

DECISION-MAKER:	HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	CONSULTATION ON WESTWOOD HOUSE SHORT BREAK SERVICE
DATE OF DECISION:	29 NOVEMBER 2012
REPORT OF:	DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INTEGRATED STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING, NHS SOUTHAMPTON
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	

BRIEF SUMMARY

This paper sets out proposals that have been developed by children’s commissioners in NHS Southampton and Southampton City Council for the PCT to de-commission short breaks from Westwood House (Solent NHS Trust) and transfer the commissioning responsibility with funding to the City Council in order that the Council can commission all short breaks from its existing range of short break providers as part of a consistent city wide service offer.

The proposals were presented to the HOSP on 15 August 2012 and approval given for a targeted consultation to be carried out by the PCT with the Southampton City service users of Westwood House. This consultation began 8 October and will officially conclude on 14 December 2012, and will be presented to the PCT board later that month for a decision. Contact has now been made with all families and so this paper provides an update of the feedback received.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To note the consultation process and the feedback received.
- (ii) To support the PCT’s recommendation to its board (subject to the final outcome of consultation being reflective of the feedback so far) that lead responsibility for the short breaks currently provided at Westwood House should transfer to Local Authority commissioned provision, supported by the development of a peripatetic nursing team to be commissioned by the PCT.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Robust pre-consultation engagement has been undertaken with service users, the messages from which informed the consultation proposal. A robust targeted consultation process has taken place with service users and others including special schools, GPs and local MPs. The majority of service users accepted the rationale for change and some welcomed the opportunity to look at alternative arrangements.
2. Social Care has statutory responsibility for short breaks and the current system of having two separate referral and assessment routes with different criteria is potentially unfair and inequitable.
3. This proposal enables the PCT to maintain provisions for existing children whilst achieving better value for money and freeing up resources to re-invest in health provision for disabled children e.g. community equipment, therapy provision, community specialist nursing.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4. Option 1 – Do Nothing (no change) - this is not recommended on the basis that Social Care has statutory responsibility for short breaks and the current system is potentially unfair and inequitable.
5. Option 2 – Transfer directly to Social Care’s current range of providers - This option would involve the Westwood children transferring directly into currently contracted social care providers. This option was rejected following the engagement exercise, given the parental feedback regarding nursing support.
6. Option 3 – Transfer to Social Care current range of providers but with a Health commissioned peripatetic nursing team to in reach into the short break setting, providing professional supervision, training and where appropriate direct nursing care. **This is the preferred option.**
7. Option 4 - Personal Budgets - This option would involve identifying a personal budget (based on level of need and market value) that could increase the choices for the families. This is likely to be an option for some families alongside the options identified above as opposed to an option it its own right.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

8. Westwood House is an NHS short break provision managed by Solent NHS Trust which provides a range of short breaks for children with complex health needs aged up to 18 years. Short breaks are provided as overnight residential care, outreach into the home or day-care. The staff team is made up of qualified nurses and health care support workers with a nurse on duty at all times when the residential unit is open.
9. Statutory responsibility for the assessment of need and the provision of short breaks for children with disabilities lies with social care. Health responsibilities relate to providing health based support that enables children to access short breaks.
10. An anomaly has developed where health have separately commissioned, as a single agency, short breaks for a small group of children at Westwood House effectively creating an alternative referral, assessment and choice of service provision to that which the majority of children with disabilities in the city access. Operating outside statutory systems creates the potential for inequity in both the ability to access resources and the level of service delivered; unnecessary duplication procedurally; and inappropriate and inefficient use of resources.
11. Southampton PCT is thus looking to transfer lead responsibility and funding for the short breaks currently provided at Westwood House to social care from April 2013 to ensure parity, equity of access and greater choice for all children needing short breaks and focus scarce resources on health priorities and responsibilities. This group of children would cease to receive their short breaks at Westwood and instead receive them from the City Council’s providers.

12. The consequence is that Westwood House may cease to operate as a short break provision. The PCT with Solent and Hampshire PCT will work together to determine the future of this resource. The PCT would particularly like to redeploy staff into the peripatetic nursing team described above at Option 3.

13. Pre-consultation engagement

Southampton City PCT in partnership with Southampton City Council undertook a pre-consultation engagement with parents of Southampton children currently using Westwood. The overriding message was around the importance of qualified nursing support. This was therefore built into the consultation options.

14. Feedback from consultation

Parents and Carers

The consultation was with Southampton families only. A parallel engagement exercise has been undertaken with Hampshire families using Westwood and the messages are broadly the same. Although originally thought to be 23 Southampton families using Westwood, it transpired that, owing to changes in family circumstances or further information received (i.e. two families were actually receiving continuing health care packages which would continue as currently and a further 3 were receiving day care and would shortly be moving into nursery provision), there were actually only 17 affected by the proposals.

- a) All parents were offered the opportunity of a face to face meeting to discuss the proposals. 12 out of 17 parents took up this offer. Those that chose not to were sent a consultation document by post.
- b) The majority of parents understood the rationale for change.
- c) The majority of families welcomed the introduction of the peripatetic nursing service and recognised that this is a positive initiative for all children receiving short breaks, not just those currently using Westwood.
- d) Some concerns were raised that PCT funding for the proposals would be withdrawn at a later date.
- e) There were also some concerns that other local short break providers would not have the capacity to meet additional demand. Commissioners are in ongoing discussion with local providers about this. Conversations to date have not given cause for concern with regard to capacity.

Other stakeholders

- a) Solent NHS Trust will not be in a position to formally consult with their staff until the current formal consultation is completed; however they have undertaken an early engagement exercise. The consultation document has also been shared with the staff team.
- b) The main staff feedback thus far has related to concerns about comparable standards of quality within other short break provision. However it is envisaged that through tighter contract management and with the peripatetic nursing team providing some clinical based staff training, care planning and, where appropriate, direct involvement in care, quality will be enhanced across the city.

- c) The Friends of Westwood, a charity organisation that supports Westwood House, has also been engaged. The Friends understood the rationale for change; their main concern was around maintaining quality.
- d) Meetings have taken place with John Denham and Alan Whitehead who again understood and accepted the rationale for change. Their main feedback related to the potential impact of city council budget proposals on short break provision and the need to ensure that this is understood alongside the Westwood proposals. They also raised the issue of continuity of health funding.
- e) Consultation documents have also been sent to the special school heads, GPs, social care and voluntary sector leads and the consultation process discussed with the PCT's Patient Forum and LINKS.

15. Next Steps

- a) The formal consultation period finishes 14 December 2012.
- b) Consultation feedback will be presented to the PCT Board in December to inform decision making.
- c) If the proposal is agreed, the next step will be to meet again with families individually to discuss their child's needs/ wishes and plan for their future short breaks. This will be undertaken jointly by health and social care staff, in collaboration with the short break providers.
- d) This will also including working with Solent NHS Trust to develop the peripatetic nursing team to be operational by April 2013.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

- 16 The PCT would meet the additional costs to the City Council via a transfer of funds under a Section 256 Partnership Agreement. A similar agreement already exists for the Rose Road contract. It should be noted that outside of this Agreement, the PCT will separately meet the additional costs of:
- those children/young people currently using Westwood who do not meet the City Council's eligibility criteria (to be kept under review).
 - any additional support required to enable a child/young person with complex health needs to access their short break – this would include the proposed nursing team referenced in Option 3.

Any remaining funding over and above this will be re-diverted to make improvements in health provision for children and young people with complex health needs.

Property/Other

- 17 Westwood House is owned by Southampton City PCT but under DH guidelines is proposed to transfer to Solent NHS Trust as sole occupant on 31 March 2013. Should Solent's occupation fall below 50% then Solent would be obliged to offer the entire property back to the Secretary of State.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

18. The arrangement to transfer commissioning responsibility and funding to the City Council would be made pursuant to Section 256 of the National Health Service Act 2006.
19. The statutory duty of Local Authorities to provide short breaks for children with disabilities is set out in Section 17 of the Children Act and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011.
20. The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Other Legal Implications:

21. None.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

22. The proposals outlined above are in line with the City Council's short break policy and statement agreed by Cabinet and published in October 2011.

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KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Consultation document.
2.	Distribution list for consultation document
3.	Communications and engagement plan

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	N/A
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	Yes
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Other Background Documents

Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	Integrated Impact Assessment	NHS Southampton City Trust Headquarters Oakley Road Millbrook Southampton
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