

## **Plymouth Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel Minute 18 21 June 2010 – NHS Plymouth (Mental Health) Quality Accounts**

Liz Cooney, Assistant Director of Governance NHS Plymouth introduced the Quality Accounts. It was reported that:-

- a. the trust had experienced a steep learning curve in the preparation of the document;
- b. although all of the information within the report was relevant it was accepted that the authors had lost sight of the fact the document was for public consumption and not limited to health care professionals;
- c. further work would continue into patient experience including how to best introduce systems and processes in order to collect quality data from patients on their experience;
- d. the Quality Accounts show both the positive and negative results the trust had received;
- e. there had been very little notice from the Government and Department of Health that these documents would become statutory which had caused problems in their preparation.

In response to questions from members of the panel it was reported that:-

- f. it was a possibility that the current economic climate could contribute to the increase in section 136 referrals, although there was no significant evidence to support that. Further information could be provided on psychiatrists waiting times, transitional mental care for young people moving into adult mental health care;
- g. there had been a significant increase in the number of incidents of verbal abuse and physical violence towards staff. It was believed that this increase was due to better reporting from staff as previously they had not reported incidents of verbal abuse. There had been prosecutions and the increase was being addressed;
- h. there were problems with staff being able to access data or patient records out of hours or over the weekend. The issue is being worked on so that staff can have the information they require to assess at hand.

In reference to the format of the Quality Accounts from the NHS Hospitals Trust and NHS Plymouth Mental Health Services members of the panel commented that;

- i. both Quality Accounts were particularly difficult to understand and councillors felt as a document providing information to members of the public this was not acceptable;

- j. the documents made few references to Plymouth and do not mention the Local Area Agreement, Local Strategic Partnership or vision for the City and lack a joined up approach;
- k. by receiving these reports nine days before the publication deadline the panel felt they would have very little impact on its content;
- l. a different title for the reports could allow people to better understand its content;
- m. it was clear from the format of the accounts that there had been little communication between authors at NHS Plymouth and NHS Plymouth Hospitals Trust;
- n. there were a number of strategies and documents which are seen by the Local Strategic Partnership and make up a portfolio of documents relating to the city, the Quality Accounts documents could be added to this.

In response to comments it was reported that:-

- o. Plymouth NHS Hospitals Trust had not been greatly involved in the Local Strategic Partnership but would welcome the opportunity;
- p. LINK had been consulted with, alongside patient forums and patient surveys;
- q. for next years report the NHS bodies in the city would work on a common format for the reports;
- r. scrutiny panels would have more involvement at an earlier stage in the preparation of quality accounts for next year.

Agreed that;

- 1. a plain English executive summary of reports would be published online by both bodies alongside their Quality Accounts, links from the City Council website would be made;
- 2. a change of headline title would be considered;
- 3. there would be communication between NHS bodies to create a common format for future Quality Accounts and there would be earlier consultation with scrutiny committees in order for them to have a greater impact on the Quality Accounts;
- 4. further information on the waiting times for referrals to mental health professionals and transitional mental health care for young people would be distributed to the panel;

5. the scrutiny lead officer and democratic support officer would investigate a sub regional approach to signing off documents of this type with Devon County Council and Cornwall County Council.