

Meeting of
Lanarkshire NHS Board
26 September 2007

Lanarkshire NHS Board
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SUBJECT: WINTER PLAN

1. PURPOSE

- The following report provides the Board with an assessment of the level of preparedness of NHS Lanarkshire in regard to planning for the demands of the service over the winter period.
- The Board received an initial report in June 2007 which outlined the measures that were planned to be taken forward across a range of fronts including; use of intelligence, primary and secondary care services both in and out of hours, communications and working with other partners.
- The attached report provide an update on the original planning work and outlines the actions that have been taken as well as those that require further attention over the next weeks and months.
- The Scottish Government have taken a keen interest in the manner in which plans are being developed. In particular they have asked for a self assessment to be undertaken by Boards in regard to the level of preparedness of the Primary Care Out of Hours services. The summary plan for the Out of Hours Service is included in detail within the attached report and will be submitted to the Scottish Government on 28 September 2007 subject to Board approval.

2. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- A project team covering the whole of the health and social care system for Lanarkshire has been up and running since the beginning of July 2007. This team has met fortnightly and will continue to do so in the run up to the festive period. It will take responsibility for turning the current plans into action and co-ordinating work across the system.
- In order to ensure that all parts of the health and social care system have access to robust, reliable and up to date information, a system of basic intelligence gathering has been developed. The system will rely upon informal intelligence gathering from our lead locality GPs, daily evidence from the Out of Hours system and hard data from secondary care in terms

of both A&E and Bed Capacity. This will allow us to share information daily with GPs, community staff, social work, on call managers and staff on the ground in all three acute sites.

- There a number of initiatives underway in primary care including; bolstering the community nursing resource for peaks in demand, maximising the use of the Community Pharmacists, targeting the most vulnerable patients by use of SPARRA data in each locality and putting in place enhanced arrangements in East Kilbride and Wishaw to support care homes. These initiatives are described in more detail in the attached report.
- The communications plan has been worked through in detail and will link closely to the national message that is now being developed by NHS24. A copy of the communications plan is attached at appendix 1 and a copy of the advert to be used is at appendix 2. The message is to use services appropriately and when you need them. The advert at appendix 2 will be used as the consistent theme in any of our communications with the public. One key issue will be targeting our “frequent fliers”, carer’s and vulnerable patients with this message and the various opening times of local NHS facilities over the festive period.
- Planning within the Acute Sector is also well developed and is looking carefully at both managing the emergency as well as the elective care programmes. Work is in hand to provide increased access to diagnostics over the festive period as well as providing admission avoidance alternatives around “same & next” day assessment clinics.
- Significant work is also being progressed to ensure that staff numbers and skills are matched with demand to even out the peaks and troughs experienced in previous years. This involves consideration of flexibility in working across secondary care, maximising the use of the specialist nursing resource and increasing ward rounds.

3. ACTIONS FOR THE SERVICE

- The Primary Care Out of Hours assessment will be sent to the Scottish Government by the 28th of September outlining in NHSL’s state of readiness in this regard.
- A final combined Winter Plan covering both primary and secondary care will be prepared for submission to the Board in October. This plan will outline the range of actions to be taken, the responsible officer, financial implications and the current status of the actions. This plan will be used by the Project Team and the Corporate Management Team to monitor progress and escalate issues where necessary
- Social Work colleagues have only relatively recently been involved in the overall winter planning team. The involvement of social work and the

additionality that they bring to the whole system approach is invaluable. There are a number of schemes that have operated in Lanarkshire on a patch specific manner in the past few years. Work is being progressed rapidly with the two councils in order to both quantify exactly what level of expectation the NHS has of social work services over the festive period and to identify how this can be achieved.

- The level of delayed discharges in the system at this point in time does provide a concern about the availability of acute beds at times of peak demand. There is a need to work with both Councils to reduce these levels to a minimum in the run up to the busiest parts of the winter period. A small group including the three operational directors has been tasked with identifying solutions to this issue in both the short and longer term.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to;

- receive the attached report outlining progress to date on whole systems Winter Planning
- receive the self assessment of preparedness in respect of Primary Care Out of Hours services for onward transmission to the Scottish Government
- note that a combined detailed and costed Winter Plan covering primary and secondary care services will be presented the Board in October 2007.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information or clarification of any issues in this paper please contact.

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