

BCUHB response to the Scrutiny Investigation Report: Supporting the Disabled People of Gwynedd (Wheelchair Service)

BCUHB welcome the opportunity to respond to the recommendations of the investigation by the Care scrutiny committee. Unfortunately as the full report has only recently been made available for consideration we are unable at this time to make any detailed observations on its contents, but will commit to review the full report, along with our commissioners WHSSC and our service teams. We welcome the acknowledgment within the report of our willingness to engage throughout the period of investigation and will endeavour to use the findings within it to continue to improve service delivery for all users.

Response to Recommendations:

Recommendation 1

That the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing refers this report for the attention of the North Wales Community Health Council, and ask them to consider the need to hold a national review of the suitability of the wheelchair provision from the perspective of the service users.

BCUHB response

We welcome to involvement of the Community Health Council in reviewing the service and providing their input to support continual improvement of services provided for the residents of Wales. In relation to the suitability of wheelchair provision in Wales, there are several aspects that could be explored, some of these BCUHB can influence, such as looking at a variety of ways in which the views of service users are gathered. Others, such as what is on the wheelchair framework and the approach to providing wheelchairs in Wales are not a decision the Health Board make, as they are made at an All Wales level through WHSSC and the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 2

That the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing refers this report for the attention of the Minister for Health and Social Services at Welsh Government.

BCUHB response

BCUHB would ask that as part of this submission the original report provided to the scrutiny committee by the Posture and Mobility service be provided alongside their report.

Recommendation 3

That the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) publishes its annual report on the performance on the Posture and Mobility Service, in accordance with its policy, so that it can be scrutinised publicly.

BCUHB response

BCUHB acknowledges that this is a matter for WHSSC to provide the information

Recommendation 4

That the Posture and Mobility Service (PAMS) researches the possibility of having an electronic form or referral system that everyone involved with the referral process can follow. If this is not possible, a communication system should be agreed which ensures that the PAMS immediately informs the referee that the referral has been received, and the expected timetable.

BCUHB response

The Electronic referral forms has been raised between the Services in Wales and development is underway to address this. The Posture and Mobility service will also explore the options for improving the communication process with service users upon receipt of a referral and the next steps.

Recommendation 5

That the Posture and Mobility Service continues to work with other organisations (e.g. GPs, local nurses, occupational therapists in the community) in order to share information about an individual's needs assessments for a wheelchair. This should avoid duplication and the need to hold separate reviews for the provision of other equipment, e.g. shower chairs.

BCUHB response

As acknowledged within the report and shortly after the original scrutiny committee meeting in January 2019, meetings have been set up with the local social services Occupational Therapy team. This relationship will be one that continues to be in place to ensure that joint working forms a key part of the process for patients when assessing their social needs and their wheelchair needs, so that the any adjustments required are identified early and efficiently.

Recommendation 6

That the Posture and Mobility Service and Gwynedd Council (and other Councils if they so wish) continue to collaborate in order to attempt to overcome the existing barrier of having separate assessments for the needs of the individual that requires a wheelchair, and the need for adjustments to the individual's home.

BCUHB response

See response above

Recommendation 7

The outcomes of the new scheme that is being trialled in south Wales to train some specialist staff in the community in order to hold the Level 2 assessments (specialist or powered wheelchairs) should be considered. If successful, consideration should be given to rolling it out nationally.

BCUHB response

The Posture and Mobility service in BCUHB do work closely with their colleagues in South Wales and will liaise with South Wales regarding this trial and the outcomes and next steps associated with it, with a view to adopt/adapt when necessary for local implementation.

Recommendation 8

In line with the principles of the Community Clusters (health and social care workers collaborate on a local level), information regarding which staff from which organisations are trained to hold Level 1 and 2 assessments should be shared locally amongst all organisations that support individuals in wheelchairs, in order to speed up the referral process for the benefit of the service user.

BCUHB response

The Posture and Mobility service will work with Social Services colleagues to identify training needs and support that training where required. In terms of sharing information about training there will be GDPR considerations and this will be factored into the training provision and training logs.

Recommendation 9

Gwynedd Council to keep an eye on the Pressure Mapping scheme that is being trialled in the Wrexham area in order to see whether it is a success, and extending its provision in Gwynedd.

BCUHB response

Pressure mapping is used by Posture and Mobility for those service users where postural needs require specific assessment and provision. This is the case for all areas of BCUHB and has been in place for some time.

Recommendation 10

Consideration should be given to training local nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, carers, etc. to monitor the use of specialist chairs and equipment in order to attempt to anticipate problems with the equipment, or to identify whether there is a need to adjust it to respond to the needs of the individual, and promptly inform the Posture and Mobility Service of any needs promptly.

BCUHB response

As outlined above, relevant training will be provided to partners to support the on-going management of service users who require a wheelchair.

There are occasions when faults occur with the wheelchairs and the service is continually reviewing processes to manage this. One relative recent addition to that support is an app that links to a service users mobile phone and can detect certain specific faults/issues with a wheelchair. This information can then be relayed to the Ross Care team who can then identify what is required, improving the “first fix” rates through identify the specific issue. This means that advice can be given over the phone (in some instances) and in others the technicians can identify what they need to take out (i.e. equipment) on their visit to fix the issue promptly. On-going review of the key performance indicators for this will be reviewed as part of the contract review process.

Recommendation 11

Local nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, carers, etc. should inform the PMS promptly if they are aware of defective chairs or equipment not being used anymore, so that they can be collected and reused by others in need.

BCUHB response

The Posture and Mobility service would welcome this support

Recommendation 12

As training is already available to carers on the use of wheelchairs, this should be promoted and maximised.

BCUHB response

The Posture and Mobility service continually look at ways to promote the service and ways to engage with service users to develop the service.

BCUHB Summary

There are some points of correction that need to be raised in relation to the content of the report, which are outlined below. If these could be reflected in the final version that would be very much appreciated.

6.15 Correction: there are approximately 66 various models of wheelchair available to the service for Adults and Children.

7.45 The statement in point 7.45: *“The second-hand experience of the Councils' staff, where adults are assessed and then receive a wheelchair, demonstrate that there is quite a high level of dissatisfaction about the service.”*

BCUHB do not feel that this provides a balanced reflection of the service, given that only five people were consulted for feedback as part of the evidence gathering for the report. BCUHB feel that the statement should be amended along the following lines:

*The second-hand experience of the Councils' staff, where adults are assessed and then receive a wheelchair, demonstrate that there is **some** level of dissatisfaction about the service.”*

The BCUHB Posture and Mobility service would like to thank Gwynedd Council for producing this report and highlighting some area that the service can look to improve upon.

There have been a few other areas of improvement since the scrutiny committee meeting in January 2019 that are worthy of a mention here, not least the performance level of the service. As highlighted in the Gwynedd report, WHSSC sets a target that 90% of all adults and children are assessed and receive their wheelchair within 26 weeks. Currently (as of July 2019) the adult service is sitting at 92% and children is at 100%. This is a significant improvement on the adult performance, which was at 81% at the time of the scrutiny committee meeting. Weekly meetings are in place to review all service users who are

currently above 26 weeks, to identify what measures need to take place to improve this position further.

In addition, service user feedback information gathered from service users over the last 6 months have included the following comments:

February 2019

STAFF VERY POLITE AND HELPFUL. NOTHING WAS TOO MUCH TROUBLE. INCLUSIVE AND THE EVIDENCE OF THINKING OF THE BENEFITS TO BE ACHIEVED BY THE EQUIPMENT.

What could be improved?

HARD TO IMAGINE. EXCELLENT SERVICE.

March 2019

What was good about the service?

EVERYTHING WAS EXPLAINED AND IT WAS A VERY PLEASANT EXPERIENCE.

April 2019

What was good about the service?

CONSISTENCY. EXCELLENT STAFF.

MY NEEDS ARE DEALT WITH.

Informative. THE STAFF LISTENED.

KIND STAFF LISTEN TO ME.

EXPLAINED EVERYTHING IN DETAIL, LISTENED TO MY NEEDS.

EFFICIENT AND POLITE SERVICE.

What could be improved?

MORE STAFF FOR SHORTED WAITING TIMES.

August 2019

What was good about the service?

"They listened to what we had to say, were very understanding of our needs."

The Posture and Mobility service will continue to review a variety of methods of capturing service user feedback. The service does response promptly to formal concerns and On the Spot concerns. The service does acknowledge that not all informal concerns/complaints may reach the department but it will look at ways of making this easier for service users as well as improving some of the lines of communication that the report highlighted.