

HEALTH AND CARE INSIGHTS

Issue 6 - December 2017



Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Christmas is a time when most people are able to spend time with their loved ones and enjoy the holidays. For the NHS this can be one of the busiest times particularly if the weather is very cold. But as you will have read in last month's newsletter we have planned and prepared for the pressures we are and will be under this winter. In this newsletter you can read about some of things we are doing to ensure we can continue to provide high quality services even with the increased number of people needing care.

People can also make sure they are as prepared as possible if they do find themselves becoming unwell or suffer an accident. They can make sure they know what service to access and how to do so. Local GP services will be closed on the Bank Holidays but other services such as some pharmacists will be open at some point every day and NHS 111 service will be open 24/7 right across the festive season to offer advice. Our locally developed NHSquicker app can also help - you can find out more about that below.

Launch of NHSquicker

NHSquicker, a free phone app, aims to help people choose the right health service. It shows up-to-date waiting times for local emergency departments and minor injuries units, based on a person's location. It also shows live travel times to help people make informed decisions about where to go when they are in need of urgent care. People can also use NHSquicker to find information about less urgent NHS services, such as GPs, pharmacies, sexual health services, dentists and opticians. To download the app, search 'NHSquicker' on your app store. You can also view it online at www.nhsquicker.co.uk

Supporting more acutely unwell people in the community

We are already caring for more people safely in their own homes and communities but people still need to come in to hospital for a range of treatments including those needing drugs intravenously. This can disrupt a person's life and also put more pressure on our hospital beds.

To address this community staff are being trained to provide the treatment safely in people's homes. During December and January nurses within the Intermediate Care teams are being trained to be able to support more acutely unwell people with a range treatments including those administered intravenously. Following that the programme will roll out to Community Matrons and Community Nurse teams too. This will mean that these teams will be able to support patients at home or within residential/nursing placements who are dehydrated through fluid management and individuals needing intravenous antibiotic treatments for urinary tract infections and cellulitis which will prevent hospital admissions.

This will also mean that patients will be able to receive their care from one team rather than having to be cared for by a different team if they become more unwell and require a different sort of treatment.

Seeing and treating more people without having to admit them

Around 450 patients a month are admitted into hospital through our Emergency Department. While they are with us, these patients often have a series of waits for assessment, medical review, diagnostic tests, and a treatment plan. We believe that for many people we can provide the same quality care without the need for a hospital admission by changing how we work. For

Working with you, for you

HEALTH AND CARE INSIGHTS

example, we now reserve early morning scans so that some people can go home and come back to hospital the next day for a scan, instead of being admitted overnight to wait for a scan. Measures like this help us make beds available for our most acutely unwell patients, whilst providing quicker access to diagnosis and the right treatment for those who could return home the same day.

To support this we have extended the opening hours of our Acute Medical Unit to cover weekends. Our medical teams are also starting a month-long trial of daily 'outpatient clinics for urgent patients and our senior doctors are working later into the evening to speed up decision-making and enable more discharges the same day. During January, our orthopaedic team will be providing a senior team to work in the Emergency Department to see if this expertise at the makes a difference. We will be monitoring these and other changes to see how they are working, but we are already seeing an improvement in the service we offer our patients.

Extension of Rapid Response and Reablement Service

Additional staff are being recruited to our Rapid Response and Reablement service so that we will be able to provide extra support to help people stay at home and improve their independence. The recruitment has started with more to follow in the New Year. In addition we have agreed a block contract with an external provider to support us with extra capacity in terms of 200 hours over the winter period to make sure that we can support as many people as possible to stay at home and be more independent.

Partnership Board with voluntary sector

The Partnership Board has been set up to enable local community and voluntary sector led solutions to support the care model and local communities. The group's membership includes the two umbrella organisations, CCG, Torbay Council, Healthwatch and the Trust and is supported by the Academic Health Science Network. The group will make decisions on allocation of funds to agree jointly agreed care model priorities and monitor progress. The group will also ensure regular communication with the voluntary services across South Devon and Torbay. Initial meetings have focussed on transport and personal support to older people living at home.

Join our campaign to identify unpaid carers.

We already support about 24,000 unpaid carers across Torbay and Devon, but we know that roughly three out of four people who care for someone are not getting all the information, advice or support that they need. This may mean that they end up in crisis and they, or the person the care for, may require a hospital/care home admission or other preventable service.

There is plenty of advice and support from emergency back-up plans, to advice about benefits and work, to free parking at local hospitals when supporting the person they care for, to free training in caring and staying well, there is much, much more support than most people realise.

In addition to the usual numbers for Torbay Carers or Devon Carers, there is now a phone number which anyone can ring to access the appropriate support. For more information, please contact Torbay Carers on 01803 208455 or torbaycarersservice@nhs.net



We hope you find this update useful and that you can see we are making real progress towards our aim of supporting more people to be well and independent. If you would like to receive future issues by email contact tsdft.communications@nhs.net