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## HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

10 MARCH 2020

(7.15 pm - 8.55 pm)

**PRESENT:** Councillors Councillor Peter McCabe (in the Chair),  
Councillor Thomas Barlow, Councillor Rebecca Lanning,  
Councillor Dave Ward, Councillor Nigel Benbow and  
Councillor Pauline Cowper, Councillor Hina Bokhari

**ALSO PRESENT:** Barry Causer (Public Health Commissioning Manager) Dr  
Catherine Heffernan, (Principal Advisor for Commissioning Early  
Years, Immunisations and Vaccination Services, NHS England)  
Bernadette Johnson , (Immunisation Commissioning Manager  
NHS England) Katie Bugler, (Director for Transforming Primary  
Care – Merton and Wandsworth CCGs). Dr Karen Worthington  
(Clinical Director for Transforming Primary Care – Merton CCG)  
Hannah Pearson, (Primary Care Transformation Manager –  
Merton and Wandsworth CCGs), Dr Josephine Ruwende,  
(Consultant Public Health - Cancer Screening NHS England)  
Stella Akintan (Scrutiny Officer)

Councillor Tobin Byers, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care,  
Health and the Environment.

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mary Curtin and co-opted members Diane Griffin and Saleem Sheikh.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests

### 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

### 4 IMPROVING ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES AND PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS 2019-2020 (Agenda Item 4)

The Director of Commissioning gave an overview of the report. Merton has a well-developed service providing psychological support, across a range of symptoms. This item was last reported to scrutiny in February 2019 and there were some concerns about the capacity to meet need. It was reported that the service is now

performing well. The most updated figures show that in January there were 468 cases so the service continues to meet its targets.

A Panel member asked how they will increase access amongst under-represented groups. The Director of Commissioning said they will look at where it is appropriate to introduce different ways to access the service. In 25% of cases ethnicity is not recorded, they will aim to increase this.

In response to questions it was reported there is no access criteria for the wellbeing service and support to those with long term conditions.

A panel member said as the link to poverty and long term conditions are more prevalent in black and ethnic minority communities therefore it be expected that they have more need for the IAPT service. The Director of Commissioning said they take on that challenge to ensure that all groups get appropriate access.

RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

## 5 CANCER SCREENING IN MERTON (Agenda Item 5)

The Consultant in Public Health gave an overview of the report including trends in uptake and coverage in London. It was reported that main issues include; shortage of practice nurses, radiology and radiographers. The success in bowel screening programmes has led to pressures. Coverage in Merton is lower than south west London neighbours. Breast screening coverage has been declining.

A Panel member asked that given that Merton uptake is low, if resources are allocated according to need. It was reported that NHS England look at the interventions that can be implemented across the region but within the partnership approach.

A Panel member asked for more details of the social media campaign. It was reported that they will identify groups with low uptake and have appropriate messages for those groups, using faith and community leaders to tailor messages for various sections of the community.

The Public Health Commissioning Manager added that the local public health team have used social media to support bowl screening programmes.

RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

## 6 ADULT IMMUNISATIONS PROGRAMME FOR MERTON. (Agenda Item 6)

The Principal Advisor gave an overview of the report and highlighted that the Flu season was relatively mild and there were no new strains. Uptake amongst over 65s has improved, although uptake was lower for 2-3 year olds. School vaccines are

improving, and access to GP appointments are very important for improving vaccination uptake.

A panel member asked if increases in school age children doing well is because they are a captive audience. The Principal Advisor said as they directly commission schools it has an impact. Overall Providers has a big impact on increasing uptake through processes such as calling people back.

#### RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

### 7 MERTON CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP PRIMARY CARE STRATEGY (Agenda Item 7)

The Director for Transforming Primary Care gave an overview of the report highlighting the improvements in primary care including further development of primary care networks, GP access hubs increased from two to six. Also an increase in access to digital medical appointments.

A Panel member asked how the CCG is addressing wellbeing amongst GPs as the workforce still struggling, there are less staff with an increased workload. The Director for Transforming Primary Care reported they are talking to GPs to listen to their concerns. CCG colleagues are visiting to practices to provide support and receive feedback. A Healthy Workplace session has also been planned which will look at what more can be put in place locally. Merton are average on the ratio of GPs to patients.

A Panel member asked about progress with planning for GP retirement. The Clinical Director for Transforming Primary Care said this is a national issue and there are currently an increased number of doctors in training. In primary care it is important to make being a GP attractive. Training and support will help to attract new GPs to the borough.

A panel member asked about the success rate and reliability of digital consultation as doctors cannot do physical checks of symptoms. It was reported that If a patient is having a video consultation the doctor will decide if the consultation was appropriate and will convert to face to face if needed.

#### RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

### 8 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT 2020-21 (Agenda Item 8)

The substance misuse videos were seen as useful in helping to contextualise the issues and was welcomed by the Panel.

Panel members said they would like the work programme to include the following issues:

Social care

New CCG and south west London CCG

Update on the process in Merton becoming an Integrated Care System

Mental health

Community Pharmacy

Air quality with a focus on the health impacts and the health in all policies approach.