



Briefing for Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Physical health checks for people over the age of 14 with learning disabilities in Norfolk and Waveney

1. Introduction

Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC) have requested an update on progress with physical health checks for adults and children aged 14 or over with learning disabilities in Norfolk and Waveney since it was discussed at their meeting on 22 February 2018.

2. Background

The provision of health checks for adults and children aged 14 or over with learning disabilities is commissioned from general practice as a Directed Enhanced Service (DES). This is commissioned by NHS England and delivered within general practice and is funded by the CCGs under their delegated commissioning responsibilities. Health checks are available for patients aged 14 and over that have moderate to severe learning disabilities. All patients on the GP practices' learning disability registers are entitled to and should be invited to receive an annual health check. The health check supports the prevention and early identification of disease and other health related conditions.

It is predicted that there are over 16,500 adults in Norfolk that have a learning disability, of which 12,000 are of working age. Of these it is predicted that there are around 3,500 adults that have a moderate to severe learning disability. There are approximately 4,500 adults and children with learning disabilities who could require some form of support. (Norfolk JSNA Briefing document 'adults with learning disabilities' James Henry, Analyst, Norfolk County Council, 16 May 2018.)

There is significant evidence and studies that show people with learning disabilities have poorer health outcomes and lower life expectancy than the general population, and at least 50% of patients have at least one long term health condition. Therefore the importance of delivering a programme of health checks that allow for reasonable adjustments to be made to meet the individual needs of people with learning disabilities is critical to reducing the health inequalities

known to exist. People with a learning disability can have a higher risk of physical health problems including constipation, type 2 diabetes and obesity amongst others.

The health check programme for adults with learning disabilities commissioned through the directed enhanced service has two components:

- Annual health check for patients with learning disabilities,
- Completeness of the GP learning disability register,

In order to improve the accuracy of the GP practice learning disability register, practices must liaise with local authorities to identify which of their registered patients are known to the local authority and vice versa. The benefit of this sharing of information and ensuring that the GP practice register is up to date is that this reduces the likelihood of patients being omitted from the GP practice register and not being invited for an annual health check.

The health check has a minimum requirement to address the patient's physical and mental health, including health screening, lifestyle advice, medication accuracy, sexual health and transition arrangements on attaining the age of 18, communication methods, family carer needs and self-care and management.

Following the annual health check a health action plan should be produced that addresses the patients' needs. Best practice would be to do this in conjunction with the patient, family, carer and other agencies involved and a copy given to the patient in a format suitable to their specific needs. Patients' medical records should be updated with the relevant information following the health check.

3. Performance and activity

3.1 Mechanism for monitoring and measuring compliance

The data collection and validation for the delivery of health checks is undertaken by NHS England and compliance is reported on a quarterly basis both at practice level and CCG level. It is noted that as of August 2017, **all** practices across Norfolk and Waveney were signed up to the health checks programme, and are monitored on the delivery of health checks. It is recognised that despite the agreement to deliver the health checks, there is considerable variation between practices and the Norfolk and Waveney CCGs continue to work with practices to improve the data quality of the GP practice learning disability registers and to increase the numbers of health checks undertaken.

In order to do this, we are working with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to better align the councils' registers of people with learning disabilities with GP practice learning disability registers. This is an important first step in ensuring that we have a true picture of how many adults there are with learning disabilities in Norfolk and Waveney and therefore how many would be eligible to receive a health check.

This is a genuine challenge for the system which we continue to work on. The GP practice register will include people who have been coded as having a learning disability but who may not be on the local authority register which is people known to local authority services.

3.2 Delivery of the standard

The table below shows the number of health checks for adults with learning disabilities by clinical commissioning group over a two year period.

We recognise that the NHS England data shared at the Norfolk HOSC held in February was incorrect and have explored why this error occurred. NHS England collects data quarterly by extracting data automatically from GP practice clinical systems in order to make payments to practices, however the practices are measured on 31 March annually for their achievement against the standard. Practices therefore schedule the health checks at different points in the year and don't necessarily report at the quarterly checkpoints.

In addition, we know that there are historical problems with how data has been coded by practices, for example previously there were many codes for recording learning disabilities on GP practice clinical systems – this can lead to a false picture of how many people on the GP practice register have a learning disability. Practices are now required to use specific codes as part of this directed enhanced service. There were also errors within the spreadsheet we presented.

The most recent data available is presented in the table below. In order to provide assurance to the HOSC, in future, we will only provide data obtained from the single national data source published annually by NHS Digital to ensure completeness and accuracy. We will not provide information from the quarterly extractions as this is unreliable.

Clinical Commissioning Group	2016/17			2017/18		
	Number of patients on LD register in 2016/17	Number of LD patients who received a health check in 2016/17	% of LD patients who received a health check in 2016/17	Number of patients on LD register in 2017/18	Number of LD patients who received a health check in 2017/18	% of LD patients who received a health check in 2017/18
Great Yarmouth and Waveney	1395	597	42.8%	1395	770	55.2%
North Norfolk	1331	696	52.3%	1331	698	52.4%
Norwich	1681	679	40.4%	1681	739	44.0%
South Norfolk	1309	733	56.0%	1309	756	57.8%
West Norfolk	968	376	38.8%	968	496	51.2%
Total	6684	3081	46.1%	6684	3459	51.8%

4. Progress and actions to date

Since the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in February 2018 a working group has been set up with representation from commissioners, provider organisations and primary care. The group has developed an action plan to improve our performance across Norfolk and Waveney around the provision and uptake of health checks for adults and children aged 14 or over with learning disabilities. Some of these initiatives are being tested in single CCG areas and they will be evaluated and rolled out across Norfolk and Waveney as appropriate. These are summarised below:

Action	Update
Increase support from community learning disabilities nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A programme has commenced to deliver training to practice nurses• Learning disability nurses have worked with practices to target patients that have not responded to health check invitations• In Great Yarmouth and Waveney GP practices have named contacts within the local learning disabilities teams. They provide direct support, information and advice and how to address any issues that they may be experiencing.
Provide training to GPs and practice staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education evening events held for GPs in West Norfolk CCG.• 'Medibite' training sessions for GPs commissioned and delivered in Norwich CCG area• Across Norfolk and Waveney all organisations and professionals involved with people with learning disabilities will receive training around the mental capacity act in relation to an individual's health needs.• Community learning disabilities nurses have delivered training for practice nurses in some areas around the background and process of delivery of health checks.
Information for patients and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In West Norfolk CCG easy read appointment information is sent out which contains contact information for the learning disability nurses in order to support the recipients who are being invited for the health check.• In other parts of Norfolk and Waveney easy read appointment letters are sent out to people. We know that it is important to ensure that people are

	<p>communicated with in a way that they understand and does not put them off having the health check. We know that standard letters do not always get read by the patients and as a result they therefore are more likely to not attend their appointment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Norfolk CCG's have a plan to pilot the blue envelope scheme. Easy read appointment letters are sent in blue envelopes so that when people with learning disabilities receive them they know to open it. • West Norfolk CCG is developing a website for members of the public and surgeries which will include information about how to access services, types of letters and information for a health check. • We plan to undertake work to engage people with a learning disability and their families and their carers around methods of communication. • Awareness raising for people with learning disabilities and their carers • In Norwich CCG Thorpewood Medical Group have a specialist nurse who works on Saturdays and Sundays to see the patients in their own homes or in a quiet setting within the practice at 'non-working times' to help increase the number of health checks. This has demonstrated great success with 65 of their 67 patients having a health check.
Improving data accuracy and data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Norfolk CCGs are investigating the use of the Eclipse system to collate information to identify where over medication is an issue with a view to stopping over medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both • We are working with NCC on a dedicated piece of work to validate the Local authority and GP practice learning disabilities registers across Norfolk and Waveney.

A Norfolk and Waveney wide Learning Disabilities strategy has been developed and includes a section “Being Healthy and Happy” and health checks for adults with learning disabilities are included within this. Health and social care have discussed having a subgroup of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board to look at the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability which would include raising the profile and uptake of the annual health checks.

The strategy which was co-produced with service users has been signed off by the Joint Strategic Commissioning Committee and Adult Social Care committee.

A system wide approach is being taken to improve the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability including increasing the update of the annual health check. Our aspiration is to work with all providers to raise the importance of individuals’ health and wellbeing for whom they provide care and support.

5. What are the main challenges that we need to overcome to improve performance?

Our immediate priorities of action for the next six months are:

- We will work with both county councils and practices to improve the accuracy of GP practice registers of people with learning disabilities and recording data around health checks.
- We will work with practices to further improve the quality of health checks that are being provided and ensure consistency across Norfolk and Waveney.
- We will work on the methods of communicating with patients with learning disabilities and to ensure that practices apply the Accessible Information Standard.

Progress on this work is being monitored by the Primary Care Commissioning Committee of each CCG regularly held in public.

The STP workstream for mental health now includes service for people with learning disabilities.

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