

Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Service Report for Health in Dacorum Meeting of 8th June 2022

At its' meeting on 21.04.22, Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC's) Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing (ACS) Panel received a Covid-19 update.

From December 2021-January 2022, ACS was challenged by the Omicron wave which again demanded concerted effort. The wave was managed with relative success, drawing on the learning and experience with Covid-19 that now exists.

In the most serious Covid-19 outbreak situations, ACS can, with the agreement of the care provider, intervene directly to transfer care operations to another provider at short notice, usually temporarily. For such scenarios, ACS has been able to deploy its' Social Care Emergency Workforce team, comprising staff on stand-by to be called in when it is not possible to provide sufficient cover by other approaches. This is distinct from Herts at Home, an in-house service to provide care when other providers are not able to.

ACS now recognises a number of risks that have been deepened by the Covid period. At the time of the meeting, ACS was entering a phase where recovery is combined with periods of rising infection, as well as addressing the social care reform agenda. All of these will place significant demands on capacity and resourcing.

At this meeting, the Panel looked at the Adult Social Care Performance Monitor for Quarter 3 of 2021/22. "Front door" activity is still 1.4% higher than pre-Covid levels. There continues to be an increased demand from hospital discharges and an increase in requests for support by carers. This has caused adult social care waiting lists to remain higher than pre-Covid levels. However the average time to assessment remains comparable with pre-Covid performance of around 38 days.

Homecare capacity has grown significantly during the pandemic although it continues to be under pressure.

At its' meeting on 23.03.22, HCC's Audit Committee received a risk focus report on the risk of care provider failure. The Committee resolved to support actions and control measures including the ACS monitoring teams regularly monitoring risks. Measures also included oversight of the market, focused support on inadequate providers, supporting providers to meet the challenges of Covid-19, workforce measures, Herts at Home, ongoing discussions with providers to understand their financial pressures and the regular oversight of the ACS panel regarding market conditions.

C/Cllr Fiona Guest.