

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 6 January 2016

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Winter Pressures

1. Staff from Social Care are once again participating in teleconferencing with partner agencies in health and social care in response to increasing levels of pressure on hospitals across the North East. These calls, co-ordinated by NHS England, take place with varying frequency, depending on escalating or reducing pressure on the partners, and are based on a set of established North East Escalation Plan thresholds for providing support to health trusts and local authorities.
2. Whilst South Tees Hospitals Foundation Trust has come under significant pressure in recent days, this has not yet translated into unusual pressure for the hospital based social work team which continues to operate at a sustainable level in line with expectations for this time of year. At the most recent telecom we were able to report that we have capacity within the domiciliary care and care home sectors and no significant workforce pressures within our own teams.

Transforming Services for People with Learning Disabilities

3. Social care staff are working as part of one of five NHS England driven fast track pilot areas (our pilot area covers the North East and Cumbria) with the objective of improving the independence, well-being and health of people with learning disabilities and/or autism and strengthening services in the community.
4. The centrally driven timescales for the work are challenging and although the initiative will improve community based services there is a strong theme within the work around the closure of hospital beds for this cohort. This will affect some local authorities much more profoundly than it will Middlesbrough for whom the central focus will be the small cohort of forensics learning disability service users supported at Roseberry Park. It is likely to be the case that a greater proportion of those individuals will in future move out of the hospital setting and into the community, with support, at an earlier stage.

Residential Care Home Admissions

5. For a number of years Middlesbrough has been the highest, or one of the highest users of residential care homes for older people across the country. Despite the challenges associated with town's legacy of ill health this does not adequately account for the disproportionate use of residential care homes with the real causes lying within the realms of customary practice, available alternative services and service user expectations.

6. A number of measures have, therefore, been put in place to provide greater scrutiny of the decisions taken around admission to residential care with the greatest focus being placed on identifying more effective mechanisms to continue to support individuals independently in their own homes. These measures are proving successful with a consistent reduction in our use of permanent residential care; at the time of writing we have approximately 70 fewer individuals placed in residential care when compared with the same time last year. This work will be further developed over forthcoming years as we continue to transform adult services and further develop the use of contributory resources such as assistive technology extra care housing and improved support for carers.

ADULT HEALTH

Alcohol Awareness Week – 16 - 20 November

7. To promote Alcohol Awareness Week, officers from Improving Public Health provided a week of activity to promote responsible drinking messages. Two high profile multi agency events were delivered in the Town Centre and Middlesbrough Football Club involving up to 16 agencies.
8. These events were used to obtain information about people's alcohol consumption. They were also used to launch the national Dry January Campaign, Middlesbrough's "Kick Start the New You", where people volunteer to sign up for a month of alcohol abstinence to improve their health. Neil Maddison, former Boro player and BBC Tees match commentator, promoted the "Kick Start the New You" campaign. He attended the Town Centre event and promoted it during his radio broadcast. MFC further promoted "The Kick start the New You" campaign by broadcasting it on the big screen during the match at the football club on 20 November ensuring the alcohol messages reached a maximum capacity audience.

Spensley's Emporium Convicted for the sale of Counterfeit Glen's Vodka.

9. On 8 December Lee Spensley and the company "Spensley Brothers, trading as "Spensley's Emporium and Atik", were fined a total of £2400 + £2260 costs after pleading guilty to Trade Marks and Food Safety offences at Teesside Magistrates' Court.
10. Trading Standards Officers had received intelligence about counterfeit vodka at the premises and had noticed empty boxes in the bin area which they believed were counterfeit Glens. Examination by the Trade Mark holder confirmed that the boxes were not genuine and a joint visit was made to the premises by Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Police Licensing Officers. Bottles of the counterfeit Glen's vodka was found in the each bar within the premises, a total of nearly 50 one-litre bottles were removed. The business had been running a promotion on Vodka and mixers. The product was found to be below strength for vodka and to be a mixture of industrial grade alcohol mixed with water.

11. This case was the latest after an extensive intelligence-gathering operation by Middlesbrough Council and national agencies to disrupt the supply of counterfeit

Councillor Julia Rostron
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