



Belfast Trust and Primary Care Forum welcome you to our third edition of the Links newsletter. We have now been living with the pandemic for over a year now and we, as an entire system, are making encouraging progress with the rollout of the vaccination however it is clear that the virus will remain with us for the foreseeable future.

This bulletin provides progress on the vaccination programme to date - and for people who are homeless, for people who are refugees and asylum seekers and for people with disabilities. It also provides a link to the Trust's Rebuild Plan for April to June 2021 and some presentations which were delivered at the recent Trust and Primary Care Older People's workshop which will hopefully be of interest. Also there is information on a new website launched by the Royal ED Unit for young people. We will share this amongst

GP colleagues and on GPNI website to share access to the information in our newsletter.

Please tell us what would you like to see featured in the next quarterly bulletin? Please contact angela.young@belfasttrust.hscni.net with any feedback on how we can make this more informative or beneficial to you.

Covid-19 Vaccination update

Belfast Trust reached the remarkable milestone of having administered 100,000 vaccinations on Wednesday 7th April 2021. This total includes older people, carers, HSC workers, people with learning disabilities, the CEV (Clinically Extremely Vulnerable), people with mental ill health, and care home residents.

As regards people who are homeless, the Trust has vaccinated 518 people to date, based in Hostels. This included hostel staff and was recorded on the same vaccination system that is being used regionally, so the information of who has been vaccinated is available as many of these service users have GPs. It is the intention of the Belfast Inclusion Health Service to offer monthly vaccination clinics to try to ensure that this transient population can have timely access to the vaccine.

People who are refugees and asylum seekers or those without status have the right to access the Covid vaccine – immigration status or nationality have **no** impact on eligibility.

It is important that people with disabilities can access the Covid vaccination centres – this [advice](#) may be useful to help optimise accessibility. Some recent [advice](#) from the Law Society NI on Enduring Power of Attorney and Covid Vaccination may be of interest.

BHSCT Rebuild Plan

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on health and social care provision across the Trust when many services had to suspend or reduce normal service including many elective procedures. Our Rebuild Plan for April to June 2021 outlines how we will incrementally increase levels of service provision during this quarter and is supported by an activity plan outlining the anticipated increasing levels of activity across the Trust. The draft plan was shared with our Senior Leadership Group, Commissioners,

GP partners and with Trade Unions for comment before being submitted to the Department of Health for approval. The final [plan](#) is linked for ease of reference.



Clinical Communication Gateways

During our forum meetings, it has been highlighted time and time again that it is vital that changes on CCG or advice requests is communicated in a timely fashion between the Trust and Primary Care. Please find attached some recent [developments](#) and information across a range of specialities.

Joint Primary Care and Trust Older People's workshops

Two Primary Care & Trust workshops on improving care for frail older people in Care Homes & for Step-up care have been held (December & February) to support our joint work on delivering effective patient pathways between care homes and secondary care in light of the recent No More Silos initiative by DoH. This is in recognition of the growing demographic pressure that the number of frail older people presents and the need to work together to improve experience.

Dr Marie-Louise Thornton summarised the overall aim as '**delivering an integrated, responsive, accessible & robust service**' for our frail older people. [Presentation](#) attached. The workshops focused on the role and development needs of the following services and pathways:

- Extension of ACAH service (Hospital at Home)
- The development of alternative pathways if ACAH is not appropriate. Existing arrangements and proposals for change were raised for the following services:
 - Frailty Hub access & Direct Admission to care beds
 - Palliative care access
 - Mental Health for older people access
 - Heart failure service access
 - Respiratory service access
 - Tissue viability, Swallowing issues, access to Physiotherapy
 - All supported by Integrated communication, with a Directory of pathways (to be shared shortly).

A personal experience of service user and carer feedback was given by Anne O'Reilly. She highlighted how an individual in the last year of life can experience multiple inpatient episodes on different sites and how this can feel as if existing practice and professional issues take priority over the individual's needs. It is important that people feel they have shared decision-making and that professionals record what is discussed with the individual and the decisions taken together.

Input from a number of **care home managers** in workshop 1 was very valuable and highlighted support for single GP Practice alignment to individual care homes where possible and the opportunities to address the current challenges to ensuring good communication across the multidisciplinary team. Evidence of the benefits of multi-disciplinary teams wrapped around care homes is in **reduced hospital admissions, reduced ambulance use, reduction in GP OOH service & positive user feedback.**

Dr Barbara English, the Trust's Clinical Director for Psychiatry of Old Age provided detail on the [Current Pathway for Mental Health Response for Older People in Belfast](#). She outlined that the Community Mental Health Service includes: Consultant led Psychiatry of Old Age (POA) medical team, Community Multi-Professional Mental Health Team for Older People (CMHTOP) and the Specialist Dementia Outreach Team. Of note, the Single Point of Referral is the one point of entry into the service, accessible (Monday to Friday in hours) via CCG (Mental Health Age 65+ & Specialist Dementia Service), Phone: 028 9504 2700 (Emergency) or via email: SinglePointMHSOP@belfasttrust.hscni.net.

Chaired by Grainne Bonnar, Gillian Traub & Brian Armstrong, the teams involved in these workshops have committed to explore these opportunities further in shared primary and secondary care discussions. Agreed revised proposals for No More Silos are to be submitted by 23 April 2021.



The Royal Victoria Hospital Emergency Department have launched a new website to help support young people with a wide range of issues they might be experiencing, including mental health, drugs and alcohol, problems at home and bullying. It is hoped that the website will offer young people the options of accessing support services in their home and community before they reach a crisis point. The site launched in March 2021 and is already very successful. Watch the [video](#) to find out more about how the website was developed and how it hopes to help. You can access the website at: www.youngpeopleni.org.