

Neuro- rehabilitation and Neuropsychology Update

Purpose

This report is an update following discussions at the February 2018 panel, identifying some concerns with community neuropsychology input in Merton.

Review of the Issue

Following some concerns with community neuropsychology input in Merton, a review of the community neurorehabilitation service delivered by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) and the services used at the Wolfson Unit, part of St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (SGH), was undertaken.

From the community, this identified that access to psychology was limited to those in severe need and it involved a referral to the Wolfson, which resulted in a disjointed and lengthy service for patients. From a review of St George's activity, this indicated that Merton CCG patients may have been discharged earlier or avoided an admission altogether if neuropsychology was available within the Merton Community Neuro-Rehabilitation Team. It also identified that Merton was a very high referrer to the outpatient services, leading to an inefficient use of a valuable resource.

Proposed Solution

Discussions have taken place with CLCH and SGH regarding a solution to this issue. A cost effective innovative proposal has been drawn up that will significantly improve the service for patients. The proposal is to integrate neuropsychology staff into the community neuro rehabilitation service so they operate as one team. The model will enable the appointed staff to work alongside community staff whilst being under the employment of a major acute trust. This enables clinical supervision and cover for leave as well as being advantageous in terms of securing staff within the recruitment process.

The Psychology Team at SGH has worked with CLCH and the CCG and the model proposed has support from the clinicians involved. A financial analysis of the proposed model has been undertaken and from initial review this appears to be a financially viable option with the cost of the proposed service being met by the potential savings within the current Wolfson costs. Further detailed analysis is being undertaken to ensure the proposal clearly demonstrates the desired shift in activity from hospital to community and therefore achieves the identified efficiencies alongside improved service quality.

Next Steps

It is proposed we work with interested stakeholders to ensure the service proposed is delivered in a way that meets the need of the population it is intended to serve. In order to avoid delay it is proposed that this runs alongside the recruitment process, the lead in time for which is expected to be around 3 months.

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