



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

8 July 2021

Report of the Director of Public Health

SECTION 75 UPDATE REPORT

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with:
- 1.2 An update in relation to the Strategic Governance's Boards oversight of the Section 75 Partnership Agreement since the Covid-19 pandemic. This report will also provide an overview of services delivered as part of the Section 75 including the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service as well as the Early Help delivery in Children's Centre's.
- 1.3 An overview in relation to the changes to vision and hearing screening, and the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the ability to promote these changes. The report also seeks the support of the Health and Wellbeing Board in relation to communicating the changes for school entry vision and hearing screening across the county.

2. Information and Analysis

Strategic Governance Board Update

- 2.1 The Strategic Governance Board was established as part of the governance arrangements for the Section 75 Partnership Agreement between Derbyshire County Council Public Health, Children's Services and Derbyshire Community Health Services (DCHS). This group is

responsible for leading the effective planning, delivery and monitoring of the partnership approach and the identified priorities and programmes to be delivered within the Section 75 agreement. The Strategic Partnership Board has been in place since 2018 and is chaired by the Director of Public Health and contains representation from Public Health, Children's Services, Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Derbyshire Community Health Services (DCHS).

- 2.2 The Strategic Governance Board sits under the Health and Wellbeing Board and the terms of reference stipulate that the group would meet every six to eight weeks to provide oversight on the Section 75 agreement. However, the Covid-19 pandemic and the pressures within the organisations represented within the Strategic Governance Board resulted in resources being prioritised towards the Covid-19 response and recovery. As a result, the Strategic Governance Board did not meet between April 2020 and March 2021.
- 2.3 The Public Health Commissioning Team have continued to have regular contact with the services delivered as part of the Section 75 Partnership Agreement to provide assurance in relation to service delivery.
- 2.4 The Strategic Governance Group was re-established in March 2021 with the first meeting held on 25 March 2021. A subsequent meeting was held on 18 June 2021 and there is now a full commitment for the Strategic Governance Board to meet regularly moving forward. The main issue discussed within the Strategic Governance Board since its recommencement in March 2021 is in relation to vision and hearing screening.
- 2.5 The model for vision and hearing screening at school entry in Derbyshire changed when the Section 75 Partnership Agreement commenced on 1 October 2019. Previously the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service were responsible for the vision and hearing screening of all Reception aged children. The final year whereby vision and hearing screening was undertaken in schools was the 2019-20 academic year.
- 2.6 Following this the plan was to move from a screening model to a signposting model, encouraging parent/carers to access High Street Opticians to obtain a free NHS eye test. This is a model that has been adopted by a significant number of other local authority areas.
- 2.7 The benefits of adopting this new signposting model include:

- A reduction in the number of false positive tests; This was an issue within the previous vision screening model, because significant numbers of children were being referred into Secondary Care that on further examination did not have an issue with vision.
- A reduction in waiting time for appointments into Secondary Care; due to the high number of referrals into Secondary Care as a result of the vision screening at school entry (many of which were not required), created large waiting lists with some children having to wait up to 52 weeks from the point of referral to having an initial appointment in Secondary Care.
- Enable High Street Opticians to detect vision problems that may not be picked up as part of the vision screening in schools; According to a 2013 external review by the National Screening Committee, school entry screening is primarily undertaken to detect amblyopia. However, an examination at the High Street Opticians would enable the detection of other conditions that could affect children including: childhood Cataracts, Strabismus, Myopia, Hyperopia, Astigmatism, Colour Vision Deficiency (Colour Blindness). Many children may not show signs and symptoms of some of these conditions.

- 2.8 The decision to stop the delivery of hearing screening was taken following a detailed review of the evidence on the effectiveness and impact of the screening programme. This evidence review took in to account the changes in recent years due to the introduction of the national new-born and early years hearing screening programme. The changes were also informed by engagement and consultation as detailed in paragraph 2.10.
- 2.9 Following the implementation of universal new-born hearing screening, school entry hearing screening across Derbyshire would now only be expected to identify between 1 to 4 children per year with a permanent hearing impairment and would find a higher proportion of false positive results, leading to increased and unnecessary demand on NHS services and unnecessary worry for parents. An appraisal from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (2016) around the accuracy and cost-effectiveness of school entry hearing screening programmes has concluded that school entry screening is unlikely to detect further cases with hearing impairment and is unlikely to represent good value for money. Hearing is also assessed earlier in a child's development by health visitors as part of the Healthy Child Programme development reviews at both one and two years old.
- 2.10 A public engagement exercise was undertaken during 2019 on the proposals to end vision and hearing screening prior to the approval of the decision to end vision and hearing screening in schools. Many other

Local Authorities have adopted a similar approach to that being delivered in Derbyshire.

- 2.11 The final year vision and hearing was due to take place in schools was the 2019-20 academic year. The plan was to undertake a publicity campaign during the spring/summer of 2020 in order to:
- Promote the new signposting model for eye examinations to encourage the parent/carers of young people to take their children for a free NHS eye test at any High Street Optician at school entry and to have regular check-ups thereafter
 - Inform the public and key stakeholders as to the changes to hearing screening in Derbyshire and advise parent/carers to take children to the G.P if they have any concerns regarding their child's hearing
- 2.12 There were also plans to commence a procurement during 2020 to fund an external organisation with the relevant expertise to undertake a social marketing campaign on the changes to vision and hearing screening in Derbyshire, as well as understand the messages that some of the most targeted groups of people in Derbyshire would be receptive to in relation to encouraging parent/carers to take children and young people to the High Street Opticians on a regular basis, or to the G.P if they have any concerns in relation their child's hearing.
- 2.13 However, the Covid-19 Pandemic and the impacts this has had on capacity within High Street Opticians has meant that Public Health in partnership with key stakeholders have not been able to undertake this publicity campaign to promote the new model for vision and hearing screening. This reduced capacity within High Street Opticians coupled with the prioritisation of shifting Public Health resources to the Covid-19 response, meant that the procurement to undertake the social marketing campaign was unable to take place during the 2020-21 financial year.
- 2.14 As a result, there is a low awareness in Derbyshire in regard to the changes in vision and hearing screening. Over the past 12 months there have been missed opportunities to make the parent/carers of children and young people in Derbyshire aware of the changes to vision and hearing screening, and the importance of taking children for regular check-ups at the High Street Opticians or to visit the G.P if they have concerns about their child's hearing.
- 2.15 Vision screening was added to the Public Health risk register in February 2021. In March 2021 the Strategic Governance Board approved the approach of Public Health exploring the feasibility of implementing a temporary one year vision screening catch up

programme, to be delivered by community optometrists in schools to the current Reception year cohort during the 2021-22 academic year when they are in Year 1. However, further discussions between members of the Local Optical Committee as well as with Head of Orthoptics at Royal Derby Hospital and Chesterfield Royal Hospital, have come to the conclusion that this is not a viable option with the infrastructure currently in place, and the timelines required in order to implement such an approach. Therefore, Public Health will prioritise the procurement for a social marketing campaign over the upcoming weeks.

- 2.16 This Social Marketing campaign will take a system wide approach to the promotion of vision and hearing screening by:
- Consulting with targeted groups to understand the messages and channels of communication certain groups will be more receptive to
 - Mapping High Street optician availability across Derbyshire to inform the Strategic Governance Board of areas where they may be additional barriers to accessibility to High Street opticians and enable the Board to plan accordingly
 - Identifying key stakeholders such as social care staff, schools and other health professionals working with families of young children and young people themselves, and the messages they can communicate with parent/carers as well as young people to promote high uptake of children and young people obtaining a free NHS eye test

This report seeks the support from the Health and Wellbeing Board partners to developing and delivering a social marketing campaign, which aims to encourage a high uptake of parent/carers taking their children for regular eye tests at the High Street opticians in Derbyshire, as well as promote the key messages around hearing.

2.1 0-9 Public Health Nursing Service Update

Following the Covid-19 outbreak the National guidance 'Covid-19 Prioritisation within Community Health Services', which was published on 1st April 2020, recommended that for 0-5 (Health Visiting) services should stop all service delivery except:

- Antenatal contact
- New Birth Visit
- Visits for those identified as vulnerable or have a clinical need
- Safeguarding work

The guidance around the 5-19 (School Nursing) service at the time was to stop all service delivery except:

- Phone and text service
- Safeguarding work
- Specialist School Nursing

As a result, the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service stopped all elements of service delivery except for those workstreams prioritised within the national guidance. A safeguarding workstream was set up consisting of a face-to-face and non-face-to-face delivery team to ensure sufficient capacity could be placed towards the safeguarding workstream. Since June 2020 normal service delivery has been phased back in line with national guidance. However, a significant level of resources has had to be put into completing a catch-up exercise for families who missed Healthy Child Programme contacts as well as other work that was not prioritised in line with the national guidance. The service has also had to absorb rising levels of needs in areas such as safeguarding, domestic violence and mental health since the Covid-19 outbreak.

2.2 Early Help Delivery within Children's Centre's

Part of the Section 75 Partnership Agreement involves Public Health investment into the early help offer within Children's Centre's. This included:

- The delivery of parent education group programmes
- The delivery of home learning programmes
- UNICEF Baby friendly accreditation
- Children's Centre Health Champions

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the delivery of Early Help services within Children's Centres. Service delivery has been maintained during the pandemic, but this has had to be delivered virtually. The Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place for the delivery of Early Help into Children's Centre's stipulates that The Strategic Governance Board should review the SLA after 18 months and on an annual basis thereafter. At the last meeting on 18 June 2021 the Strategic Governance Board gave approval for a working group to review the SLA in place with Children's Services for the delivery of Early Help into Children's Centre's as part of the section 75 Partnership Agreement, in order to ensure that the service is fit for purpose moving forward in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. Implications

3.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

4. Consultation

4.1 Both online and face-to-face public consultation was undertaken during 2019 on the proposed changes to vision and hearing screening. Between April and May 2019 an online survey was completed by 228 people. Face-to-face consultation was also carried out within Children's Centre's with parent/carers of young children between May and July 2019. The face-to-face consultation interviewed 217 people in total with all respondents having at least one child under the age of 7.

5. Background Papers

Cabinet Report 10 October 2019 - Achieving Public Health 0-19 Outcomes – Section 75 Agreement between Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust

Cabinet Report 28 February 2019 Public Health Nursing and Achieving Population Health and Wellbeing Outcomes in 0-19 Year Olds across Derbyshire through the Development of a Section 75 Agreement

Cabinet Report 26 July 2018 A New Approach to Public Health Nursing and Achieving Population Health and Wellbeing Outcomes in 0-19 Year Olds across Derbyshire

6. Recommendation(s)

That the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- a. Notes the update in relation to the Strategic Governance's Boards oversight of the Section 75 Partnership Agreement since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, including the overview of services delivered as part of the Section 75 including the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service and the Early Help delivery in Children's Centre's.
- b. Notes the changes to vision and hearing screening, and the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the ability to promote these changes.
- c. Supports the communication of the changes to vision and hearing screening for school age children across the county.

7. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

There is a low awareness in Derbyshire of the changes in vision and hearing screening. Over the past 12 months there have been missed opportunities to make the parent/carers of children and young people in Derbyshire aware of

the changes to vision and hearing screening, and the importance of taking children for regular check-ups at the High Street Opticians or to visit the G.P if they have concerns about their child's hearing.7.2

Report Author: Jamie Dix

Contact details: Jamie.dix@derbyshire.gov.uk