

Social and Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	Thursday 1 July, 2021
Report Subject	Joint Funded Care Packages
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer for Social Services
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Health and Social Care work closely together to provide appropriate care and support packages to meet individual's needs in the community. These packages are funded either by Social Services (with or without a client contribution depending of the outcome of a financial assessment) or jointly between the health board and social care, or solely by the health board if an individual's needs meet the criteria for full Continuing Health Care funding.

The process of funding is complex and close working relationships with health board colleagues have been established over a number of years to enable constructive partnership working in this area to obtain the most appropriate care for an individual which is funded accordingly.

This report seeks to provide information into the processes of both agreeing joint funded care packages and the budget management processes associated with this work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To assure Members of the robust and proactive budget management approach Flintshire County Council takes to ensure joint funded care packages are financially well managed.
2	To inform members of the plan to introduce a CHC Monitoring Officer post, supported by 'Invest to Save' funding.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLANATION OF THE FINANCIAL PROCESSES SUPPORTING JOINT FUNDEED CARE PACKAGES
1.01	Background
1.02	NHS Continuing Health Care (CHC) is a package of care and support for people over 18 years of age who have complex care issues which are primarily health based. The NHS in Wales is responsible for the delivery of CHC, though the Local Authority has a role.
1.02	Welsh Government created an implementation framework for NHS Continuing Health Care in Wales which was published in 2014 and which is currently under review. The Framework sets out the arrangements for CHC in Wales and how eligibility is determined. It stipulates that Local Health Boards have the lead responsibility for CHC in their local area. They must, however, work with local authorities, other NHS organisations and independent/voluntary sector partners to ensure effective operation of the Framework.
1.03	Under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Social Services will provide/fund social care for adults who are assessed as having care and support needs. The local authority cannot fund or provide care to undertake health tasks. If as health tasks are required to be undertaken in the community to support an individual to live at home or in a care home, the local health board (Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board [BCUHB]) is responsible, through CHC, for the funding of these services. Some peoples' needs are clearly identified as all social care, or all health and as such, each agency will fund 100% of the package.
1.04	As everyone has individual needs, some people will have needs that are clearly identified as 100% social care and will be funded either wholly by the local authority or through a client contribution and local authority funding (dependent of the outcome of a financial assessment). Other individuals who live in the community have needs which are 100% health needs, and all of their package of care will be funded by the health board, through CHC.
1.05	However, many people have some social care needs and some health needs and their care packages are jointly funded by the health board and the local authority with the proportion fo funding determined by the eligibility laid down in the Welsh Government CHC Framework referred to above.
1.06	There are around 5,000 people in Wales receiving CHC at any point in time and this accounts for c.£360m of the annual Wales NHS budget.
1.07	In addition to the Adult CHC Framework, there is also a slightly different CHC mechanism to support Children and Young People, and the framework for both is currently being reviewed.

1.08	Continuing Healthcare in Flintshire
1.09	<p>The CHC process is well-established and regularly used by Social Services. The current challenges are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As people become older, frailer, or their health deteriorates, their health needs increase. The social care package which used to meet their needs are now required to contain some health tasks. It is therefore beholden on Social Services to gain engagement from the CHC team in BCUHB to contribute to the cost of care packages. This has been at times a challenge for Social Services. • Flintshire and Wrexham have the highest number of CHC packages across North Wales. This is likely due to the population size and indicator that officers have acted promptly and diligently to pursue CHC claims where appropriate. • BCUHB employ a team of specialist CHC reviewers and have a management structure to solely undertake this work which affords them resource and capacity. Social Services staff however, undertake this role as part of their varied and demanding work. • During a recent Internal Audit of CHC processes, it was identified that to assist with the reconciliation of claims (both ‘agreed’ and ‘in-dispute’), as well as the close monitoring of disputed CHC claims, it was identified that a business case be put forward to appoint a Continuing Health Care Co-ordinator to suit within the Financial Assessment and Charging Team of Social Services. The funding for this post is outside the current budget for the service and a request for ‘Invest to Save’ monies is being sought.
1.10	<p>When working with Children’s Health the CHC framework is less prescriptive than the current Adult framework. This can make it a challenge to secure consistent decisions on funding. For information, there are very few children who receive 100% CHC funding, and this can be attributed to how the system operates and is not directly linked to the complexity of need. Often when a child supported through CHC becomes an adult, the contribution from Adult Health BCUHB increases.</p>
1.11	<p>The challenge for the local authority is twofold. Firstly, it is to ensure that those individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for CHC receive wholly or jointly funded packages of support. BCUHB have informed partners that they pay the highest value of CHC payments in Wales and that Flintshire receives the highest amount of CHC payments in north Wales.</p>
1.12	<p>Secondly, it is to ensure that all agreed packages are paid in a timely manner, and the resolution and payment of disputed packages.</p>
1.13	<p>In response to this second challenge, Social Services have the following processes in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Accountants meet regularly with BCUHB to ensure payments claimed for are accurate and outstanding debts are paid. • Debt levels are monitored monthly and a report produced by the Revenue Service for the Chief Officer. This report is discussed at the Social Services Directorate Management Team meeting and outstanding debt levels escalated with BCUHB Senior Managers • Any issues are further escalated through the Flintshire and BCUHB Strategic Partnership meetings held quarterly between the Chair,

	Chief Executive and Area Director of BCUHB and the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member, Chief Executive and Chief Officer for the Council.
1.14	The creation of the role of a CHC Monitoring Officer will further assist with the management of disputed cases along with timely monitoring of both agreed and disputed packages and the provision of management information.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Additional funding through the 'Invest to Save' to support the creation of a CHC Monitoring Officer post.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Debt levels are monitored monthly and an escalation route has been established

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	None required at this stage.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - CHC National Framework for implementation in Wales

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Contact Officer: Jane Davies – Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning Telephone: 01352 702503 E-mail: jane.m.davies@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
7.01	None

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	(1) Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014: The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.