



20 March 2017

Agenda Item: 8

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN NURSING SUPPORT FOR PUPILS ATTENDING SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides information on changes to the way nursing support to children and young people attending special schools in Nottinghamshire will be provided, as part of the transformation of community health services for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

Information and Advice

2. Community nursing for children and young people attending special schools is provided as part of the Integrated Community Children and Young People's Health (ICCYPH) Services transformation programme. The programme was borne from a concern that a lack of co-ordinated healthcare support for children and young people with complex needs and disability and their families was leading to inequity of access and potential safeguarding risks. There were multiple healthcare providers and teams working to different processes, policies and procedures leading to duplication and lack of efficiency and effectiveness, which was having a negative impact on children, young people and families. There were too many acute and emergency hospital attendances and admissions for conditions that could be treated at home or prevented completely with effective pro-active care. Furthermore, children were staying in hospital for too long. The vision for the Integrated Community Children and Young People's Services Programme is to enable children and young people with acute and additional health needs, including disability and complex needs, to have their health needs met wherever they are.
3. Included within the programme were the following community health services for children with additional needs:
 - Physiotherapy
 - Speech and language therapy
 - Occupational therapy
 - Special school and community nursing, including end of life care
 - Phlebotomy.
4. Following a full procurement, a contract was awarded to Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT), commencing from April 2016, to deliver the new integrated community health services.

5. Following the commencement of the new services, community nurses transitioned from their previous employers in the acute hospital trusts to employment by NHFT.
6. As part of the transformation of community nursing, the new service model requires that support is needs-led, rather than allocated to particular settings. The advantages of this approach are that the needs of children are met equitably and on the basis of clinical need rather than on the basis of what provision is available in their school or setting, and also enables the upskilling of nursing staff in localities through providing support to a wider range of needs and conditions.
7. Most of the County's special schools had previously been supported by a needs-led community nursing service, in keeping with the vision for the new ICCYPH services. However, in three schools, nurses had previously been located on the school site. To ensure careful and collaborative resolution of issues emerging from this change, a joint forum between commissioners and providers of the health services and the special school heads was established. This forum now meets termly, with agreed terms of reference.
8. In response to concerns raised by the three schools with nurses on site, the expected transition of the nurses to the new community teams was delayed from the planned date of September 2016. This was to allow staff within the schools to receive the necessary training for them to ensure that they are competent in meeting their pupils' health needs for which specialist nursing input is not required. The planned date for a formal transition to the new arrangements is after the Easter holidays in 2017 and families have been communicated with on an individual basis regarding any planned changes to their care/the care of their child. There have been no complaints from families and this supports the position that there have been significant improvements in the service families receive since the new contract was implemented. There were previously high numbers of complaints but these have steadily decreased. There have been no complaints about any element of the service since October 2016.
9. Training for school based staff to meet the health needs of children in the schools continues and is planned in response to the needs of individual children. Leaders of the County's special schools are satisfied with the training received and the providers, commissioners and schools continue to work together to address any emerging issues.

Other Options Considered

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10. Consideration was given to retaining the nurses in the locations in which they were based prior to the new contract. However, this resulted in a lack of consistent support for children and families, inequity across the County and the de-skilling of nursing staff, who were only supporting a small number of children, with often minor health needs, in the setting where they worked. As such, the preferred clinical needs-led model was pursued.

Reason for Recommendation

11. It is recommended that the Committee note the content of the report and the progress made.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution, the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability

and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

13. There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

1) That Committee notes the changes to the way nursing support to children and young people attending special schools in Nottinghamshire will be provided, as part of the transformation of community health services for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

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Constitutional Comments

14. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KAS 23/02/17)

15. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 13 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

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Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

All.

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