

Item 5: Better Care Fund

By: Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 8 April 2016

Subject: Better Care Fund

Summary: This report invites the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the information provided by the Kent CCGs.

It provides additional background information which may prove useful to Members.

1. Introduction

- (a) The £5.3bn Better Care Fund (formerly the Integration Transformation Fund) was announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending round, to enable a transformation in integrated health and social care. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is seen as one of the most ambitious programmes across the NHS and local government. It has created a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together around people, placing their well-being as the focus of health and care services (Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government 2016).
- (b) In 2015-16, the Government committed £3.8 billion to the Better Care Fund with many local areas contributing an additional £1.5 billion, taking the total spending power of the Better Care Fund to £5.3 billion (Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government 2016).
- (c) In 2016-17, the Better Care Fund will be increased to a mandated minimum of £3.9 billion to be deployed locally on health and social care through pooled budget arrangements between local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). The local flexibility to pool more than the mandatory amount will remain. NHS England will set eight conditions, which local areas will need to meet through the planning process in order to access the funding in 2016-17. The conditions require:
 1. That a BCF Plan, covering a minimum of the pooled Fund specified in the Spending Review, should be signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board itself, and by the constituent Councils and CCGs;
 2. A demonstration of how the area will meet the national condition to maintain provision of social care services in 2016-17.
 3. Confirmation of agreement on how plans will support progress on meeting the 2020 standards for seven-day services, to prevent unnecessary non-elective admissions and support timely discharge;
 4. Better data sharing between health and social care, based on the NHS number;

Item 5: Better Care Fund

5. A joint approach to assessments and care planning and ensure that, where funding is used for integrated packages of care, there will be an accountable professional;
 6. Agreement on the consequential impact of the changes on the providers that are predicted to be substantially affected by the plans;
 7. That a proportion of the area's allocation is invested in NHS commissioned out-of-hospital services, or retained pending release as part of a local risk sharing agreement;
 8. Agreement on a local action plan to reduce delayed transfers of care (NHS England 2016).
- (d) From 2017-18, the government will make funding available to local authorities, worth £1.5 billion by 2019-20, to be included in the Better Care Fund (Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government 2016).

2. Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the report on the Better Care Fund be noted and the Kent Accountable Officers be requested to present an update to the Committee at the appropriate time.

Background Documents

Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government (2016) '*2016/17 Better Care Fund Policy Framework (08/01/2016)*', <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/better-care-fund-how-it-will-work-in-2016-to-2017>

NHS England (2016) '*Technical Guidance Annex 4: Better Care Fund Planning Requirements for 2016-17 (01/02/2016)*', <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/annex4-bcf-planning-requirements-1617.pdf>

Contact Details

Lizzy Adam
Scrutiny Research Officer
lizzy.adam@kent.gov.uk
03000 412775