



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 10TH SEPTEMBER 2013

SUBJECT: CONTINUING NHS HEALTHCARE

REPORT BY: ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the current situation in relation to access to Continuing NHS Healthcare for residents of the County Borough.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Individual's assessed as having a primary health need are eligible for Continuing NHS Healthcare (CHC) support to meet all their physical, mental health and personal care needs.
- 2.2 The current CHC framework was introduced in May 2010 and Implemented in August 2010 to ensure that people are dealt with fairly and consistently throughout Wales. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) recently published a review of the process in "Implementation of the National Framework for Continuing NHS Healthcare" (13th June 2013). Their main findings were:
- Overall the CHC Framework has delivered some improvements
 - There is clear evidence of inconsistent approaches to CHC eligibility being applied across Wales
 - Some aspects of the Framework lack clarity particularly in the areas of learning disability and mental health
 - CHC expenditure and numbers of cases has reduced across Wales since the introduction of the Framework (May 2010)
 - There is operational oversight of the Framework but strategic leadership is lacking
 - Health Boards cannot provide assurance that the Framework is being applied fully and that they make fair, timely and consistent decisions on eligibility.
 - There is significant risk that not all retrospective claims for CHC will be completed by the deadlines set.
- 2.3 Overall, the findings would replicate our experience of CHC in Caerphilly. However, we have not seen the reduction in numbers of people receiving CHC support that have been seen by other Councils.

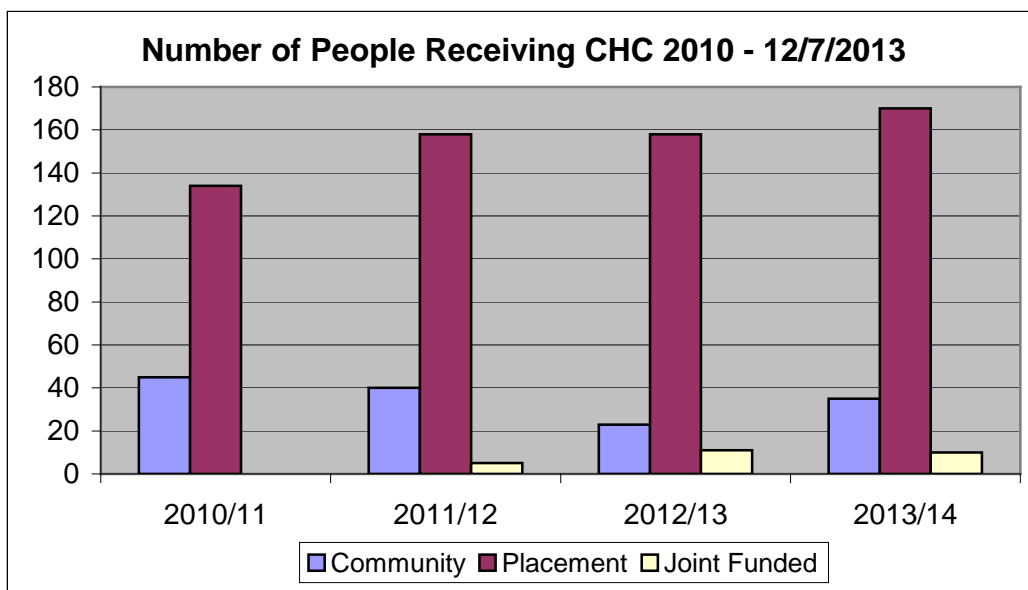
3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The provision of services under the Continuing NHS Healthcare Framework is assisting residents with the most complex care needs. It is therefore seen as at the end of a continuum of services from the most simple to the most complex. As such it responds to the demographic changes and strategic plans associated with health and social care and the Local Service Board.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Wales Audit Office (WAO) report identified that both the number of CHC cases and expenditure has fallen across Wales since the introduction of the Framework in August 2010. The position is inconsistent across Wales with some Health Boards including Aneurin Bevan Health Board (ABHB) showing increasing numbers.
- 4.2 "Health Finances" (WAO) identified that Health Boards reported £44 million pounds worth of savings on CHC in 2011/12 accounting for the third largest area of savings. Alongside the reduction in the number of people deemed eligible health boards have also pursued more cost effective service provision and developed more local services in preference to expensive out of area placements.
- 4.3 In Caerphilly, for older people and those with physical disabilities the number of people in receipt of ongoing CHC support has increased by 21% since 2010/11. In addition to this a number of individuals are fast tracked through the system for support over a limited time period due to terminal illness. The table below is significant as it identifies a decline in the numbers receiving community support and the increase in joint funded packages since the introduction of the Framework. It also identifies that the majority (79%) of people receiving CHC receive their care in a care home. The initiative and expertise of the Adult Services Review Team has been significant in this regard. The annual financial commitment is £7,800,00.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Community	45	40	23	35
Placement	134	158	158	170
Joint Funded	0	5	11	10
Total	179	203	192	215



- 4.4 The CHC expenditure in Caerphilly on large packages of care has no impact on social care budgets but evidences the national trends identified in 4.2 above.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
CURRENT PACKAGES COSTING £1000 - £2000 p/w	16	13	17
CURRENT PACKAGES COSTING £2000 - £3000 p/w	1	5	5
CURRENT PACKAGES COSTING £3000+ p/w	9	4	2
Total	26	22	24

- 4.5 Information from ABHB indicates that at 31/3/2013 28 individuals with mental health difficulties (including 4 joint packages of care with the local authority) were supported through CHC. No historical information is available to assess trends. The annual financial commitment for ABHB is £1,976,078.
- 4.6 At 31/3/2013 there were 16 people with a learning disability receiving CHC support, including 2 joint packages of care. No historical information is available to assess trends. The annual financial commitment is £2,139,816.
- 4.7 The above position has been achieved by a proactive response from the Social Services Directorate in identifying CHC triggers via an investment in a skilled and trained social work workforce, a dedicated CHC Coordinator and a robust approach to challenging eligibility.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is inequality in the way that the Framework is being applied across Wales and between service user groups. Paragraph 2.2 above identifies in-equities both in the process and thresholds throughout Wales and between service user groups.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, as funding for CHC is the responsibility of health. Where packages are jointly funded they are not eligible for CHC. Reductions in the number of people currently receiving CHC or in the eligibility threshold would have serious financial repercussions for this authority.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Personnel implications arising from this report

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All consultations are contained in the body of the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members to note the current position on Continuing NHS Healthcare.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Report at Member's request.

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