Welcome to Caring Together News

Welcome to the August 2016 Caring Together News – keeping you informed and involved in developing integrated care in Eastern Cheshire. You can register to receive future issues by email or read the latest news on our website at www.caringtogether.info.

If you have ideas for articles you would like to see in future issues, or would like to receive more information, you can email your ideas at ecccg.caringtogether@nhs.net.

**Contents**

- **Programme Board goes online**
  
  It will soon be possible for people interested in Caring Together to find out about its key decision makers.

  The communications and engagement team is developing a webpage featuring the name, photograph and employer of all Programme Board members. Details will be presented as links to the email address and organisational website of the member in question.

  Partners represented on the board include Cheshire East Council, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, East Cheshire NHS Trust, NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG and Vernova Healthcare community interest company. The webpage is set to go live next month (September) and will be promoted in the newsletter.

- **Three key messages**

  The three key messages from the Caring Together Programme Board meeting which took place on 10 August are as follows:

  - The Board is actively considering what changes need to be made to create the conditions for major service redesign, including how services are planned and bought, so Caring Together can make best
use of the resources available and tailor services to meet local need while making them as effective and efficient as possible

- Board members are in regular dialogue with regulators NHS England and NHS Improvement to keep them abreast of their plans as they emerge and to seek their help, guidance and support
- Board members were supportive of the modelling work that has been completed to date and are looking forward to receiving a more comprehensive report at their meeting next month (September).

**Future care services start to take shape**

A virtual team of health and social care professionals and managers is working hard to develop possible options to ensure the long-term sustainability of health and social care services in Eastern Cheshire.

The team of representatives from the Caring Together partner organisations is made up of people involved in providing services as they are the best placed to know where changes can be made to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Doing nothing is not an option as the gap is growing between the money that Eastern Cheshire commissioning organisations receive and the costs of providing the services in the way that they are currently delivered and configured.

The aim is to have health and social care staff joining forces within the community to help people live well and to reduce avoidable hospital visits and admissions to hospital where this is appropriate and safe to do so.

Partners will continue to engage with members of the public and other stakeholders to shape future services. Whatever happens, people will continue to have access to the care they need.

**Joint working goes from strength to strength**

A range of health and social care practitioners across Eastern Cheshire, together with patient representatives, are currently contributing their ideas for improvement in integrated working through a series of joint workshops.

Health and social care leaders are facilitating workshops in the following localities throughout August and September:
Team Knutsford have been the trail blazers - kicking off their first workshop earlier this month in true Olympic style with an Olympic torch lit to signify the start. More than 20 people including a GP, community matron, district nurses, community psychiatric nurses, physiotherapists, community health nurses, paramedics and social care practitioners have contributed to the workshops.

Patrick Heywood and Jo Rose, patient reps from the Knutsford GP cluster, also attended and said they enjoyed participating in the team building event. It is hoped that these events will enable a better understanding of roles, responsibilities and the rich community resources available in each locality to enable the people of Eastern Cheshire to receive joined-up care that promotes their independence to remain at home for as long as possible.

Each participant has been encouraged to provide feedback and to use their creative minds to look at imaginative and new ways of working together in the future.

Learning from each event has been passed on. Following the Olympic torch theme, the next team to hold the torch will be Congleton and Holmes Chapel as they hold their workshops. The events will culminate in the production of a shared action plan detailing the next part of the journey for each locality.

**Caring Together goes to market!**

_Caring Together_ took part in Macclesfield’s popular _Treacle Market_ last month (July).

A number of staff from across local care services manned an information stall and asked shoppers to put tokens in clear plastic bottles to indicate the most important considerations for health leaders to bear in mind when improving services. People had their say on the following criteria:

- Staff experience
- Service user experience
- Safety
Care outcomes was rated the most important consideration, followed by safety and user experience.

Several visitors signed up to receive the newsletter too.

Caring Together will attend lots of public events this autumn and winter to gather views to take into account when developing proposals for future integrated care. Watch this space for details of other events.

Have your say on plans to limit prescribing of over-the-counter medicines

NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG is urging people to take its survey on plans to stop funding the prescription costs of medicines that are readily available over the counter for minor conditions like coughs, colds and headaches.

Its proposed policy aims to reduce general practice consultations and prescriptions for minor conditions.

The policy would reduce pressure on health services and encourage people to take the best possible care of themselves and be ‘prepared to self-care’ with a well-stocked medicines cabinet, in line with the Caring Together ambition of empowerment.

But the opinions of patients and carers will be taken fully into account before any
changes are made.

The draft policy, associated frequently asked questions (FAQs) and an online survey can be found here. Alternatively, readers can type: www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk/minorconditions into their search engine.

Printed versions of the survey will soon be available in Eastern Cheshire’s 22 GP practices and other key community venues.

Both online and paper surveys must be returned by 5pm on Wednesday 14 September.

The policy is expected to give every GP in the area around one extra hour a day to see patients with more complex problems. Additionally, it is estimated to save up to £500,000 a year in Eastern Cheshire.

Medicines earmarked for people to buy themselves instead of getting on prescription include:

- Painkillers for minor conditions
- Remedies for diarrhoea, constipation and indigestion
- Cough and cold medication
- Antihistamines and anti-inflammatory medicines
- Sun creams plus creams and ointments for minor skin conditions.

The draft prescribing policy has been supported by Cheshire East Council’s health and adult social care overview and scrutiny committee, which also backed the CCG’s proposal to seek the public’s views.

Dr Graham Duce, CCG clinical lead for prescribing and GP with Park Green Surgery, Macclesfield, said: “A consultation and prescription for a minor condition costs the NHS around £50 but if you buy the medicines yourself you could expect to pay no more than a few pounds, and it could be as little as 20p.

“The CCG is facing significant financial challenges and is working with the public to make best use of the resources available, including asking patients to take as much responsibility as possible for their own health when they can.”

Under the policy, medicines unavailable over-the-counter or which are unsuitable for purchase will continue to be available on prescription.

The draft prescribing policy was developed as part of the CCG’s financial recovery plan to save £9.7m in 2016-17 to achieve an end-of-year deficit of £3.8m agreed with NHS England.
In common with many health service commissioners in England, the CCG has a widening gap between the funding it gets from NHS England and the cost of delivering essential healthcare.

To bridge the gap, it has agreed plans to work more efficiently with service providers, award contracts offering better value, and stop paying for goods or services that it does not have to fund or which offer limited clinical benefit.

Much of the demand for healthcare in Eastern Cheshire arises from the fact that the area has the fastest growing percentage of people aged over 65 in the North West. As a result, the CCG spends well above the national average on specialist procedures like transplants and NHS-funded Continuing Healthcare for people who need long-term support at home after being discharged from hospital.

Many CCGs have already agreed similar policies or are planning to do so. For example, in the North West, NHS Warrington CCG and NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale CCG have both introduced similar policies to the one proposed by Eastern Cheshire.

NHS South Cheshire CCG and NHS Vale Royal CCG are also currently engaging on a similar draft policy.

Read the draft policy and take the survey at www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk/minorconditions.

**New sexual health centre unveiled**

East Cheshire NHS Trust has opened a new sexual health centre that will help achieve the Caring Together ambition of empowering people to take more responsibility for their wellbeing.

The state-of-the-art Eagle Bridge Centre for Sexual Health, in Crewe was unveiled last month (July) and is open to people right across Cheshire, complementing the well-established facility on the Macclesfield District General Hospital site.

The purpose-built facility, within Eagle Bridge Health and Wellbeing Centre, was created as part of an £11.3m, five-year contract awarded to the trust by fellow Caring Together partner Cheshire East Council last year to provide sexual health services across the local authority footprint. Based on Dunwoody Way near Crewe town centre, the facility offers an accessible location and operates longer opening hours plus an emergency advice line on Sundays and bank holidays.
The centre also serves as a base from which the trust can provide services from community locations including pharmacies.

The facility was officially opened by Crewe MP Edward Timpson who said: "While teenage pregnancies are at a record low and the treatment available for sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) has improved markedly, there is still much more that needs to be done to promote sexual health and help prevent it deteriorating in the first place—particularly among high-risk groups.

"The consequences of poor sexual health can be devastating. That’s why having this new, state-of-the-art, sexual health clinic is so important."

Councillor Paul Bates, council cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: “We welcome the opening of the new integrated sexual health service at Eagle Bridge Health and Wellbeing Centre. The services provided at the centre will play an important role in improving sexual health outcomes for residents, including reducing unwanted pregnancies and controlling the spread of STDs.”

Trust chief executive John Wilbraham said: “We are delighted to open the new centre and hope it helps increase accessibility for people using sexual health and contraception services.”

As part of the new sexual health service, the trust has commissioned a campaign – Go Sexual Health or ‘gosh’ - to raise awareness of contraception and help reduce rates of STDs. Gosh has seen partnerships formed with dozens of key local businesses and organisations including gyms, bars, colleges and nightclubs to help raise awareness among customers, students and members.

For more information on the ‘gosh’ campaign, sexual health and clinics in the area, visit www.gosexualhealth.co.uk or follow @gosexualhealth.

**Your Cheshire Care Record needs you**

As reported recently in the newsletter, the Cheshire Pioneer programme has appointed NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) to promote the Cheshire Care Record.

Now, the CSU is drawing plans to attend lots of public events before Christmas to encourage use of the record, the purpose of which is to give health and social care professionals across the county a common, accurate view of care information that people have agreed to have shared. The data will enable high-quality care to be provided as quickly as possible and will mean patients don’t have to keep repeating their story.
If you know of any care-related events taking place in Cheshire before Christmas, please email Sally Clarke, CSU communications and engagement manager, at sally.clarke4@nhs.net or call her on 07789 273850. Meanwhile, the CSU is working towards an official public launch of the record this autumn. Watch this space for updates.

Help us keep you informed

Caring Together partners East Cheshire NHS Trust and NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG are to create a shared database of contact email and/or postal addresses of people who have asked to be kept informed about the programme.

The database will help Caring Together communicate effectively and quickly with the public and other stakeholders. As part of the process, any reader no longer wishing to receive the newsletter is asked to email Charles Malkin, communications manager at the CCG, at c.malkin@nhs.net or call him on 01625 663824. We will then remove you from the database.

Equally, readers are encouraged to share the newsletter with loved ones and colleagues, and ask them to sign up if they wish. They can do this via the same email address.

We are always looking at ways to promote great news, ideas, articles and ways to improve our communications and, as such, any feedback can be sent to Charles.

Please note that Caring Together will never share your contact information with anyone outside the partnership comprising:

- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- East Cheshire NHS Trust
- NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG
- Vernova Healthcare, a community interest company representing the
area’s GP practices and providing a range of specialist general practice and surgical procedures).

New guide gives lowdown on Caring Together

A pocket guide is being produced that will tell people everything they need to know about Caring Together.

The booklet will be available in the area’s 22 GP practices to accompany the first of four posters summarising the benefits of an additional £2m investment by NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG through the programme to guarantee access to a consistent range of general practice services wherever people live and to enable new clinics supporting people to stay well and to manage long-term conditions.

The guide defines Caring Together, explains the reasons for investing in general practice and tells people about the new services they can expect at their surgery in 2016-17. The publication summarises the programme’s important achievements to date and lists its priorities for this year.

Improvements planned by practices will enable patients to:

- Book an appointment two to six weeks in advance after a first consultation with a healthcare professional
- Get a non-urgent appointment in no longer than three weeks after triage
- Get an appointment with their GP within 24 hours, if necessary, after being seen by an out-of-hours GP.

Practices will also:

- Take steps to identify and help overweight patients
- Introduce a service to help stop people developing diabetes
- Set up clinics for people with diabetes, serious breathing problems, heart conditions and leg ulcers
- Give injections
- Change dressings and remove stitches
- Test patients for heart problems and blood clots
- Give better support before and after operations.
The guide and first poster are likely to appear in waiting areas next month (September) or October.