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**NORTH WALES** SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING  
SERVICES IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE

## **Minutes of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board Meeting**

**15th January 2021**

**10:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**Via MS Teams**

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|----------------|---|
| Present:       | Mary Wimbury (MWim) (vice-chair), Bethan Jones Edwards, Alwyn Jones, Morwena Edwards, Chris Stockport, Cllr Bobby Feeley, Cllr Joan Lowe, Cllr Louise Emery, Cllr Dafydd Meurig, Estelle Hitchon, Fon Roberts, Helen Corcoran, Jenny Williams, John Gallanders (JGa), John Gladston (JGI), Judith Greenhalgh (JGr), Kevin Roberts, Llinos Medi Huws, Mark Wilkinson (MWil), Nicola Stubbins, Peter Williams, Rob Smith, Roma Hooper, Sam Parry, Shan Lloyd Williams |
| Apologies:     | Teresa Owen, Bethan E Jones, Catherine Elaine Jones, Cllr Christine Jones, Ffion Johnstone, Neil Ayling, Dr Lowri Brown, Lucy Reid  |
| In attendance: | Bethan Roberts, WAO   |

### **1 Welcome, introductions and apologies**

Mary Wimbury, vice chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above. The vice chair also thanked KR for the support and contribution he has made on behalf of NWFRS and wished KR well in his retirement.

### **2 Notes and actions of last meetings**

The minutes of meeting 11.12.2020 were agreed as a correct record with all actions completed.

### **3 Health & Care Group**

The board received a verbal update from the H&CSG from JG.

North Wales have seen a substantial surge in Covid cases in the last few weeks, resulting in significant pressure on health and social care, particularly within the

East. Extensive staffing issues have been seen within LA and Private care homes and challenges in relation to retaining the sustainability of care homes.

The SCG has set up two new groups to deal with the significant pressure in the system at present:

- A Silver Cell has been created to support the vaccination strategy
- A Bronze Cell group to manage significant issues in relation to social care and care homes (predominantly staffing).

Cllr LIMH asked for the recognition of ongoing support being provided from all partners to the pressure and challenges to sustain all services to be noted.

JG also provided recognition for the excellent partnership work taking place to support the care home crisis by LA's, BCU, private, voluntary and the public all doing their utmost through this challenging period.

#### **4 Impact of current COVID-19 situation on BCUHB services**

The board received an update from MWil on the request by Cllr JL for an update on the cancellation of planned care across the region, especially in relation to planned cancer treatment and critical operations.

MWil informed, due to significant pressure across the region, particularly in the East:

- BCU senior manager have agreed, taking the decision reluctantly, to cancel elective procedures across the whole of North Wales in order to provide additional capacity in the 3 main hospital sites.
- BCU plan to move as many services as possible and some essential elective surgery from Ysbyty Maelor to Ysbyty Gwynedd with effect from 18.1.2021.

MWil noted the extremely difficult position for Health and Social Care at present, decisions are not made lightly and the importance and sensitivity of all decisions are all recognised.

Cllr JL thanked for the update, being aware of local acute pressures on the sector.

CS clarified all decisions are made by BCU clinical leads, a group of senior BCU colleagues on a risk based approach taking into account the best interest of patients.

CllrJL noted from own perspective, the importance of elected members being regularly updated, so that the most up to date and correct information can be the provided to the public to allay fears.

MWil noted CllrJL point, noting BCUHB will strive to maximise the potential of using elected members as a communication channel for the future mass vaccination rollout.

CS provided RPB members with an overview of the impact of current COVID-19 situation on BCUHB services:

- A similar pattern is being seen across North Wales as the first Covid wave. Numbers have increased significantly within the last four weeks in terms of impact with critical care occupancy increasing on all 3 acute hospital sites plus critical high care being delivered outside critical care wards.
- Certain areas in the region more prominent than others. A high rate is seeing particularly within the community in Wrexham and Flintshire, seeing slightly less numbers as move toward the West.
- All 6 NW LA's report increase week on week causing significant challenges, in particular Ysbyty Maelor (YM). The numbers of inpatients at YM has exceeded the number during the first wave, with Intensive Care fully occupied.
- Staffing challenges experienced and the situation is expected to become worse over the next few weeks.
- Undertaking to move activity to avoid the cancellation of all services to accommodate the greatest pressure with vaccination in Care Homes work done in parallel.
- Important message to the public to do their best to help and keep to social distancing rules. Covid is not a condition relating to the elderly, although older people represent the highest number of cases, young and fit individuals have also been hospitalised and over the course of the pandemic BCUHB have treated individuals under 30 years of age.

JGa provided an observation regarding hospital enquired infection, being aware relatives and visitors are not permitted to visit, patients are constantly being discharged and deliveries to hospital posing a huge infection risk.

CS noted JGa point and this is being dealt with within BCU.

JGa also noted the recent incident of taking Arriva buses off the road due to drivers being tested positive will run the risk of multiple car occupancy going to work.

KR noted proposed clear communication to reinforce the public not to be scared of attending hospital and using elected members as a channel to communicate this important message.

CS confirmed of no particular outbreak of hospital acquired Covid at present, almost all Covid activity at present is community acquired.

JG reiterated, noting all extensive networks supported by PHW discussions, and all evidence suggest, particularly with the new Covid variant, community transmission, within family and close contact.

The chair thanked MWil and CS for their comprehensive update.

## 5 COVID-19 Vaccine

CS provided a comprehensive verbal update in FJ's absence:

- Work is progressing via a Silver Cell Co-ordination Group, part of the Resilience Forum.
- BCU is leading on this huge logistics piece of work in collaboration with all partners
- Pfizer vaccination delivered prior to Xmas proved challenging; issues with handling at minus 60 degrees in batches of 1000, needing to administer all once opened, vaccine does not travel or move well, difficult in rural areas when administering small cohorts
- The arrival of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine has transformed the vaccination programme, providing further options and wider distribution through primary care and community settings.
- The Health Board are also currently piloting on behalf of Wales a community pharmacy vaccination model in the West administering Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine

Plan to vaccinate by end of January the following cohort, as per guidelines received by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) :-

Care Residents, Care Home staff, 80 years and above, BCU Frontline staff, Domiciliary and Social Care frontline staff and other care partner frontline staff.

Plans to vaccinate by the middle of February: All inpatients and over 70 years old.

MWim enquired how BCU oversee the administration of all Pfizer doses from one package once defrosted.

All 3 Mass Vaccination Centre's (MVC's) will imminently be changing to 7 days a week and numbers have been calculated, booking only the number of people corresponding to the number of doses. Individuals from the subsequent cohort have also been contacted to be available at short notice, as a contingency measure. Thus far, wastage has not been a significant issues in North Wales.

CS confirmed a higher number of BCU front line staff had received the first batch vaccination at the end of 2020 than social care front line staff, due to being easier to vaccinate BCU staff whilst dealing with Pfizer handling issues. Invitations for vaccination have now been sent to all social care front line staff across the region.

ME noted the concern for the West is the long distance between Bangor MVC and care home and other priority staff in rural areas and has requested utilising the Oxford vaccine in local primary care and community settings.

PW asked if an individual has been vaccinated with Pfizer for their first vaccination will Pfizer also be given as the second dose.

CS confirmed, and the reason also why a decision has been made to administer either the Pfizer or the Oxford vaccination in venues across the region. i.e. no one venue will be administering both vaccination supplies (Pfizer and Oxford)

CS acknowledged the work of the whole team in getting this off the ground. Work is due to progress at pace over the next few weeks.

SLW enquired if work is being done on vaccinating homeless individuals and also the issue of when / how can staff who are not Local Authority / Health employees, who support vulnerable people in refuges, Extra Care Housing, supported housing and homeless people be vaccinated.

CS undertook to enquire and feedback on this query.

#### *Actions*

- CS to feedback on vaccination issues above.

## **6 Mid-year Carers Grant update**

Due to FJ's absence this item has been deferred to February agenda.

#### *Actions*

- Agenda – February- RW

## **7 Volunteering Recovery Grant**

JGa informed submitting one bid on behalf of the RPB was not possible on this occasion, due to the timescales provided by WG considered unrealistic – funding to be spent between 15th Jan and end of March 2021.

However, a number of projects have been developed across the partnership of CVC, LA and Health:

- Wrexham submitted a bid in the name of AVOW as a consortium, BCU volunteering team and WCBC for £67K; significantly less than the potential £200K available per county.
- FCC and IACC have also submitted bids.

WG outcome of bids is expected today 15.1.2021.

JGI suggested establishing a RPB sub-group to prepare for future funding opportunities.

JW noted her disappointment the region failed to organise a joint submission, being a missed opportunity as the RPB have discussed on numerous occasions the value of the Third Sector as equal partners. JW favoured establishing a sub-group to consider, discuss and organise plans for future submissions.

BJE agreed to set an initial meeting up with third Sector RPB representatives to start the process for future opportunities.

*Actions*

- BJE to arrange an initial meeting with JGa/JGI/RH

## **8 AOB**

MWim informed of a recent WG consultation document - WG White Paper on Rebalancing Care and Support and requested this to be placed on a future NWRPB agenda for discussion

*Actions*

- Rebalancing Care and Support - Agenda Feb/March - RW