

Agenda Item 4

		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

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	16 March 2022
Subject:	Chairman's Announcements

1. Information Requested at the Last Meeting (16 February 2022)

More detail was requested at the last meeting on the following items:

Community Emergency Medicine Services
(Minute 72 – East Midlands Ambulance Service Update)

Community Emergency Medicine Services (CEMs) are provided by LIVES [Lincolnshire Integrated Volunteer Emergency Services]. CEMs have three highly equipped response vehicles, and is supported solely by qualified medical specialists and experienced clinicians, including doctors, paramedics, and nurses, who volunteer their time to provide this service. CEMs are able to provide enhanced care at the scene of the emergency, such as testing and ultrasound, which can reduce the need for a patient to enter the healthcare system as an emergency, thus reducing pressure on A&E. This service is unique to Lincolnshire.

The specialist skills provide by CEMs mean that they can carry out many procedures, that often an ambulance crew cannot, for example, stitching and treating a serious wound to diagnosing and treating complex diabetic emergencies in a patient's own home. The LIVES annual report for 2020/21 refers to CEMs attending 753 jobs during the year, following which they escorted patients to hospital on 103 occasions; conducted 51 surgical procedures and provided sedations to 76 patients.

Dental Services

(Minute 71 – Chairman’s Announcements)

At the last meeting it was reported that NHS England and NHS Improvement (Midlands) had received £8.9 million as its share of a national funding allocation of £50 million (announced on 25 January 2022) to secure more dental appointments by the end of the year. Information on the allocation of funding for dental services in Lincolnshire has been requested and will be circulated when provided by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Suicide Prevention Action Plan

(Minute 74 – Suicide Prevention in Lincolnshire)

The Lincolnshire Suicide Prevention Action Plan is available on the County Council’s website: [Suicide prevention action plan – Lincolnshire County Council](#)

Information on the Community Suicide Prevention Innovation Fund may be found on the gov.uk website: [Suicide Prevention Fund 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

2. Covid-19 Update

Covid-19 Response: Living with Covid-19

Since the Committee’s last meeting on 16 February 2022, the main development has been the publication of the government’s its plan for living with Covid-19 (*Covid-19 Response: Living with Covid-19*) on 21 February 2022. The government plans to enable the country to manage Covid-19 like other respiratory illnesses, while minimising mortality and retaining the ability to respond if a new variant emerges with more dangerous properties than the omicron variant, or during periods of waning immunity, that could again threaten to place the NHS under unsustainable pressure. The following key dates were included:

- **From 21 February**
 - The guidance for staff and students in most education settings to undertake twice weekly asymptomatic testing was withdrawn.

- **From 24 February**
 - The legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test was removed, but adults and children who test positive continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.
 - Self-isolation support payments and funding for practical support ceased.
 - Routine contact tracing ceased.
 - The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (England) (No 3) Regulations were revoked.

- **From 24 March**
 - The Covid-19 provisions in the statutory sick pay regulations will cease.

- **From 1 April**
 - Guidance will be updated on the steps that people with Covid-19 should take to minimise contact with other people.
 - Free universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for the general public will cease, but will remain available for social care staff and for a small number of at-risk groups.
 - The health and safety requirement for every employer to explicitly consider Covid-19 in their risk assessments will cease.
 - Guidance to the public and businesses will be consolidated, in line with public health advice

Testing

The PCR testing network across England will be decommissioned in a phased approach over the next nine months. This will include all regional and local testing sites across Lincolnshire, as well as the mobile testing units. This aligns with the new strategy to remove free population wide PCR testing by the end of March.

Simultaneously all national and local components for asymptomatic testing will also be removed by the end of March. This includes the current Later Flow Test universal offer (covering home delivery and pharmacy collect) as well as the local targeted community testing programme.

Vaccination Programme

The government has stated that the vaccination programme will continue, with the current focus on all 12-15 year olds, and on at-risk 5-11 year olds. Subject to the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisation (JCVI), further vaccinations (boosters) may be recommended for people who are most vulnerable to serious outcomes from Covid-19 in the autumn of 2022 this autumn and, ahead of that, a spring booster for groups which the JCVI consider to be at particularly high risk.

3. Mental Health Rehabilitation in Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) has announced that it would like to hear the views of service users, carers, partners and the general on mental health rehabilitation services in Lincolnshire. LPFT states that feedback will help the Trust develop the best mental health rehabilitation support for people now and in the future.

LPFT will host three face-to-face events as follows:

- 22 March 2022, 10am – Midday at the Alive Church, Newland, Lincoln, LN1 1XG
- 23 March 2022, 10am – Midday at Boston United FC, Jakemans Community Stadium, Pilgrim Way, Wyberton, Boston, PE21 7NE
- 24 March 2022, 10am – Midday at Jubilee Church Life Centre, 5 London Road, Grantham, NG31 6EY

The events will invite the views and feedback of anyone who is connected to mental health rehabilitation services; whether they have cared for someone in rehabilitation, have an interest in NHS mental health community care, or have personal lived experience. Further information and bookings can be made via LPFT's Participation Coordinator, Sarah Cox, via email at: lpft.involvement@nhs.net.

The engagement events will also provide attendees with an update on current services and opportunity to help shape new developments within mental health rehabilitation services in Lincolnshire. Two of the areas where feedback is going to be sought are:

Ashley House, Grantham

In February 2021, to support the pandemic response and to ensure services were staffed safely, LPFT made a decision to temporarily close Ashley House, a 15-bed mixed gender open rehabilitation inpatient unit in Grantham. As well as supporting staffing on the LPFT's other rehabilitation and acute mental health wards, this enabled LPFT to put additional resource into its Community Rehabilitation Service, which was launched in 2020.

Community Rehabilitation Service

The Community Rehabilitation Service, launched in 2020, initially provided support to people living in Lincoln and Gainsborough but has now expanded to the Grantham and South Holland areas of the county. LPFT states that the community teams are able to support a larger number of people than inpatient units, with people being cared for closer to their home. The teams work to support those with long-term mental health difficulties who have been in hospital for a length of time. Service users receive increased on-going support with their day-to-day lives, enabling the building of skills and confidence, helping to improve relationships and support networks.

4. Lincoln Medical School Placements at United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust

On 21 February 2022, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT) announced that it would be welcoming into its hospitals the first ever cohort of 80 third year medical students from the Lincoln Medical School at the University of Lincoln. The students will receive training at Lincoln County Hospital and Pilgrim Hospital, Boston, whilst also caring for patients.

ULHT will be providing clinical placements for these medical students, in a collaboration between the Universities of Lincoln and Nottingham. This Lincoln Medical School students will be training alongside the existing cohort of students from Nottingham., who will conclude their training in 2023, after which all student intakes will be from Lincoln Medical School.

It is hoped the new Medical School in Lincoln will address future projected shortages of doctors by encouraging graduates to complete their junior doctor training and applying for jobs locally. The numbers of students coming to Lincolnshire's hospitals will increase over the next two years as part of the increase to the government cap on medical school places.

5. **Healthwatch Lincolnshire Live Panel Event: Dental Services in Lincolnshire**

This is a further reminder that the Healthwatch Lincolnshire Live Panel Event on dental services in Lincolnshire is taking place on 30 March, from 10 am until 11 am. It will provide patients the opportunity to ask the questions that about their dental care in Lincolnshire. Further details are available at the following link: -

[YourVoice@Healthwatch: Dental Services in Lincolnshire March 2022 | Healthwatch Lincolnshire](#)

6. **North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust – Three Year Strategy**

On 15 September 2021, the Committee considered an item on North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust (NWAFT) and requested a copy of their overall strategy once it had been revised and approved. On 8 February 2022, the NWAFT Board of Directors approved its three year strategy for the period 2022/23 – 2024/25, entitled *Local Care for Local People*. This document is available in full on the Trust’s website: [Trust Strategy - North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust \(nwangliaft.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nwangliaft.nhs.uk)

On 16 February 2022, a request was made for the inclusion of an item in the Committee’s work programme on the Trust’s estate strategy, with particular reference to the Stamford and Rutland Hospital site following reports in December 2021 that a planned sale of the western end of the site had fallen through. The Trust remains committed to the sale, as indicated on page 23 of its approved three year strategy which includes a commitment “to finalise a land sale and development of the west end of the Stamford and Rutland Hospital site”.

7. **Delivery Plan for Tackling the Covid-19 Backlog of Elective Care**

On 8 February 2022, NHS England and NHS Improvement published its *Delivery Plan for Tackling the Covid-19 Backlog of Elective Care*. This plan includes several ambitions, including the following four:

- (1) Waits of longer than a year for elective care will be eliminated by March 2025. Within this, by July 2022, no one will wait longer than two years, the NHS will aim to eliminate waits of over 18 months by April 2023, and of over 65 weeks by March 2024. Long-waiting patients will be offered further choice about their care, and over time, as the NHS brings down the longest waits from over two years to under one year, this will be offered sooner.
- (2) Diagnostic tests are a key part of many elective care pathways. The NHS’s ambition is that 95% of patients needing a diagnostic test receive it within six weeks by March 2025.

- (3) The NHS has continued to prioritise cancer treatment throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and has consistently seen record levels of urgent suspected cancer referrals since March 2021. To maintain this focus, the NHS's ambition is that, by March 2024, 75% of patients who have been urgently referred by their GP for suspected cancer are diagnosed or have cancer ruled out within 28 days. Local systems have also been asked to return the number of people waiting more than 62 days from an urgent referral back to pre-pandemic levels by March 2023.
- (4) For patients who need an outpatient appointment, the time they wait can be reduced by transforming the model of care and making greater use of technology. The NHS will work with patient groups to monitor and improve both waiting times and patients' experience of waiting for first outpatient appointments over the next three years.

The full plan, including supporting documents, may be found at:

[Coronavirus » Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

The NHS's *2022/23 Priorities and Operational Planning Guidance*, which is issued to local health systems, was updated on 22 February 2022 to reflect the delivery plan for dealing with the backlog of elective care.

8. The Health and Care Bill

The Health and Care Bill, which was introduced in the House of Commons on 6 July 2021, is now completing its final stages in the House of Lords. Two elements of the Bill are considered below:

Integrated Care Systems

The government's intention remains that integrated care systems (ICSs) will be established as statutory entities, each comprising:

- an integrated care partnership – a broad alliance of organisations and representatives concerned with improving the care, health and wellbeing of the population, jointly convened by local authorities and the NHS; and
- an integrated care board bringing the NHS together locally to improve population health and care.

As previously reported the original implementation date of 1 April 2022 for the ICSs has been deferred to 1 July 2022, as the statutory instruments and statutory guidance cannot be made until the Bill has been enacted. However, interim guidance has been issued by NHS England and NHS Improvement, which has enabled local health systems to plan for the new arrangements. Lincolnshire's ICS will be called the *Better Lives Lincolnshire Alliance*. In addition to ICSs, the Committee will need to become familiar with new abbreviations:

- ICB – Integrated Care Board
- ICP – Integrated Care Partnership

As previously reported, Lincolnshire has appointed Sir Andrew Cash as the ICB's Interim Chair, and Andrew Turner as its Chief Executive.

NHS England is also requiring local systems to establish a provider collaborative, with the aim of driving the provision of high quality, cost-effective health and care services. The Lincolnshire Health and Care Collaborative (LHCC) has been established. As reported to the Committee previously, Peter Noble has been appointed as its Managing Director.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Powers

When the Bill is enacted, there will be particular focus on the planned provisions enabling the Secretary of State for Health and Care to intervene in local NHS reconfigurations, which has been subject to particular consideration by the House of Lords. These provisions would affect the existing powers of health overview and scrutiny committees to make referrals to the Secretary of State in cases of substantial variations of local health services. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny is reporting that it expects the powers of referral for health overview and scrutiny committees to remain in their current form until April 2023, when the new intervention powers of the Secretary of State would be introduced.

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