



Newsletter

Health news for North Yorkshire July 2014

County partners share vision of mental health

The state of mental health provision in North Yorkshire and priorities for the future was debated by North Yorkshire's Health and Wellbeing Board at its July meeting.

Earlier this year, the Department for Health published Closing the Gap, which sets out 25 areas on which local organisations can focus to deliver change.

In North Yorkshire, all CCGs have identified mental health as a priority. Emotional wellbeing has also been identified as a key focus of the North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The county council has protected expenditure on mental health services this year.

Several priorities in the Better Care Fund plan also focus on mental health, including:

- improving health, self-help and independence by developing more alternatives to long-term care for those with learning disability or mental health needs;
- investing in primary care and community services; and
- creating a sustainable system by investing in support for carers and working with secondary care to secure the hospital, mental health and community services needed.

The board saw presentations from a provider's perspective from Martin Barkley,

chief executive of Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust; from a commissioning point of view from Simon Cox of Scarborough and Ryedale CCG and from a social care perspective from Richard Webb, the county council's director of health and adult services.

The covering report to the discussion stated:

"Local variation within the county needs to be understood and addressed. Recognising the complexity of the North Yorkshire care system, improving the quality of mental health services should reflect the needs of local communities – a 'one size fits all' approach will not do. Services must be designed to keep people at home or, where care elsewhere is necessary, to return them home as soon as possible."

The link between mental and physical health was vital. Not only did mental health need to be given parity with physical health,

but there was evidence that mental health problems compromised physical health.

In North Yorkshire, people identified with a mental health problem were almost four times more likely to die before the age of 75 than those without. Suicide accounted for around 6% of these deaths. The biggest cause at 22% was circulatory disease. Twice the number of people with mental health problems were smokers, compared to the general population.



On course to help families

North Yorkshire County Council believes it is on course to turn around 70% of its targeted troubled families by the end of the summer.

And the council believes its scheme is on track to turn around 845 families by the time the Government programme ends in 2015. The progress of its Developing Stronger Families programme means children are back in school where they were previously playing truant or excluded; high levels of youth crime and anti-social behaviour are down and adults are getting off benefits and into work.

The authority intends to use the strategy long-term as a model for transforming the day-to-day living of the most challenging and complex households.

Children's social work investment

At a time when many local authorities are facing a critical shortage of children's social workers, the county council has turned around recruitment problems.

Until four years ago, it relied on agency staff for over a quarter of its social workers. It now employs no agency staff.

The council has increased the number of children's services social workers to 162, compared to 109 in 2008. It plans to invest in two more social workers to support its customer service centre and four more to undertake family group conferencing.

Increased emphasis on admissions in BCF plan

North Yorkshire's Better Care Fund (BCF) plan is to be revised following changes announced recently by the Government.

These call for increased emphasis on the reduction of avoidable emergency hospital admissions and change the framework for performance payments.

Up to £1bn of the BCF will be allocated to spending on out-of-hours services according to the level of reduction in emergency admissions.

The Government's statement says: "Local areas will agree their own ambition on reducing emergency admissions and

they will be allocated a portion of the £1bn performance money in the fund in accordance with the level of performance against this ambition."

North Yorkshire's BCF plan will be reviewed in the light of this announcement. Delegated authority to approve any changes has been given to the chairman of the health and wellbeing board, the county council's director of health and adult services and the chief officers of the five CCGs covering North Yorkshire.

Ministerial sign-off of the plan is still expected this summer. In the meantime, finalising details of the various schemes within it continues.

In total, the Government has created a pooled fund of £3.8bn for the BCF. North Yorkshire's plan has three main priorities:

- to improve people's health, self-help and independence;
- to invest in primary care and community services; and
- to create a sustainable system.

North Yorkshire's BCF can be read in detail at www.nypartnerships.org.uk/28854



Recovery focus to new drug and alcohol misuse services

North Yorkshire County Council has awarded contracts for an adult, recovery-focused substance misuse service across the county.

The new service will open on 1 October and will be available to support anyone over 18 who misuses drugs and/or who is a harmful or dependent drinker.

The service will be available across North Yorkshire, with hubs in Selby district, Craven, Harrogate district, Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale and Hambleton and Richmondshire. It will also be available at outreach facilities. There will be a single point of contact. People

can self-refer or be referred by family, friends or a professional.

DISC is responsible for the treatment aspect of the service and Lifeline Project is responsible for the recovery and mentoring aspect. Together, they bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise that will help people to recover from substance misuse.

"This new service will be very much focused on helping and supporting people to recover from substance misuse and dependence," said County Councillor Don Mackenzie, executive member for public health.

Find more about health and wellbeing at www.nypartnerships.org.uk/healthandwellbeing

AskSARA for advice on daily living

AskSARA is a new service providing guided advice and help with daily living, with the intention of helping people to make informed decisions that allow them to keep living independently in their homes.

It is run by the DLF charity and licensed for use by North Yorkshire County Council.

AskSARA will create more customer choice and start to open up self-service options on the council's website for those wishing to access simple equipment. Customers will be able to buy daily living aids and get advice and information following an online survey.

Customers will receive a report containing advice from DLF's occupational therapists, which will recommend both lifestyle changes and living aids.

To buy items, customers will be directed to trusted suppliers. They will also have access to a handyman service to help with the installation of living aids.

The system will identify any at-risk user and advise them to contact the county council.

This pilot project will run for one year. Find out more at www.northyorks.gov.uk/asksara.

Ofsted rates county 'good'

The county council puts the needs of children first and keeps them safe, says Ofsted, which has praised it for its children's services.

Ofsted's judgement, in its latest inspection, has placed North Yorkshire among the top authorities in the country for its care and protection of children, grading it as "good" in every category. Ofsted also stated that the authority had "clear plans" to become outstanding.