

## **Full Policy Briefing - NHS Long Term Plan**

### **January 2019**

#### **Context**

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On 7 January 2019 the NHS published its 'Long Term Plan' setting out its strategic approach and priorities for the next ten years. The NHS Long Term Plan is supported by the new NHS five-year funding settlement agreed in June 2018, increasing funding by £20.5 billion per year (in real terms) by 2023/24, an average rise of 3.4% per year.

The NHS Long Term Plan outlines how the NHS plans to become 'fit for the future', modernising services and getting the best value for money for patients. The strategic approach can be characterised along three broad themes: increased integration of services; a focus on prevention; and an awareness of the social, cultural and economic factors that affect health outcomes – so-called 'wider determinants of health'.

#### **Key Proposals**

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The NHS Long Term Plan sets out a number of actions and goals across five areas for improvement. The key points, as relating to Birmingham City Council, include:

##### **1. A new service model**

- A new service model for the NHS with more coordinated and joined-up services, and a more personalised approach to care.
- Commitment to increase investment in primary and community care services as a share of NHS spend – worth at least an extra £4.5 billion per year by 2023/24.
- The creation of fully integrated community-based healthcare, with community multidisciplinary teams aligned with new primary care networks of GP practices.
- By 2023/24, upgraded NHS support to all care home residents who would benefit.
- Achieve and maintain a Delayed Transfer of Care (DToc) figure of 4,000 or less delays, and then reduce further over the next five years.
- Expansion of social prescribing, with over 1,000 trained social prescribing link workers in place by the end of 2020/21.
- Acceleration of the adoption of Personal Health Budgets (PHBs) including people receiving mental health services, with a learning disability, receiving social care support, and end of life care.
- Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) across the whole country by April 2021, growing out of current Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs).
- A new ICS accountability and performance framework to provide a consistent set of performance measures, including a new 'integration index' measuring the extent that local health and social care partners are delivering joined-up care.
- Development of new approaches to combining health and social care budgets where appropriate, to be set out in the upcoming Green Paper on adult social care.
- A review of the Better Care Fund (BCF) funding mechanism, to be completed in early 2019.

## **2. Prevention and health inequalities**

- A renewed and expanded NHS prevention programme, with recognition of the health impacts of socioeconomic inequality.
- NHS and national government to reconsider the role of NHS in commissioning certain public health services including health visitors and school nurses.
- A range of new interventions/services to tackle some of the leading factors affecting health: smoking, obesity, alcohol and drug use, and air pollution.
- NHS England to target a higher share of funding towards geographies with high health inequalities, worth over £1billion by 2023/24.
- All local health systems will need to produce plans setting out how they will specifically reduce health inequalities by 2023/24 and then again by 2028/29.
- Additional investment of up to £30million on meeting needs of rough sleepers including specialist homelessness NHS mental health support.
- NHS to encourage national adoption of carers' passports.
- Investment in NHS specialist clinics to support people with serious gambling problems.

## **3. Health outcomes**

- Maternity and neonatal health – a range of actions to achieve a 50% reduction in stillbirth, maternal mortality, neonatal mortality and serious brain injury by 2025.
- Children and young people's mental health services
  - Commitment to increase proportion of NHS budget spent on CYP mental health services, including community-based services and eating disorder services.
  - Mental Health Support Teams to be rolled out to schools and colleges in around 25% of the country by the end of 2023
  - A new model of mental health services for 0-25 year olds, integrated across health, social care and education services
- Learning disability and autism
  - By 2023, national learning disability improvement standards to apply to all services funded by NHS.
  - By 2023/24, all CYP with a learning disability and/or autism to have a designated keyworker.
  - Renewed focus on enabling CYP with a learning disability and/or autism to use Personal Health Budgets (PHBs).
- Range of measures to tackle the five leading causes of premature death: cancer, heart disease and stroke, respiratory conditions, dementia, and self-harm (including suicide).
- Adult mental health services
  - Increased investment in adult mental health services, worth at least an extra £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24.
  - By 2023/24, local areas supported to redesign community mental health teams to move towards place-based, multidisciplinary services across health and social care.

- By 2020/21, 24/7 community-based mental health crisis response available for adults and older adults.
- Ending acute out of area placements by 2021.
- Reducing suicide rates to remain an NHS priority over next decade.

#### **4. Workforce development**

- A full workforce implementation plan to be published later in 2019 to address workforce challenges, including a shortage of key staff and recruitment of staff from overseas.

#### **5. Technology and digitally enabled care**

- Redesign of clinical pathways to offer 'digital first' options for patients, especially in primary care and outpatient services, to free up more time for face-to-face appointments for those patients who need them.
- Over the next five years, all patients will be able to access their GP digitally and opt for 'virtual' outpatient appointments where appropriate.
- Development of the NHS App and a range of condition-specific apps, in partnership with developers and the voluntary sector, to enable patients to manage and monitor their health at home.
- Continued expansion of digital Personal Health Records (PHRs) and Summary Care Records (SCRs) that patients and services can access online.
- Increased staff access to mobile digital services and patient/care records online.
- From April 2020, NHS organisations will no longer use fax machines.
- Increased use of health data and new technologies including artificial intelligence (AI) to identify groups of people at risk of health issues and improve outcomes.

#### **Importance to Birmingham and Key Services/Policies Affected**

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The NHS Long-Term Plan is likely to have a big impact on adult and children's social care services, especially for those working with older adults and people who need support to live independently at home.

The proposals to replace Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) with Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) by April 2021 will give local authorities such as Birmingham City Council (BCC) a much larger role in the design and delivery of health and social care services. The NHS expects local commissioners to develop streamlined, integrated commissioning processes that deliver personalised, place-based care for citizens, with an emphasis on multidisciplinary approaches to care and support. Health and social care services will draw ever closer together over the next decade, with shared budgets and financial arrangements where possible. Birmingham City Council has placed considerable importance on partnership working approaches over the last year, and thus should be in a good position to take advantage of the opportunities that the Long Term Plan provides to improve services and outcomes for people in Birmingham.

The themes laid out in the NHS Long Term Plan align closely with our own Vision and Strategy for Adult Social Care and Health, with an emphasis on delivering personalised care

and support, working in partnership with other organisations, social prescribing, and the importance of prevention and early intervention. This is strong confirmation that we are on the right track with our approach to health and social care services.

This strategy recognises the important role that local government plays in health, especially when addressing the wider determinants of health such as economic and social inequalities. However, it also states that the NHS and the Government will be considering if the NHS needs to play 'a stronger role' in the commissioning of some public health services such as sexual health services, health visitors, and school nurses. It is unclear what this means at this stage. The Local Government Association (LGA) has sent a letter to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care requesting clarification on the terms of reference for any strategic review of public health and the role of local government, to which Birmingham City Council has contributed.

### **Additional Commentary**

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The NHS Long Term Plan has received a mixed response from stakeholders and commentators, with support for its broad themes but concern that the Plan may not be realistically deliverable.

This is an ambitious and forward-thinking strategy to modernise the NHS and rethink how we deliver health and social care services. The emphasis on joined-up services, 'digital first' outpatient and primary care, and the use of new technologies such as apps, wearables and artificial intelligence (AI) will fundamentally change the way that people access and interact with healthcare services. It is particularly significant that this plan recognises the impact of wider social, cultural and economic factors on healthcare outcomes, especially for a city such as Birmingham with high levels of economic and health inequalities.

However, there are various factors that will make the Long Term Plan difficult to deliver, especially at pace. The NHS five-year funding settlement will increase funding to the NHS by £20.5 billion a year by 2023/24, however commentators such as [The Nuffield Trust](#) and [The Kings Fund](#) have doubts that this will be enough, as it is still below historic average funding increases, and below the 4% uplift some argue is required. The uncertainty posed by Brexit will also have a heavy impact on the NHS budget. The Nuffield Trust estimates that a no-deal Brexit could cost the NHS [£2.3 billion a year in additional costs](#).

Successful delivery of the Long Term Plan will also depend on solving the NHS workforce crisis. The NHS already has around 100,000 unfilled vacancies, set to rise to around [250,000 by 2030](#). Again, the uncertainty posed by Brexit will impact on staff shortages if the NHS cannot find a way to recruit and attract staff from overseas.

Finally, as we move towards integrated health and social care systems, the future of the NHS is now heavily dependent on the success of local government, including social care and public health services. The recent public health funding settlement [cut funding by £240m in real terms](#), which could pose a significant setback to the prevention approach outlined in this strategy. The Government has yet to publish its Green Paper on adult social care (first

scheduled for release in summer 2017), which will outline how they plan to fund the massive rise in demand for adult social care services. Until this is published, it is difficult to fully assess whether the new service model proposed here is realistic and deliverable.

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