

Agenda Item 5

		THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE	
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 Andrew Crookham
Executive Director - Resources

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	17 June 2020
Subject:	Lincolnshire NHS Response to Covid-19

Summary

This report provides background on the response of the NHS Lincolnshire to covid-19.

Actions Required

To consider the information presented on the response of the NHS in Lincolnshire to covid-19.

1. Background

Introduction

As reported to the Lincolnshire CCG Board on 29 April 2020, the covid-19 pandemic has presented the biggest challenge to the NHS since its establishment in 1948, and has been described as the most significant challenge to the country since the second world war. The CCG Board also recorded the fact that the way in which NHS services and staff in Lincolnshire had responded to challenges of covid-19 had been outstanding. The CCG Board also recorded its appreciation of and gratitude for the work of partners in the public sector, including social care, community care and the care homes sector, and the voluntary sector.

2. Key Elements of Response

Capacity

In readiness for the outbreak, both United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT) and Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS) expanded their capacity, as part of the surge planning requirements. ULHT had the ability to accommodate 1,150 general and acute patients (normal capacity 920) and 80 patients in ventilated beds (normal capacity 25).

The number of covid-19 inpatient cases at ULHT, LCHS and LPFT peaked at 112 on 9 April. Since that time the figure has fallen significantly. On 29 May ULHT had recorded 20 covid-19 in-patients on its sites.

Cases in Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire continues has had a very low number of covid-19 cases per 100,000 population by comparison to the rest of Midlands Region and England as a whole – third lowest of all Sustainability and Transformation Partnership areas. As of 2 June 2020, Public Health England reported that there had been a cumulative total of 1,118 covid-19 cases in Lincolnshire, which represented 147.9 cases per 100,000 population. This compares to rate of 273.2 for England and 192.3 for the East Midlands. However, Boston has recorded a rate of 327.2.

Key Temporary Changes in NHS Service Provision

There were a number of changes made in service provision across the NHS in Lincolnshire, in order to ensure that there was sufficient capacity to deal with the anticipated increase in covid-19 cases; to manage reduced staffing levels; to maintain essential non-COVID-19 care; and to work within the Government's social distancing requirements.

These changes included:

- the suspension of all elective surgery
- the suspension of all non-essential outpatient appointments
- the closure of the Stamford Minor Injury Unit
- the closure of the Urgent Treatment Centres at both John Coupland Hospital, Gainsborough and Johnson Hospital, Spalding
- the concentration of hyper-acute stroke services at Lincoln County Hospital
- the closure of the Butterfly Hospice in Boston.

LCHS also expanded community hospital bed numbers, the clinical assessment service and their community nursing capacity.

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) made a number of adjustments in capacity to ensure that they could continue to provide patient services. Many LPFT services became online/digital. LPFT had good capacity in place to prepare for a potential increase in mental health demand.

There were numerous adjustments in primary care capacity, with many GP practices adopting online or telephone consultations.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The response to Covid19 followed pandemic plans developed nationally and locally at each trust. These plans included the preparation for the large volumes of PPE equipment required. Guidance on usage of PPE was provided from Public Health England.

Throughout the response to covid-19, there has been a great deal of interest and concern on the availability of PPE. A national allocation process was initiated.

At ULHT through a combination of alternative sourcing, the national allocation and a less than average requirement for PPE (stemming from having fewer suspected and confirmed covid-19 patients) there have not been any occasions where PPE has run out. ULHT remains in a place of relative strength where on a number of occasions they have been able to support system and regional partner organisations through mutual aid.

3. Consultation

This is not a direct consultation item.

4. Conclusion

The Committee is requested to consider the information presented on the response of the NHS in Lincolnshire to covid-19.

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

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