



Although a formal committee of Brighton & Hove City Council, the Health & Wellbeing Board has a remit which includes matters relating to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Local Safeguarding Board for Children and Adults and Healthwatch.

Title: Sussex Health & Care Winter Approach 2023-24

Date of Meeting: 07 November 2023

Report of: Managing Director NHS Sussex (Brighton & Hove) and Executive Director, Health & Adult Social Care

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Brighton & Hove Health and Wellbeing Board with a summary of the Sussex System Winter Plan approach for 2023/24 and an update on progress to date.

1. Decisions, recommendations and any options

- 1.1 That the Board notes the Sussex Health & Care system approach to winter planning 2023/24 as outlined in this paper and its appendix.

2. Relevant information

- 2.1 The overall purpose of the Sussex-wide winter plan is to ensure that the system is able to effectively manage the capacity and demand pressures anticipated during the winter period to meet the needs of the local population. The winter planning period covers the period November 2023 to April 2024. The plan should ensure that the local systems remain resilient and are able to manage demand surge effectively, maintain patient safety and support delivery of the relevant business plan objectives and locally agreed system improvements during this period.
- 2.2 Health and care systems typically experience increased demand pressures during the winter months due to a number of factors including:
- Seasonal illnesses (e.g. flu, norovirus)
 - Extreme weather (e.g. falls in icy conditions)
 - Exacerbation of respiratory illnesses and a range of long-term conditions due to cooler weather
 - Ongoing impact from the cost-of-living crisis affecting the most vulnerable in the local population to keep well
- 2.3 Adding to pressures in 2023/24 are Covid 19 and the need for the NHS to recover from previous waves of Covid, and from the impacts of industrial action, particularly in terms of addressing the backlog of elective procedures.
- 2.4 Health and care systems have been planning systemically for winter surge pressures for a number of years, and typically a key part of this process is assessing how well the previous year's plans met demand, and using learning from this to inform the subsequent year's planning.
- 2.5 The definitive Sussex winter plan has not yet been agreed, and is in any case a detailed document which addresses a wide range of operational matters rather than a strategic plan. Appendix 1 outlines a high-level approach to winter planning agreed by system partners.

3. Important considerations and implications

Legal:

- 3.1 There are no legal implications arising from the report, which is presenting a progress update and is not requiring a decision from the Board.

Lawyer consulted: Sandra O'Brien Date:18/10/2023

Finance:

- 3.2 Any additional costs resulting from the Sussex-Wide Winter Plan will need to be met from within identified resources across NHS Sussex and the Council.
- 3.3 Winter pressures causes significant financial strain across Health & Social Care. Current budget forecasting accounts for anticipated increased demand over this period. However, budget forecasts may be subject to variation later in the year due to the unpredictable nature of the impact on services during the winter.

Finance Officer consulted: Sophie Warburton Date: 20/10/2023

Equalities:

- 3.4 The aims of effective collaborative winter plan arrangements are to ensure that local health and care systems are able to continue to deliver the services that have been developed to meet the needs of the local population. Cold weather disproportionately affects our most vulnerable residents and the Sussex Wide Winter Plan seeks to ensure that resources are targeted to support those at greatest risk. Specific services will be further developed to support delivery of the Plan during the winter period and equality impact assessments will be undertaken to support the development of those specific services.
- 3.5 Sustainability:

The Sussex-Wide winter plan considers how best to use NHS and local authority resources across Sussex in order to cope with seasonal demand surges for health and care services. Any negative carbon impacts of these plans (e.g. through people potentially having to travel further from home to access services where local capacity is stretched) need to be considered. However this needs to be balanced against the risks to individuals of not being able to access appropriate health or care.

Health, social care, children's services and public health:

- 3.4 Health, public health and social care implications are directly addressed in the system approach to winter (Appendix 1).

Supporting documents and information

Appendix1: Sussex System Winter Plan 2023-24 Approach