

Healthcare Forum

4 July 2019, 4.30pm – 6.30pm at Brierley Hill Civic Centre

Q&A following Matthew Hartland's Presentation: Money Makes The World Go Round

Mrs Helen Codd, Engagement Manager - Dudley CCG welcomed all to the Healthcare Forum and introduced Mr Matthew Hartland – Chief Finance Officer, Dudley CCG.

Matthew delivered a presentation on 'Money Makes the World Go Round' and welcomed questions following the presentation.

Q: Does the CCG funding change yearly?

A: Yes. We are receiving a 5.3% growth on growth (yearly) funding.

Q: As a resident of Dudley, I am not happy with the £1.9m savings expected from Dudley. Who can I complain to?

A: Dudley CCG have been liaising with NHS England over the expected savings. £8.4m across the Black Country is expected to be 'reserved' with Dudley having to 'contribute' £1.9m. The CCG is mandated to make savings in order to provide balance across the region, however it is not proportionate with savings made in other CCGs. There will be no cutting services, but the CCG will be looking at the 'reserves' but by using those funds will reduce the overall CCG reserves.

Q: How will this affect patients who want treatment at hospital?

A: There will be no refusal of patient's treatment at the local hospital. The CCG finance team is removed from the clinical decision process.

Q: With regards to acute services, what are we going to do about precautionary services and always chasing our tail? As Finance Director it almost feels you have been penalised for keeping Dudley ok. With the money you now have, can you put your hand on your heart and confirm you can provide a safe service or a fit for purpose service?

A: We don't provide the services, but do have contract mechanisms with the service provider. We need to make sure that the contracts we have in place are robust as possible so we can meet our objectives and make sure they are as safe as possible. Mrs Caroline Brunt, Chief Nurse & Quality Officer 'holds' to account the local Trusts. Any quality concerns raised are brought to Caroline's attention and investigation and action is taken to resolve the issues. We can be strong and robust in the policies and procedures. If we have areas where quality isn't as good as it should be, we take action. With the funding available, a safe service can be provided for both physical and mental health services. The savings targets increases quicker than our spending plan.

Q: Four years ago there were 247 CCGs in the UK. How many of those are doing a good job; how many are under or over-spent and how it this managed?

A: In the West Midlands, we all tend to achieve our financial duties although there are problems in other areas. We intend to achieve a surplus of £1m. Hence the reason for the system-wide change of making savings to assist those areas who are struggling. For those areas experiencing deficits this could also result in changes within the local CCG, Trusts and Boards.

Q: Parity of Esteem; what percentage of the overall planned expenditure by the CCG is on mental health; and what is the projection of that going forwards and why?

A: So in terms of the international definitions, of the £516m - £45m is spent on mental health. In the Long Term Plan, we're instructed to spend on mental health 0.7% of the overall 5.3% growth the CCG receives. The disproportionate balance is left for all of the other services and one of things we have to do is fund 0.7% higher than our allocation. We put 6% growth in this year and we're planning 0.7% higher than our growth for each of the years (4-5 years) in line with national guidance.

S: Funding for mental health and staff is decreasing.

A: The Black Country Partnership and Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust are merging and part of this process will include review of funding, staffing levels and services available to the public.

Q: The Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) have seen an increase in users with mental health issues and we work well with external partners. Is the CCG working with voluntary sectors and is the public aware of the services available?

A: Yes the CCG does work closely with the voluntary sector, unfortunately some of the voluntary sectors are losing funding. The CCG provides funding in three specific areas, Children & Young People; Adults (over 18 years) and Older Adults (elderly). The CCG is in the process of commissioning a new service to assess patient with dementia and part of that is to work with the Alzheimer's Society. We have also commissioned a service in order to prevent the admission of older patients to hospital. Collaborations between the CCG and the voluntary sector continue to build.

Q: With regards to the funding for community groups; what is the current strategy and what is the current proportion of funding that goes to community groups compared to in the past? What are the proposals for the future?

A: The strategy is currently under development. The funding has not reduced and the CCG has maintained is funding. We haven't increased the funding and that is why the strategy will look into this and we recognise we probably do need to increase the funding in this area.

End of question and answer session.