

Lancashire County Council

Adult Social Care

Winter Plan 2022/23

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Contents

Section	Title	Page No
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Planning Context (including risk)	4
3.0	Aims and Objectives	8
4.0	Preventing and Controlling the Spread of Infection in Social Care	8
5.0	Service Stability and Additional Capacity	9
6.0	Cost of Living Increases	13
7.0	Collaboration Across Health and Care Services	14
8.0	Supporting People Who Receive Social Care, The Workforce, and Carers	15
9.0	Prisons	17
10.0	Public Health	18
11.0	Communications Arrangements	19
13.0	Appendix A – Additional Service Capacity	20



1. Introduction

The Lancashire County Council (LCC) Adult Social Care Winter Plan is a necessary and critical part of business continuity planning to set out continuity actions, key risks and mitigations, and the management of these during what is typically a more pressured part of the year. Adult Social Care are focussed on ensuring we are as prepared as possible to meet the likely challenges of winter, as well as delivering year-round resilience. This year's Winter Plan has required the Authority to take account of: -

- the continued challenges and pressures across the health and social care sector in relation to learning to live with Covid-19
- the likely resurgence of winter Flu
- significant and sustained pressure across the care market
- Sustained workforce challenges including recruitment, retention and fatigued staff who have experienced no real reduction in pressure since the start of the pandemic

The challenges this year are highly likely to be further exacerbated by the cost of living increases which will impact on staff and citizens; increasing the risks to being able to deliver safe care where and when it's needed and to people being able to keep themselves warm and well and maintain their health and wellbeing.

The challenges across the care market are sustained, with the position in Lancashire continuing to mirror the regional and national picture. The impact varies across Lancashire, and the Authority is continuing to work together with care providers and local partners on mitigating actions. Ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to meet peoples' needs, keep people safe and enabling continued 'flow' across the system is not to be underestimated and likely to be exacerbated through the winter months.

The Lancashire County Council Winter Plan for Adult Social Care formally comes into operational effect from 1st October 2022 and will run until the 15th April 2023 incorporating resilience across the Easter period.

Across the last 2-3 years Adult Social Care has continued to build capacity into some of the critical short term intervention services such as crisis support and Reablement, to better meet the needs of Lancashire residents who need them. This gives us an improved foundation for our winter planning this year, although it should be noted that a significant element remains funded via short term monies presenting delivery risks beyond 2022/23.

We know that this year will potentially be one of the most challenging health and social care have faced in recent times. We continue to live with Covid-19, plus it is anticipated that we will see a likely resurgence of the flu virus this winter. These pressures, coupled with the continued significant workforce challenges across the social care sector, mean that planning is more complicated than ever before. The health and social care workforce are fatigued from the relentlessness of the response to the pandemic. Recruitment, retention, and staff wellbeing are of paramount importance and concern. Therefore, winter resilience this year is as much if not more about ensuring stability of what we already have, as it is about creating additional support. Given the pressures, our resilience planning cannot be dependent on recruiting additional staff.

On the 1st July 2022, the Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) was created, as set out in the Health and Care Act (2022). This changed the shape and

infrastructure of the NHS locally, consolidating the Clinical Commissioning Groups in the one ICB. The ICB also undertook a review of the existing 'Place' boundaries, and the decision has now been taken to move from the existing 5 'Place Based Partnerships' to 4 Places that will be coterminous with the 4 Upper Tier Local Authorities. Lancashire County Council continue to work with local NHS partners to resilience plan, and will adapt and shape partnerships, planning and delivery in collaboration with the ICB as people come into post and governance and partnership infrastructure is established.

Within our LCC Adult Social Care Winter Plan, the focus remains on ensuring we can deliver high quality and responsive services that enable people to maximise their independence, leave hospital as soon as they no longer need a hospital bed or avoid an unnecessary admission, and remain living in their own home for as long as possible. The plan also sets out the risks to Adult Social Care being able to achieve this, and the mitigating actions to be taken.

Adult Social Care encompasses various care and social work services and operates 24/7 365 days a year. Many care services operate continuously, ensuring that people who need care and support get it at the level they need and at the time they need it. In supporting people who need social care assessments, 7-day working (except Christmas Day where the demand for planned assessments is negligible) is in place across several teams working around hospital discharge and admission avoidance, plus the Mental Health AMHP (Approved Mental Health Professional) team operate a 24/7 service. Outside of these hours, the Emergency Duty Team for social care responds to urgent situations.

The LCC Adult Social Care Winter Plan dated 16th September 2022 has been signed off by the Adult Services Senior Leadership Team, endorsed by Cabinet and shared with relevant managers and staff within the Council. The Plan has been shared with the NHS, care sector providers and other partners locally.

The range of measures and actions set out in the plan and delivery against it will be monitored on a regular basis by the LCC Adult Social Care Winter Board, which will also agree further mitigating actions where required.

Any significant amendments will be communicated via the issue of an updated version

2. Planning Context (including risk)

In addition to the usual considerations of winter and the extra demand that the time of year places on social care, there are several additional factors and risks that have been taken into consideration and influenced the planning for this year.

These include:

COVID-19

We are now in the phase of living with COVID-19, in line with the Government guidance issued in February 2022, COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19. This guidance, which is underpinned by the vaccination programme, set out the Government's plan for removing legal restrictions, maintaining resilience and protecting people most vulnerable to COVID-19.

The Winter Plan has been developed against the additional pressures that delivering services in the context of COVID-19's continued presence creates for LCC, the NHS and social care providers.

Care Market Challenges

The challenges in this sector are seen nationally, and regionally the picture is similar across all North West Local Authorities.

Locally in Lancashire, the pressures are multifactorial including a further increase in homecare with **88,491** commissioned care hours (July 2022) being delivered per week to people in comparison to 85,460 commissioned care hours per week being delivered on the October 2021 snapshot date. This shows a significant growth in both demand and provision, but in the context of the underlying challenges cross the social care sector it demonstrates the need to continue to ensure that care is not over-provided (thus reducing people's independence) in order to have care and support capacity available for people in need of it.

Some of the underlying contributory factors to the care market challenges include:

- a) Competition from other sectors on pay, terms and conditions, career progression
- b) Better pay and staff benefits in NHS attracts staff in that direction
- c) Challenges of the job
- d) Reflections of social care in the media
- e) Self isolation episodes

Risks also exist in relation to the financial uncertainty for many providers, both because of the effects of the pandemic but also future demand for their services as peoples' needs and expectations change. The Council have this year agreed uplifts broadly averaging between 5-6% to care providers delivering commissioned care.

The Council has commenced a Fair Cost of Care exercise which is required of all local authorities with adult social care responsibilities as part of the Social Care Reforms. The exercise is designed to determine a 'fair cost of care' for home care to over 18s and for residential/nursing care to over 65s. The information gathered will inform a Market Sustainability Plan to identify risks in the adult social care market and form an action plan to mitigate them. The initial outputs from this exercise are to be submitted to DHSC by 14th October 2022.

Supporting the stability of the care market remains a priority for the Council within the means and options available to us. Responding to uncertainties in how the care market may operate in the months ahead, and the difficulties in reliably estimating demand and capacity in the context of so many other variables make planning a challenge.

The risks of some providers ceasing to operate altogether, or because of workforce capacity needing to reduce the level of service they provide remains a key risk across the coming months, particularly against the backdrop of the cost of living increases.

Demand and Complexity

Adult Social Care continue to see increased demand and more people with more complex needs requiring assessment and support.

Waiting times for both social care and occupational therapy assessments have increased across Adult Social Care, in part due to the increasing demand and complexity of

peoples' needs and circumstances. A focussed and costed plan is currently in place and being delivered to reduce the number of people awaiting assessment. This may well have further impact on the requirement for, and capacity of, care hours

In addition, through the national hospital discharge policy many more people are now discharged earlier and with a higher level of need than they would previously have been. This adds additional pressures to Adult Social Care both in terms of assessment capacity but also in terms of sufficiency of social care provision in the community.

Adult Social Care has remained in 'response mode' even in moving out of the pandemic, given the many competing risks and challenges now and across the coming months. Mitigating actions remain in place and will continue to be reviewed across the winter period.

NHS Winter Planning

The NHS locally, submits in collaboration with key partners at Place Based Partnership and ICS levels, winter planning templates. The templates set out key risks and actions to be taken in respect of demand, capacity, workforce, admission avoidance, hospital exit flow and external events. Additionally, the plans are complimented by urgent care recovery plans.

Discharge to Assess (D2A)

Section 91 of the Health and Care Act came into force on 1 July 2022, revoking procedural Delayed Transfers of Care requirements contained Schedule 3 to the Care Act 2014. D2A is the preferred model but not mandated, and the national guidance Hospital Discharge and Community Support Guidance (March 2022) sets out good practice and expectations. Discharges should happen within the same day, ideally within 2 hours. All discharges must be safe.

2 Hour Urgent Care Response

The NHS locally has implemented a 2-hour Crisis Response service in line with national requirements. The service is delivered across Lancashire & South Cumbria and provides an 8am-8pm 2hr urgent care response to people aged 18+ who are experiencing a crisis that needs an urgent NHS community intervention to be able to remain in their own home and avoid a hospital admission. This includes people who reside in a Care Home.

The guidance also includes a 2-hour response where there is a breakdown in informal caring arrangements.

So far, the additional call on social care services has been manageable, however this continues to be closely monitored given the potential impact on the care market.

Virtual Wards

This is a national NHS initiative that enables people (where clinically appropriate) who would otherwise be in hospital to get the healthcare they need at home, safely and conveniently. Acute care, monitoring and treatment is provided alongside wrap around support, and plans are in place for a phased implementation of 'virtual ward beds' across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

It is likely there will be a requirement for social care support for many people in the virtual ward, and discussions are taking place to model what the demand may be and what services may be needed to support people.

NHS Hospital Bed Pressures

Bed modelling shows an anticipated significant bed pressure in each of the local hospitals, and plans are in place to mitigate against these as far as possible. Adult Social Care are working collaboratively with NHS partners to mitigate pressures, including the reduction in the number of people who have 'No Criteria to Reside' and no longer need a hospital bed but have not been discharged in a timely way.

Workforce

Requirement to consider recruitment and retention both for new or expanded services, along with the resilience and wellbeing of staff which could further impact on already fragile services. Issues such as vacancies, absences, and high turnover present greater risks around delivery of safe care, service capacity to meet demand plus the best outcomes for people.

Mental Health

Demand for mental health services has already increased significantly as a result of the pandemic and its impact on peoples' lives. Winter and the other pressures listed here are likely to add to that demand both for in-patient services, for safe and speedy discharges and for community services.

Collaborative Planning

We have worked in collaboration with key partners to develop our winter plan, including the NHS, the 3rd Sector, and providers across the care market. In turn, we have collaborated with the NHS and key partners in the development of the Place Based Partnership and ICS system plans. Our Adult Social Care Plan is not limited to only those people who receive Local Authority funded care, but also ensures that key actions apply to those who fund their own care. We have also detailed the support offered to informal carers.

Across the winter period and beyond we will continue to work closely with partners, in particular the care market to ensure that relevant advice and guidance is promoted and implemented, and where appropriate localised flexibility is applied.

Cost of Living Increases

It is expected that there will be an impact on people, the NHS and Social Care as a result of the current economic position. The Adult Social Care Plan sets out the risks to peoples' health and wellbeing as well as the delivery of safe and timely care.

3. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan are:

- To ensure that the Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan sets out how we will meet the needs of citizens who require social care across the winter period
- Within the context of the pressured position of the social care system, ensure as far as possible the provision of social care services of a sufficient volume and quality to keep people safe and supported, and that have a focus on maximising independence
- To maximise adult social care resilience, and support wellbeing, both across the care market and in the Lancashire County Council adult social care assessment and support teams
- Identify, mitigate, and minimise risks across the social care system, and work collaboratively with partners to reduce risks
- Ensure that people are supported in a safe and COVID secure way, with the right services of a high quality available in a timely way
- Ensure that the overriding principle of 'home first' i.e., people should be able to remain in or return to their own home wherever possible, is maintained throughout all decision making at individual and wider commissioning levels
- Continue to maintain the balance between reducing the risks of infection, transmission and responding to the need for people to receive care and support
- Continue to operate within and follow Government guidance and direction relating to covid-19
- Ensure care is provided in a way that supports people to remain connected with families and loved ones, supports emotional wellbeing, and reduces loneliness
- Have due regard and take relevant actions in relation to individuals and communities who may be more susceptible to infections and illness across the winter period
- Incorporate into resilience planning the potential impacts of the cost of living increases on people, services and staff.

The following sections highlight the activity/work taking place across several key areas to meet the aims and objectives stated above.

4. Preventing and Controlling the Spread of Infection Within Social Care

Whilst we are living with Covid-19, and certain precautions and actions must be taken, Infection Prevention and Control teams are also overseeing mitigating actions for other infections and illnesses across this winter.

All care providers are registered as being compliant with the [Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections](#) and the Infection Prevention Team at Lancashire County Council support all providers to ensure that they meet the criteria. This ensures that care is provided in an appropriate environment with all appropriate standards in place to prevent a wide range of infections.

Provider Engagement & Guidance

Key messages on Infection Prevention & Control information and guidance have been shared via provider webinars, the on-line provider portal, Twitter and a dedicated webpage on the Council intranet and internet.

COVID-19

As national COVID-19 regulations and requirements have started to relax, the LCC Infection Prevention and Control Team have continued to support providers where needed with working safely, lifting visiting restrictions in care homes, and managing COVID-19 outbreaks and onward recovery.

Covid-19 plans remain in place at a whole population level in relation to response to covid-19 outbreaks and options that can be taken where appropriate and necessary to contain and reduce transmission.

Flu

As we move into the winter period, the prevalence of flu increases. There is a real possibility that the impact of flu will be greater this year due to the very low levels seen during the last 2 winters and therefore peoples' lower immunity to it plus the higher levels of social interaction of people through the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions.

In response, the Government are setting off the largest ever flu campaign, encouraging everyone who is eligible to take up the flu vaccine alongside the Covid-19 booster jab. This information and reminders to take up the vaccine has been promoted to all care providers through the regular provider webinar.

In addition to the national programme, LCC Health Protection Service will be undertaking an annual workforce programme including briefings to encourage and increase protection across our own staff. For those staff under 50 years old and aren't in one of the high risk groups, the County Council will offer the option to reimburse staff the cost of the vaccine. All staff across Adult Social Care have been encouraged to take up the seasonal flu vaccine to support keeping our teams well over winter.

Local authorities have a responsibility to provide information and advice to relevant bodies within their areas, to protect the health of the population and the Lancashire County Council Flu Team provide this advice and support along with other actions to increase uptake of the vaccine.

5. Service Stability and Additional Capacity

Across the last few years, work has taken place to bring some stability to the workforce and critical services where they are funded by temporary or non-recurrent monies, moving many of them to a sustainable footing on a low risk basis. For Lancashire County Council, this gives a greater level of year-round resilience by posts being more attractive to prospective applicants as they are on a permanent contract, resulting in lower turnover of staff.

The Council's intermediate care services such as 'crisis support' and 'Reablement' are currently being re-procured. In advance of the new services being in place plans have been developed to look at what may be required in terms of additional social care capacity within the financial envelope available, and also what is realistic for the care providers to deliver given the significant pressures across the care market and the challenges with recruitment and retention.

See **Appendix A** for of the table of additional winter capacity. These include:

Crisis & Reablement Hours

An additional 550 Crisis/Home First hours per week across the winter period have been identified to support people to remain in their own home who are at risk of hospital or residential care admission without urgent support, or to be discharged quickly from hospital. The support is provided for up to 72 hours (or 5 days on discharge from hospital) and can be anything from a one-off hour to continuous support.

An additional 336 'crisis plus' hours (24/7 support for up to 7 days in the person's own home) per week across the winter period have been identified to enable Adult Social Care to offer enhanced support to those people who have more complicated urgent social care needs and would otherwise be facing an unnecessary admission to a Care Home. The additional hours will enable people to remain in their own home for longer, plus where appropriate they will also enable more rapid hospital discharge and support the avoidance of delays.

An additional up to 500 Reablement hours per week across the winter period have been identified if required in anticipation of more people being discharged from hospital more quickly. Delivery is wholly dependent on the provider's capacity to staff up to this level. As the demand on community services grows, the need to maximise peoples' independence becomes ever more critical, and enhanced service provision may well be required on a long term basis in line with the Lancashire and South Cumbria Intermediate Care Programme.

Residential Rehab/Community Beds

Work is underway to maximise the use of the existing 115 residential rehabilitation beds provided by Lancashire County Council's Older People's Care Services across the county. Several schemes/actions are in progress: -

- **Single Handed Care** - equipment has been purchased for the units and ceiling track hoists are being installed in 20 rooms across the county to support safer and more independent transfers for people with more complex needs.
- **Training** - The Lancashire County Council Moving with Dignity Team are providing a training programme in single handed care to all staff working in the rehabilitation units, as well as to the NHS therapists who work in them
- **Referral Coordinators** – 3 posts have been set up and will take on the receipt, triage, admission confirmation and decision communication across all the residential rehab units, to aid speed and consistency of response.
- **Higher Dependency Beds** – The service will undertake a test of concept in one rehab unit, Meadowfield, exploring reducing the overall number of beds but increasing the number of people with higher dependency needs the service can support at any one time. This is in line with demand and complexity of needs profiling
- **Outreach** - The service will undertake a test of concept across winter, trialling outreach on a small scale to continue the support to people who are ready to return home from a residential rehab unit but would benefit from a continuation of the reablement support in their own home for a short time. This will provide better continuity of support for people, plus release some Reablement hours.

- **Admissions Support Across 7 Days** – to bolster management resilience to be able to avoid closures to admissions, and support across 7 days, additional senior care support to be put in place
- **Temporary Beds** - A small number of beds ringfenced in some of Lancashire County Council's Older People's Care Services' residential care homes to support the care market challenges and 'bridge the gap' where people need to leave hospital but there is no care immediately available.

Some care home beds across the independent sector have been block booked by the NHS in some parts of the county, and where these are in place the Lancashire County Council Intermediate Care Allocation Team (ICAT)/Central Allocation To Care & Health (CATCH) teams will coordinate the oversight of the beds and assessments of people for onward support.

Positive Ageing & Mental Health Wellbeing Pilot

This winter, a collaboration across Lancashire County Council, Lancashire & South Cumbria Foundation Trust and Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS has seen the agreement to test a concept using some of Lancashire County Council's Older Peoples Care Services residential beds.

The model provides an intermediate care approach for older adults with a mental health need, including Dementia. Initially working with people who in out of area mental health hospitals, and then including people locally in the general Acute Hospitals, the intermediate care beds provide a re-abling approach coordinated and supported by an enhanced multi-agency team. The aim is to support more people to return to their own home, reduce the length of stay in hospitals or avoid unnecessary admissions.

The project commenced in East Lancashire from the 1st September, with 2 further units to come online in Central and North Lancashire before Christmas.

Hospital Aftercare Service (Age UK)

The Hospital Aftercare Service is present in each Acute Trust across Lancashire and works alongside discharge teams and NHS colleagues in the Emergency Department to support timely discharge for those people not requiring specialist transport or social care.

The service which is delivered by Age UK on behalf of Lancashire County Council includes "Take Home & Settle" (Tier 1) which provides support for up to 3 hours, and "Follow-up and Support" (Tier 2) which provides low level support for up to six weeks of up to 15 hours over the period.

Additional temporary capacity was commissioned last year providing up to 500 additional hours of support each week. This has been continued through this winter period to maintain the level of provision. The continuation will also provide opportunity to use the service for people being discharged from the residential rehab units.

To further promote the use of the service and reduce reliance on formal support, additional staffing capacity is in place enabling a member of the service to be co-located with each of the 5 ICAT teams across the County and is already having a positive impact on diverting people into less intensive support to facilitate hospital discharge.

The Hospital Aftercare service has been extended to support people being discharged from the Acute Mental Health wards, and this will continue across the winter period to both test the concept and provide additional resilience.

Additional capacity delivering 'good day calls' and information and advice remains in place until April 2023 funded via one-off NHS monies received early in 2022.

Workforce

Recruitment and retention challenges remain, and therefore this winter plan avoids as much as possible reliance on additional posts.

Additional workforce capacity is required to deliver the additional Home First, Crisis Plus and Reablement hours, but work has been undertaken to establish what is realistic and how best to procure with the least risk of a destabilising impact on the care market.

There is a small number of additional temporary posts into Adult Social Care in the plan in line with critical requirements to manage the scale and volume of escalation and resilience across the Acute and intermediate care service from October to April.

Mental Health

The demand for mental health services has continued to increase, due to both increased mental health prevalence within the population, as well as from suppressed access to mental health support during covid-19 lockdown periods and the impact of continuing and intermittent social restrictions. Additionally, services both nationally and locally continue to see an increased acuity in first time presentations to our services. Adult Social Care teams and the 24/7 Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) service work together with NHS partners to support to access the right treatment and support for their needs, in a timely way.

Capacity and services which will support the additional pressures seen across the winter period include:

- The scope of the Hospital Aftercare Service delivered by AgeUK has been enhanced to include people being discharged from Mental Health wards
- A Crisis Flat is being opened in early November-to support people with a diagnosis of Learning Disability and Learning Disability and Autism who are in a social crisis for a short period of time to manage behaviours that are complex and prevent a hospital admission or loss of placement.
- The Hospital Discharge Home Recovery scheme has been extended to support people being discharged from Mental Health wards
- A Mental Health Wellbeing team is being set up working across both adult and older adults. The team will provide short term social care interventions and personalised support to work alongside the person with care and support needs. Using a strengths-based approach, individuals have the control over their own lives using a timely intervention it will build their confidence, lessen their economic disadvantage, build their social network, and lessen the longer term impacts that come from inactivity (worsening mental and physical health). The team will be aligned to the Primary Care Networks and the Community Mental Health Hub.
- An additional post in the AMHP service to support people with social care needs whilst awaiting a Mental Health bed.
- Use of The Positive Ageing and Mental Health Wellbeing beds noted earlier in the Plan.

Housing, Adaptations and Community Equipment

In addition to the usual access routes for assessment for community equipment, 'trusted assessor' schemes with some of our home improvement and housing partners whereby certain items of community equipment can be provided by the staff who are undertaking other home improvement tasks in the person's accommodation are in place. This supports the prevention of falls and accidents in the home and improves peoples' independence. These arrangements will continue to be reviewed and evaluated.

Across this winter, we are commencing a test of concept in partnership with some of our District Council partners. The Health & Housing Coordination Service will test out the siting of staff with housing related expertise with our ICAT/ CATCH teams, to improve the access and support for people being discharged from hospital.

Digital Technology

Several 'Tunstall Go's' have been purchased and will be used by the hospital discharge teams. These are movable technology that will support timely hospital discharge or admission avoidance, bringing the ability to alert family or responders in an emergency as well as passive monitoring to support people's safety in their own home.

6. Cost of Living Increases

The current economic environment presents additional challenges for the social care and health system. The effects could impact to varying levels across staff, services, people who need support and their carers. Risks include: -

- More staff may leave the sector, increasing vacancies and reducing capacity
- Fuel costs may impact on the ability to deliver care to people in their own homes
- Energy costs may impact on vulnerable people whose health will be adversely affected for example through a colder home, or who have equipment that requires electricity
- Health, Wellbeing, and independence may be adversely impacted by rising fuel, food, and transport costs

The Council will continue to look at opportunities across the coming months where support can be provided and mitigate against some of the impacts. We will also work closely with the NHS to ensure that people who need our help the most are prioritised.

The Council is putting in place a Warm & Welcoming Places scheme which will see many Council buildings offer 'warm and welcome' spaces during opening times to Lancashire residents throughout the winter period. This includes 64 public libraries set in local communities. LCC will work in partnership with the District Councils and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector partners to deliver this, plus identify further spaces across organisations. The warm and welcome public spaces will offer additional support and advice services to support individuals and families to access other services to alleviate food and fuel poverty.

A new £1m Affordable Warmth Lancashire Fund has been created, where the Council will work collaboratively with District Council partners to help residents on low incomes who are vulnerable to the effects of a colder home. Working with Cosy Homes in

Lancashire, the scheme will provide access to home energy support such as boiler and insulation measures.

A cost of living webpage is being developed which will contain advice and information on support available and will be accessible via the Council's website.

7. Collaboration across Health and Care Services

Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care have worked together with the NHS and other partners on winter planning, risk mitigation and opportunities for mutual aid.

Hospital Discharge

The national Hospital Discharge and Community Services Guidance which supports the hospital discharge sections of the Health and Care Act (2022) sets out good practice and requirements around operating a discharge to assess model. Lancashire and South Cumbria have a standardised operating model and principles to promote equity of delivery across the 5 local acute hospital footprints. Continued collaboration to ensure 'flow' in and out of the hospitals is an essential element to the system managing across the winter period.

Winter Planning

Work has taken place on each Acute hospital footprint to develop a system winter plan. The system plans are predicated on having sufficient capacity in place across the community, intermediate care services and within the hospitals themselves to avoid hospitals becoming overcrowded and that they remain safe places for patients and staff. The plans also focus on admission avoidance.

The Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Plan is a key element of the system plans in the contribution to how social care and health will maintain resilience across key services and meet the needs of citizens.

Care Settings

National regulations remain in place regarding the protection of people in care homes and the hospital discharge process. Hospitals must ensure that a Covid-19 swab result is in place within 48 hours prior to the discharge to enable to care home to manage the safety of its residents. Thorough handover information should be in place about the person's needs, and if the person tests positive they can be admitted to the Care Home where the care provider is satisfied they can be cared for safely.

As a health and care system we will continue to work together to support people to return to the home they were in prior to a hospital admission wherever possible and avoid unnecessary disruption to their lives.

Provision under the Enhanced Health in Care Homes Framework is in place across Lancashire, with all care homes having been designated a clinical lead. Various arrangements are in place across the County under the framework including the sharing of health advice and information with care homes through local digital platforms, the provision of enhanced support through health care home support teams, the ability to provide GP consultations via video technology and the clustering of care homes into designated Primary Care Networks.

Digital Social Care Records

The Council are a full partner in the Lancashire & South Cumbria Digital Social Care Records (DSCR) project. The Digital Adoption and Transformation in Regulated Care Team have supported local care homes to purchase a new digital social care record system from the NHS Assured Supplier List. Using 3 NHS grants (the DSCR Programme, the Unified Tech Fund and the Digital Transformation fund) the team have funded the licence costs, training and implementation fees for 45 care homes to move from paper to electronic records, with plans to identify a further 85 eligible homes before March 2023.

These digital social care records play an important role in joining up care across social care and the NHS, freeing up time spent by social care workers and managers on administrative tasks, whilst equipping them with the information they need to deliver care. They are the platform on which other remote care tools can integrate and can enable the greater personalisation of care planning that focuses on the individual.

Escalation and Resilience

Adult Social Care have worked with the NHS locally to agree daily reporting into the Escalation Management System Plus (EMS Plus) escalation system in place across the ICS. Hospital Discharge, and ICAT/CATCH teams add their weighted team status into the dashboard each day giving visibility of capacity and pinch points.

Sitting behind the escalation system is a set of action cards detailing the response of each organisation when any partnership across an Acute Hospital footprint reaches set standardised escalation trigger levels.

Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care have resilience and business continuity plans in place and have stress tested these. Care providers equally have these plans in place, and many have enacted them across the last two years. The Lancashire County Council Quality, Contracts and Safeguarding service works closely with care providers in ensuring plans are in place and appropriate business continuity actions are mobilised as required.

All care home and homecare providers upload their information regarding staffing, vaccinations, occupancy, PPE levels or new covid-19 infections etc onto the NECS (North of England Commissioning Service) Capacity Tracker. The information supplied by providers enables visibility of pinch points and where urgent support is required and high-level data extraction is used as part of the ICS system resilience reporting.

8. Supporting people who receive social care, the workforce, and carers

Keeping people as safe as possible, whilst ensuring they get the social care and support they need is integral to this winter plan. Ensuring resilience across the workforce is critical to being able to assess for and deliver social care support.

People Who Use Social Care

A range of measures have been outlined in the plan to ensure sufficient care and assessment capacity is in place as far as possible in the current climate to support people across the winter period and beyond. This winter, maintaining the care capacity

that is available across the market is an area of focus, as well as any potential for additional capacity to meet increasing demand and periods of surge.

The additional capacity and measures in place focus on people who need care and support being able to get the right care, in the right place at the right time. Care is provided in a safe way and upholds peoples' dignity.

Due to the continuing pandemic and the challenges across the care market, additional restrictions and disruptions may occur both nationally and locally on peoples' lives. Adult Social Care will continue to respond to and work within, the required public health guidance in place at any one time to ensure that peoples' needs are met. Locally, the Director of Public Health will continue to review and issue guidance as required, for care providers to be able to protect their services users using a balanced risk approach.

This winter plan sets out the range of actions and measures being put in place not just for those people who need Local Authority funded care including people who manage their care via a Direct Payment, but also people who self-fund their care and support. People who self-fund their care have access to the range of intermediate care services such as Crisis Support and Reablement, and to the short term fully funded 'discharge to assess' services in operation.

Last year, in the continuing Covid-19 response and to further support the capacity across the care market, we extended the relaxation of Direct Payment rules for a further 6 months enabling family members to take up this role.

Carers

Unpaid carers make up a vital part of the support networks for people who need care, with many unpaid carers being the sole carer for their loved ones.

There is a range of information available to carers both on the Lancashire County Council website and through Carers Centres. Where unpaid carers are approaching Adult Social Care for support in their caring role, specific carers assessments are undertaken by local Carers Centres and where required formal support is provided to the cared for person.

Informal carers are encouraged when having a carers assessment to put in place contingency plans to ensure should they unexpectedly fall ill or require an admission to hospital, plans are in place to support the cared for person. This includes the Peace of Mind for Carers scheme which includes access to urgent formal support if needed.

Through the pandemic, where cared for people have been admitted to hospital, the restrictions on visiting have meant many informal carers have been less involved in discharge planning than they would want to be. Using some temporary COMF (Contain Outbreak Management Fund) funding, we currently have Carers Service workers co-located with the ICAT and CATCH teams to identify and provide increased support to informal carers and improve their engagement in the discharge process. Linked to this, the Hospital Discharge Home Recovery service is used to support carers where they want to provide support to a friend or relative on discharge from hospital but there are challenges to them being enabled to do so. Both services improve the timeliness of hospital discharge and support peoples' ability to return directly home.

Workforce

We know that because of the experience and consequences of the pandemic and the ongoing sustained pressures, we have a social care workforce that is fatigued and experiencing some significant recruitment and retention challenges. Coupled with increasing demand for social care assessments and for care and support, the wellbeing of the workforce is a primary focus.

Lancashire County Council have in place a range of measures to support the health and wellbeing of the Adult Social Care workforce. The Council's Employee Assistance Programme has now launched and is accessible to all staff for support with a range of wellbeing issues. Keeping physically and mentally well is a key priority. Information, help, and advice is available on the intranet via dedicated coronavirus and staff wellbeing pages and regularly updated, and for staff who do not have access to the intranet, this information is also available on the staff section of the LCC website. Staff are supported by their team managers and 1:1 supervisions have a focus on wellbeing.

Business continuity plans are in place across all teams to mitigate in the event of issues such as increased staff absences across winter.

In supporting people who need social care assessments, 7-day working is in place across several teams working around hospital discharge and avoidance, plus the Mental Health AMHP team operating a 24/7 service. Outside of core working hours, the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) responds to urgent situations.

The Lancashire & South Cumbria Resilience Hub remains in place, which is a support resource for all public sector workers, care staff and volunteers who are feeling the psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and their families. More information on the Hub is available via <https://lscresiliencehub.nhs.uk/>

To maintain sufficient Adult Social Care workforce capacity across the most pressured part of the year, annual leave is restricted across December and January to ensure 80% of the workforce is in work, with a minimum of 60% in work in-between Christmas and the New Year. The named ICAT, CATCH and Care Navigation staff rostered to work across the Christmas and New Year period to support the hospitals are shared within each Acute footprint partnership. The response to hospital discharge and admission avoidance across the holiday period continues to be a 7-day service, except for Christmas Day where emergencies are covered by EDT.

Care providers also have business continuity plans in place that contain actions to be taken in respect of winter challenges such as inclement weather alongside many other actions taken in the continued response to living with Covid-19.

9. Prisons

There are 5 male prisons within Lancashire, with varying degrees of social care demand. Winter resilience planning has taken place by the two health and social care providers who are contracted to deliver support across the Prisons, to ensure that they have contingency plans in place to meet unexpected challenges.

Measures are in place to ensure that the men receive essential social care assessments and support even when tighter restrictions are in place as a Covid-19 prevention or outbreak response.

Adult Social Care are working closely with Prison Governors to ensure the delivery of social care to the men in custody mirrors as closely as possible the care and support they would expect to receive in the community.

A 'Buddy' scheme is now in operation as a shared programme between the Prisons and Adult Social Care locally and the national organisation RECOOP, training a small number of prisoners to deliver some defined low level support, which enables those men receiving it to have greater levels of independence, wellbeing and emotional support.

10. Public Health

Public Health have a primary focus on the health and wellbeing of all residents of Lancashire. There are many schemes and services that benefit people through the winter period, including: -

Affordable warmth

Lancashire County Council works in partnership with the District Councils to secure national Energy Company Obligation and other external funding through the [Cosy Homes in Lancashire](#) (CHiL) scheme for domestic energy efficiency measures. These include insulation, external door and window upgrades, heating measures and renewable energy technologies. CHiL can also offer a home visit that looks at the property, heating type and state of repair, energy usage and can signpost to support with fuel debt, fuel bills, switching energy supplier etc. CHiL projects target those households living in fuel poverty and at greatest risk of their health being affected by having a cold home, particularly those people recently leaving hospital, but also provides an offer of support to all households.

Lancashire County Council has launched a new scheme to help residents across Lancashire to live in warmer homes. The Affordable Warmth Lancashire fund is being distributed across the District Councils in Lancashire, who will allocate the funding to assist residents on low incomes and those who are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home. District councils will work with vulnerable residents to apply appropriate measures, that will improve the insulation and heating systems within people's homes.

Help with Essential Household Items

Help with essential furniture items and white goods is available for people on a low income needing help to maintain or set up a home. Applications to the [scheme](#) are made by an approved referral organisation via Tel:0800 246 5740.

To support Lancashire residents with fuel payments the Council works with the Energy Debt Team based at Citizens Advice Preston (who cover all Lancashire districts for this service) to provide discretionary awards for fuel tops ups as part of a package of wider advice and support provided by experienced energy debt advisors. More information on this can be accessed via email energysupport@prestoncitizensadvice.org.uk .

Welfare Rights

The Welfare Rights Service (WRS) provides comprehensive and independent advice and assistance to Lancashire residents of working age with complex benefit issues, such as appealing decisions and pursuing legal remedies to unfair treatment affecting benefit

entitlement. Customers can access the service by referral from our referral partners i.e. any Lancashire County Council service, other community services such as Citizens Advice, district councils, MPs, specialist nurses, mental health services and other community service and organisations.

The WRS provides advice and support to people over pension age with any benefit issue, so whether it's checking to see if there is anything that can be claimed to top-up pensions, or benefits that will help older people to remain living independently such as Attendance Allowance, or Council Tax discounts, we can help. People over pension age can ring the helpline on 01772 533321 to speak with an adviser or to leave a message when staff are not available, and they will receive a call back.

Further information on benefits, how to access the service, and benefits training for professionals can be found at <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/benefits-and-financial-help>.

11. Communications Arrangements

Winter

Lancashire County Council has a dedicated 'Winter' page on the website delivering advice to residents such as how to keep warm and well plus information regarding travel, gritting and weather forecasts. Links are provided to partner sites including advice from the NHS and Lancashire Fire and Rescue.

Helpful advice is provided on the site regarding how to prepare for inclement weather and advice around 'choosing well' in relation to accessing health services and not increasing unnecessary pressure on GP surgeries and Hospitals. Residents are encouraged to take up the flu jab, particularly if they are entitled to a free vaccination, and to encourage older or vulnerable friends, family, and neighbours to do the same. Eligible people are also encouraged to take up the COVID-19 vaccine to continue to protect themselves.

The Lancashire County Council Winter site will continue to be updated with relevant information and advice throughout the winter period. During bad weather social media and press releases are used to remind people to take care and encourage neighbours to visit those who may be vulnerable living nearby. Key stakeholders are updated about the situation and any effects on service delivery.

Intermediate Care Capacity

Capacity and usage information regarding intermediate care services is circulated daily to key staff across partner agencies via the Lancashire County Council Care Navigation service. This gives critical information to help good decision making in supporting people to access the right services for their needs.

Covid-19

LCC has dedicated Covid-19 advice and information on the website, including the latest figures, health and wellbeing advice and where to access support, and also a myth-busting section to promote accurate information and help people make informed decisions.

Appendix A – Table of Additional Service Capacity

Item	Detail
Continuation of services	continuation of increased service and capacity levels include staffing, crisis, AgeUk additionality
Additional Crisis (Home First, Crisis, Crisis Plus) for 2022/23.	Crisis/Home First: approximately 30 additional people per week depending on individual need Crisis Plus: approx. 2-3 additional people per week assuming up to 24hr support at home for up to 5 days. Additional hours come on-line incrementally at various points across the next 4 months
Additional crisis	Crisis 'contingency buffer' (available if recruitment levels exceed line above and demand shows it's still required)
Reablement	Up to a further 16 people per week (dependent on provider capacity)
Homecare scheme – priority packages	Support timely take-up of care packages from crisis/Reablement across Dec/Jan (approx. 10 week period that is the most pressured)
Assistive Tech	30 Tunstall Go's for each ICAT and CATCH
Hospital Discharge Home Recovery Scheme	Allocation to support escalated demand
Residential Rehab Reablement Outreach	Test the concept in 2 units of Residential Rehab staff continuing the reabling support into the person's home both pre and post discharge. Additional staff of 2 G6 Managers and 4 G3 care staff working across 2 shifts over 7 days required to test the concept in up to 2 units
Residential Rehab – increase higher dependency numbers Meadowfield	Rationalise as far as possible the beds at Meadowfield and enhance the staffing numbers to enable more people with higher dependency needs to access the unit at any one time across winter. Additional 13 G3 care staff hours per day required to deliver this.
Residential Rehab – support admissions across 7 days	Bolster staffing and management in 4 of the residential rehab units to reduce the pressures in management teams and avoid delays in support planning which impact on timely admissions. Additional G4 senior care assistant 5 hrs per day, 7 days a week across 4 units required to deliver this.
Additional senior manager capacity	G12 for 7 months across winter to meet the demands of escalation and provide critical resilience and service support



Acute	
Additional Team Manager Acute	G10 for 12 months to support the management of resilience through winter and transformation
Additional Staff - Care Nav	Additional 4 G5 care navigation posts in the residential care finding service which supports Hospital Discharge required for 7 months to bolster winter resilience and meet surge demands
Total Costs	£5,106,812

