
Meeting: Corporate Parenting Panel
Date: 5 November 2012
Subject: Looked After Children's Health Progress Report
Report of: Anne Murray, Director of Nursing and Quality
Summary: The report proposes to consider and comment on the progress made in improving Health outcomes for looked after children.

Advising Officer: Anne Murray, Director of Nursing and Quality
Contact Officer: Yolanda Corden, Interim Assistant Director Children's Services Operations.
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The report supports the priority to promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable as detailed in the Central Bedfordshire Council Medium Term Plan "Delivering your priorities – our plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012 – 2016".

The health provision for Looked After Children is a key statutory service. These reports support the implementation of updated statutory guidance and ensure the report scheduling is applied

This report looks at the specific contribution of Health Services to the health and wellbeing of Looked After Children following the Ofsted inspection of services for Safeguarding and Looked After Children. The progress report was previously presented to the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board for comment.

Financial:

1. There are no financial implications for the Council

Legal:

2. There are no legal implications for the Council.

Risk Management:

3. Regulatory risks: failure to report to Members would be a breach of National Guidance.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

4. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

5. There are no implications for the Council.

Community Safety:

6. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

7. Not applicable.

Procurement:

8. Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

that the Corporate Parenting Panel note and comment on the content of the report.

Background

9. On 29 May 2012 the Board received a report setting out the findings of Central Bedfordshire's Safeguarding and Looked After Children (SLAC) inspection in relation to the quality of Health Services for Looked After Children. The Board requested a further report on the progress made in the first six months following the inspection.
10. This report sets out the actions taken to deal with:
- a) the issues which Ofsted requires to be addressed in the six months following inspection;
 - b) longer term improvement planning.

Detailed Recommendation

11. The Ofsted report identified a number of areas that needed to be tackled. The following sets out the specific areas of improvement identified and the action taken to address them. It should be noted that responsibility for the delivery of the action plan has now passed from NHS Bedfordshire and Luton to the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG). The Ofsted areas for improvement have been changed to reflect this.

Summary of Action in the six months following the inspection

12.

Ofsted areas for improvement	Action taken and impact
<p>Ensure all LAC have prompt access to appropriate health services which promote good outcomes for them.</p> <p>BCCG should ensure that all care leavers are enabled to access health services and receive a copy of their health histories to ensure they are able to make future life choices.</p>	<p>Changes which have already been implemented include increasing LAC nurse hours to help provide a leaving care service, and pilots of Health Histories to enable young people who are leaving care to have an informative written record of medical information about themselves.</p> <p>The action plan is only part of the work which the BCCG is undertaking to improve the health outcomes for LAC in Central Bedfordshire.</p> <p>The Business Plan will ensure that the service for delivering LAC healthcare will be responsive to the needs of LAC and care leavers and ensure partnership working is strengthened and inclusive.</p> <p>The Designated Doctor is in post and a permanent Designated Nurse has been appointed and will take up post in October/November 2012.</p>
<p>BCCG should ensure that all looked after children and young people have access to age appropriate health education and promotion information.</p>	<p>The distribution of Young People (age specific) Health & Wellbeing Information Packs which include a wide range of relevant and age appropriate information has commenced. The packs are distributed to all young people in care either via their designated social worker for those young people currently in the care system, or via the Designated Doctor and/or Nurse at their Initial Health Assessment, if entering care. These will be evaluated through the work of the LAC Participation & Engagement Officers, the Children in Care Council and the LAC Health Team.</p> <p>Health & Wellbeing Information Packs which include a wide variety of physical and emotional health information have been distributed to all Foster Carers via their Supervising Social Workers. The evaluation and feedback from Foster</p>

	Carers will inform the future development of these packs and associated future training.
	<p>The health promotion/health improvement work is also underpinned by the Foster Carer training programme that has been set up and is delivered in partnership with the shared Adoption & Fostering Service and South Essex Partnership Trust (SEPT) provider services. The training programmes include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to maintain and promote good health for children and young people in care • Helping to meet the specific health needs of young people leaving care • How to talk to young people about sex and relationships <p>These training sessions specifically supplement the Health & Wellbeing Information packs previously mentioned. Feedback and evaluations from the training will be collated and monitored through the LAC Health Improvement Group on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Public Health staff have also delivered a similar training session to LAC designated teachers (approximately 80 members of staff) to ensure continuity and consistency of health information and advice.</p>
BCCG and Central Bedfordshire Council should ensure that the strength and difficulties questionnaire outcomes are reviewed as part of the emotional health and well-being assessment during review assessments.	The strength and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) has been piloted and is now rolling out to be distributed by the social worker to each looked after child.
BCCG must ensure that all GPs and independent health contractors are aware of their statutory responsibility to Looked After Children.	LAC awareness is included in the Safeguarding Strategy for BCCG for primary care which is currently under review to take into consideration the change to clinical commissioning groups. This includes LAC responsibilities in the training roll out.

13. Early performance management information indicates improvements:
- In 2011-12 Central Bedfordshire's uptake of immunisations by LAC who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months was 92.3%, which is an improvement on 2010/11 and is expected to be above the national average when the figures are released later in the year.
 - In 2011-12 dental checks for LAC in Central Bedfordshire were 91.5%, which is an improvement on 2010/11 and is expected to be above the national average when the figures are released later in the year. Some of this improvement is due to new recording systems which are now in place.
 - In 2011-12 Looked After Children who had their annual health assessment during the year (each six months for under-fives) was 87.2% which was up from 84.7% last year. This figure is still low and is the subject of a focussed activity.

Conclusion and next steps

14. The next stage of improvement is to focus on longer term service redesign.
15. CBC, BBC, SEPT and the LAC Health team have held joint workshops to review the LAC service as a whole and to discuss steps towards developing a service which meets the CQC and Ofsted standard of Good, as well as ensuring that we provide a service that supports and empowers young people to live and manage a healthy lifestyle throughout their lives.
16. The first of these workshops focussed on:
- Process Mapping the current health pathway
 - Identifying Issues
 - Identifying Solutions
 - Action planning
 - Meeting with Young People who were representative of the Children in Care Council to test ideas.

Undertaking the process mapping exercise gave all an understanding of the delays in the process, complications and transfer of care.

17. The focus of the second session was to work with partners from across the health and social care economy to address the gaps identified by the Ofsted and CQC reviews and gain agreement for the foundations of a reviewed model for the LAC services in Bedfordshire. The outcome of the second workshop was to develop a business case, with input from all stakeholders, outlining the reviewed care pathway which will then go through the formal governance route for commissioning. Further work on this business case continues throughout October. Service principles and responsibilities for stakeholders were discussed and further detail will be set out within the business case.

18. The action plan is only part of the work which BCCG is undertaking to improve the health outcomes for LAC in Central Bedfordshire. The Business Plan will ensure that the service for delivering LAC healthcare will be responsive to the needs of LAC and care leavers and ensure partnership working is strengthened and inclusive.
19. This area of work remains a vulnerable area in Central Bedfordshire and also across the whole of Bedfordshire area. A review meeting with senior Health Services staff and Bedfordshire's three Directors of Children's Services will take place early in 2013 to review six months of focussed activity.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None