

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ADULT CARE & HEALTH SERVICES

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES & EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	20 JANUARY 2021	ITEM:	
TITLE:	FUTURE COMMISSIONING OF NHS HYDROTHERAPY SERVICES IN BERKSHIRE WEST		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR G HOSKIN / CLLR T JONES	PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH, WELLBEING & SPORT / ADULT SOCIAL CARE
SERVICE:	PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLBEING / ADULT SOCIAL CARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	SEONA DOUGLAS	TEL:	0118 937 2094
JOB TITLE:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ADULT CARE & HEALTH SERVICES	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:Seona.Douglas@reading.gov.uk">Seona.Douglas@reading.gov.uk</a>

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 NHS Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group ('the CCG') has approved revised arrangements for the commissioning of NHS hydrotherapy services in Berkshire West. This will mean that hydrotherapy will only be funded when exceptionality can be demonstrated via an individual funding request. Given the operational challenges of providing this service currently due to stringent infection control policies, the CCG will be working with the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust (RBFT) to determine the best way to provide this service.
- 1.2 Hydrotherapy concerns the use of special exercises completed with a therapist and in a pool heated to a higher temperature than a typical swimming pool. It is prescribed as a specialist treatment for a number of health conditions, including muscular skeletal and neurological conditions. The hydrotherapy facility at the Royal Berkshire Hospital has been closed since March 2020 as part of the Trust's COVID-19 Infection Control Policy.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the decision regarding future commissioning of NHS hydrotherapy services in Berkshire West be noted.

#### 3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The CCG has a duty to continually ensure limited NHS resources are spent prudently and that the services it commissions are evidence based, and offer clinical benefit to the maximum number of people. The CCG regularly review Procedures of Limited Clinical value (PLCV), i.e. procedures where the clinical effectiveness of that procedure is either absent or evidence shows weak efficacy.
- 3.2 Taking into account clinical effectiveness, value for money, and analysis of responses to a public consultation, the CCG Governing Body members have approved an option

to not routinely fund hydrotherapy services apart from on an exceptionally basis via an Individual Funding Request (IFR). This option allows the consideration of an individual's need and an assessment of benefits that hydrotherapy could deliver against a set list of clinical criteria. These criteria are being developed in partnership with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP)

- 3.3 It should be noted that the scope of this decision is limited to hydrotherapy services for NHS patients (those referred by a Physiotherapist or consultant), from RBFT using NHS funding from the CCG. It does not cover hydrotherapy services funded by local authorities or other agencies, including schools. It also does not cover other agencies that may utilise the pool through non-NHS arrangements. The future of the pool at RBFT is not within the remit of CCG decision making.

#### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 4.2 The CCG decision reported here has no direct impact on the Council's ability to respond to the Climate Emergency and achieve a carbon neutral Reading by 2030, taking into account the Council's Climate Change Strategy and its associated action plan and the Local Transport Plan along with any other relevant policies and statements.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 5.1 The CCG's decision has been informed by a public consultation which commenced on 10th August 2020 and concluded on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.

#### **6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 The CCG has carried out an Equality and Quality Impact Assessment of the proposed course of action, taking into account data provided by the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust on the demographics of patients who accessed the hydrotherapy service in the financial year 2019/20. Based on the evidence it considered, the CCG has concluded that differential and adverse impact could not be construed in relation to any equalities groups. Mitigating actions proposed include the provision of land-based therapy and access to hydrotherapy on an exceptions basis.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The CCG's public involvement and consultation duties are set out in s.13Q of the NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) for NHS England, and in s.14Z2v of the NHS Act 2006 for Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- 7.2 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

#### **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications for Reading Borough Council. The CCG decision is limited to hydrotherapy services for patients referred by a physiotherapist

or consultant from the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust using NHS funding from the CCG. It does not cover hydrotherapy services funded by local authorities or other agencies, including schools. It also does not cover other agencies that may utilise the pool through non-NHS arrangements.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

See:

'Future commissioning of NHS hydrotherapy services in Berkshire West' - report by Shairoz Claridge, Director of Operations Planned Care and Long Term Conditions, Newbury Locality, and Caroline Tack, Head of Planning and Transformation - presented to the NHS Berkshire West CCG Governing Body on 08.12.2020

Integrated Impact Assessment Tool - Stage 1 Pro Forma - 19.11.2020

Integrated Impact Assessment Tool - Stage 2 - Escalation Pro Forma - Nov 2020