School Nursing service to children and young people of school age who live or go to school in Lincolnshire. A service specification has been compiled in collaboration with Lincolnshire County Council as the commissioner of this service. The core commissioned offer includes:

- National Child Measurement Programme for children in reception and year 6.
- Health Needs Assessments for all children in reception and year 6.
- Hearing screening for children in reception.
- 'Clinic in a Box' sexual health offer in schools and community settings.

- Health and wellbeing and drop in clinics in schools and community settings.

The service also provides an immunisation service for school aged children, which is commissioned by NHS England. This includes the HPV [Human Papilloma Virus] vaccination for year 8 and 9 girls and from 2015/16 will include vaccinations for meningitis C, the school leaver vaccination and the national childhood flu vaccination programme.

### Current Staffing

In 2011 the Government launched a Health Visitor Implementation Plan to provide well-resourced Health Visiting services that would work in partnership with GPs, midwifery, Children's Centres and other health and early years' services to ensure that all families had a positive start in life. The Plan included a 'call to action' to train and recruit an extra 4,200 Health Visitors by 2015.

The Lincolnshire 'call to action' trajectory was initially for 134.5 whole time equivalent (wte) Health Visitors to be employed in the county. This figure was later revised to 126.4 wte. At 31 March 2015 there were 133.65 wte Health Visitors in Lincolnshire. It is important to note that the national definition includes Health Visitors that are not delivering the Healthy Child Programme, for example Family Nurse Partnership nurses, Vulnerable Children and Young People nurses, Infant Feeding Coordinators and Deputy Named Nurse posts. Actual Health Visitors delivering the Healthy Child Programme at 31 March 2015 is 107 wte.

In common with other professions, it has been difficult to recruit Health Visitors into Lincolnshire as a whole and the east of the county in particular. Over the four years of the 'call to action' LCHS has trained 45 new Health Visitors. There are currently 13 student Health Visitors in training who will graduate in September 2015 and recruitment is underway for a further eight students to begin training in September 2015. Recruitment of experienced Health Visitors is also ongoing. This ongoing training and recruitment is to address the expected retirements from the service over the next few years due to the age of the workforce.

The School Nursing service consists of Specialist School Nurses, Registered Nurses and Skill Mix Staff, supported by administrators. There are ongoing challenges with recruiting Specialist School Nurses in Lincolnshire. Workforce mapping identifies that we need 20 Specialist School Nurses to deliver the School Nursing Service and we currently have 16 in post. Four more Specialist School Nurses are in training and are due to qualify in September however the service is expecting a number of retirements. At present there is no funding available to train further Specialist School Nurses beyond the current year.

## Care Quality Commission Comments

The results of the CQC inspection in September 2014 of Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust were published in December 2014 and gave LCHS an overall rating of 'Good'. The CQC report raised concerns about the numbers of both Health Visitors and Specialist School Nurses employed by LCHS.

- **Health Visitor Caseloads.** The CQC identified concerns with high caseloads in some teams. We do not recognise the caseloads that the CQC quotes and believe they are based on a mis-interpretation of data from our clinical system. LCHS does not use caseloads as a measure of workforce allocation as the variation in demographics and need across the county make standard caseloads inherently inequitable. However, as a general measure based on a population aged 0-5 years of 39,700 children, the average caseload of a Health Visitor is 370 which is within the recommendation of no more than 400 made by Lord Laming.
- **School Nursing Staffing.** The CQC recommendation of one specialist School Nurse for each secondary school would require more than 80 Specialist School Nurses for Lincolnshire which is in excess of the funding available. This recommendation is based on Department of Health guidance from 2004 which has been superseded by 2013 guidance which suggests that skill mix teams lead by a Senior School Nurse appropriate to the deprivation and geography of the area are required. LCHS workforce mapping has identified that 20 Specialist School Nurses, supported by additional Nurses and Skill Mix Staff, is appropriate to meet the requirements of school aged children in Lincolnshire and the current service specification.

## Future Developments

There are a number of service developments that are underway to improve the quality and delivery of Health Visiting and School Nursing Services in Lincolnshire.

**0-19 Integrated Teams:** LCHS is currently developing a transformation programme to integrate Health Visiting and School Nursing Services into a public health offering for children and young people. We believe there are a number of quality and productivity gains to be made through this integration including the simplification of pathways, smoother transition between services, improved continuity of care for Universal Partnership Plus families and improved partnership working with other agencies including Children's Centres.

**Extended Hours:** LCHS is currently developing a county-wide central access point for Health Visiting and School Nursing Services that will provide telephone access to a Health Visitor or a School Nurse between the hours of 8am and 8pm. We are also investigating the provision of services on weekends to particularly meet the needs of working mothers and fathers.

**Mobile Website Development:** LCHS has developed a mobile website to provide evidence-based information to parents in an easy, accessible format. Information on breastfeeding and maternal mental health issues are currently available. It is intended

that by December 2015 the site will also contain information on all areas of the Healthy Child Programme including parenting advice, weaning and toilet training information and advice on preventing accidents and managing minor illness. LCHS is also developing a School Nursing website for young people that will include online chat facilities to connect them with a School Nurse for advice.

## **2. Conclusion**

LCHS continues to be committed to delivering a quality Health Visiting and School Nursing service that meets the needs of all children in Lincolnshire.

We are keen to help County Council commissioning colleagues to develop their understanding of the Health Visiting and School Nursing agenda, particularly through the transition to local authority commissioning. To this end we have offered opportunities for local authority staff to spend time 'back to the floor' in our services. We would also like to extend this invitation to all committee members.

We remain committed to 'growing our own' future staff in the response to the ageing profile of our workforce. We will continue to work with Health Education England and local commissioners to support training of Health Visitors and School Nurses to ensure the continued viability of the service.

We are committed to the Lincolnshire Health and Care (LHAC) agenda and are actively involved in the Women & Children's work stream to support development of new models of care. We believe that there are opportunities to improve quality and outcomes through working more closely with health and social care colleagues across the Lincolnshire system.

## **3. Consultation**

The report provides an update on current service and no consultation is required.

## **4. Appendices**

No appendices are attached.

## **5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Nikki Silver, General Manager for Family & Healthy Lifestyles at Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust, who can be contacted on 01529 220 300 or [nikki.silver@lincs-chs.nhs.uk](mailto:nikki.silver@lincs-chs.nhs.uk)

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