

Scrutiny Briefing Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Adult Social Care and Health)

Date of Meeting: 19 October 2021

Subject: Report of Fiona Taylor, Chief Officer

Organisation: NHS South Sefton CCG and NHS Southport and Formby CCG

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Purpose/Summary

To provide Members of the Committee with an update about the work of NHS South Sefton CCG and NHS Southport and Formby CCG.

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) are requested to receive this report.

Update for Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care) October 2021

If you would like more information about any of the items contained in this update, if you have any questions about local health services, or any particular issues you would like to raise, please call 0151 317 8456.

Booster programme for COVID-19 jabs begins

The roll out of COVID-19 vaccination booster doses has begun in Sefton, with those eligible being offered a jab six months (26 weeks) after their second vaccination. When it is their turn, people will be invited for a jab via the national booking service, or in some cases via their GP practice. The NHS is also advising anyone who hasn't yet taken up the opportunity of a first or second COVID-19 vaccination that they can still come forward to get protected. The CCGs continue to work with council and other local partners to encourage uptake in areas with the lowest vaccination rates. Recent initiatives have included the vaccination bus visiting colleges in Bootle and Netherton to offer the jab to students.

Don't delay your annual flu vaccination

Alongside the COVID-19 vaccination booster programme, the NHS is gearing up to deliver annual flu vaccinations. Flu vaccinations can be safely given at the same time as COVID-19 booster doses. Although there may be opportunities for those who are eligible to have both together, people are being advised not to wait until they are ready for their booster and to get their flu vaccine as soon as possible. You can find out about the serious effects of flu, particularly for those in specific groups by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>

GPs ask for support as they work through their busiest period

GP practice staff are asking for people's patience and support as they work through their busiest ever period. Sefton's CCGs' are reminding people that general practice is open as it has been throughout the pandemic and staff are working harder than ever to make sure patients and the public are kept safe so that they continue to get the care they need. Before the pandemic our GP practices were already very busy. Now GPs are dealing with more patients than ever before. From January to June 2021 practices in Sefton organised a total of 656,693 appointments for Sefton residents, not including COVID-19 vaccination appointments.

Additional safety measures, like wearing face coverings and limiting the number of people in practices at a time are still in place for the NHS. It may take longer to get through to practices and people may have to wait a little longer for a non-urgent appointment at this busy time but staff are doing all they can to get to people as soon as they can. Most practices are still using a telephone first system to help manage the rising number of contacts, or asking patients to use their online service if possible, to ensure everyone gets the most appropriate support for their needs. Most common conditions can be assessed and diagnosed by your GP via telephone or video consultation. Face-to-face appointments have been offered throughout COVID to anyone who needs to be seen in person. These could be with a GP or another appropriate member of the team, such as practice nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and social prescribers, depending on people's individual needs. There are also pre-bookable appointments at evenings and weekends for those who need them. This way of working is essential to helping practices continue to provide services and they thank all their patients for working with them throughout the pandemic and for still wearing face-coverings, following social distancing rules and for their continued kindness and support when using their services.

The latest national GP patient survey that took place in March 2021 showed that over 80% of Sefton residents who took part, said their overall experience of their GP was good, and in some areas was above the national average. In addition, around 80% said they were satisfied with the appointment offered to them and over 95% said they had confidence and trust in their healthcare professional.

Survey asks patients for their experience

During October, GP practices in Sefton will begin inviting their patients to take part in a survey about their experiences of accessing services since the start of the pandemic. The exercise will help practices respond to the requirements of this year's Local Quality Contract focused on understanding and improving patient access. The survey will be rolled out in stages over the coming months on a practice by practice basis. Flexibility has been built into the survey's design. This means that patients registered at a small number of practices where there have been site changes as a result of the pandemic, or where there are longer term changes will be asked additional questions. Practice level results will be discussed with patient participation groups to explore how access can be improved. Additionally, the overarching themes will help the CCGs to understand if any wider measures can be put in place to support practices and their patients.

Sefton mental health review

The mental health review re-convened in September with excellent representation from across the borough. Discussions focused on how the findings from phase one can be translated into delivery, whilst also incorporating the recommendations from the Mental Health Issues Working Group report. A Community Excellence Task & Finish Group has been established and is being led by primary care networks, emphasising their key role in transforming community mental health services. A number of different funding streams were identified in support of the model, with a need to coordinate across partners to ensure that such funding is invested in accordance with need and complements existing services.

Sefton residents to be part of ground breaking cancer trial

Cheshire and Merseyside has been confirmed as the first pilot site in Europe to test the ground-breaking Galleri blood test as part of the national NHS England-GRAIL Screening Study Partnership. This research aims to help deliver the NHS Long Term Plan goal of increasing the proportion of cancers detected early and dramatically reducing deaths from cancer in the future. If this trial of Galleri is successful, then it could become routinely available. Galleri is a simple blood test that can identify over 50 different types of cancer such as head & neck, ovarian, pancreatic, oesophageal and some blood cancers. The trial will investigate the clinical use of the Galleri blood test in an asymptomatic population aged 50-77 with no current or recent cancer diagnosis or treatment. Cheshire & Merseyside Cancer Alliance is aiming to recruit around 20,000 participants from across the region over the coming months. This will contribute to the overall goal of 140,000 participants across eight Alliance sites by March 2022. Participants will be identified and written to by NHS DigiTrials based on postcode and their eligibility for the trial, which will include Sefton residents. Interested participants will book an appointment to attend a local mobile health unit to consent, give blood and fill in necessary forms. Up to two further blood samples will be taken at 12 and 24 months.

Blood tube disruption

In August 2021, NHS England and Improvement (NHSEI) issued urgent guidance requiring all primary care and community blood testing to be halted until 17 September 2021, except for clinically urgent testing. Acute trusts, community hospitals and mental health trusts were also asked to reduce their demand by a minimum of 25% for a three week period up to 17 September 2021. Since this time additional blood tubes have been secured nationally and capacity has been slowly recovering through September. Updated measures have been put in place and the CCGs are working with our local laboratory partners and community providers to ensure recovery plans are measured to take account of local stocks. Capacity across services in Sefton is expected to be back to normal by 18 October.

Improving eye care services

Sefton's CCGs are working with local providers to widen and improve eye care services, bringing them in line with national requirements. The NHS Long Term Plan sets out the ambition to provide digitally supported care, more joined-up services and personalised healthcare, which could reduce traditional face to face outpatient appointments by a third over the next five years across England. Ophthalmology has significant opportunities to deliver these ambitions as many conditions can be managed remotely and the primary care optometric workforce have the ability to provide many traditionally hospital based services in the community. As well as providing patients with more appropriate care that is provided closer to home whenever appropriate, this approach will also help address national workforce pressures on ophthalmology to make them more sustainable. A new Ophthalmology Improvement Group has been established in Sefton and West Lancashire to better plan and provide services and strengthen working relationships between various partners and providers. To complement this work and to meet national requirements, Sefton's CCGs are seeking expressions of interest for a prime provider/contractor to manage a range of Optometry First – Community Eye Care Services that would be provided by primary care optical practices.

It is hoped these following services would be in place by 1 April 2022:

- COVID 19 Urgent Eye Care Service (CUES)
- Integrated Cataract Service (pre and post-operative)
- Glaucoma enhanced referral and monitoring service

‘Big Chat’ annual reviews

Around 35 people attended each of the CCGs virtual, interactive ‘Big Chat’ style annual general meetings in September. The events included a look back at the performance of each CCG as well as giving an overview of their plans for the future. Attendees heard presentations from the CCGs chief officer and chief finance officer. In addition, council colleagues gave an overview of our developing Sefton partnership, building on our work to better integrate care to improve health, wellbeing and outcomes for our residents. Our lead director for primary care gave an overview of how general practice has been working over the past year and this was illustrated by each CCG chair, who gave an insight into a typical day in practice. Breakout sessions gave attendees the chance to share their experiences of general practice and ask questions. Polling throughout the event gained positive feedback on all sessions.

The Big Chats were recorded and are available to view on the CCGs websites.

<https://www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/our-big-chat-events/big-chat-and-agm-2021/>

<https://www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/our-big-chat-events/big-chat-and-agm-2021/>

Governing Body meetings

The final Governing Body meetings of 2021 take place in November. Meetings are held virtually, recorded and published on our CCG websites to view afterwards contemporaneously. Although members of the public are not able to attend, questions can be submitted in advance and will be addressed by the governing bodies at the start of the formal session. As usual, any questions and responses are published after the meetings in the note pack.

The meetings take place as follows:

- NHS Southport and Formby CCG - Wednesday 3 November
- NHS South Sefton CCG - Thursday 4 November

Any questions should be submitted by midday on the day of the meetings using the following emails southportandformby.ccg@nhs.net or southsefton.ccg@nhs.net You can find out more information about governing bodies and view meeting papers from each CCG website using the links at the end of this briefing.

Visit the CCGs’ websites for more about their work www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk or www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk, follow them on Twitter [@NHSSSCCG](https://twitter.com/NHSSSCCG) or [@NHSSFCCG](https://twitter.com/NHSSFCCG) or see a range of short films on You Tube for [NHSSSCCG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...) or [NHS SFCCG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)