

Brent Health and Wellbeing Board

Winter Planning and Community Resilience

Collated by

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Introduction

What is behind the increasing Winter Pressure

The severity of the winter pressure is due to a combination of factors. There is the known trend of increasing demand and acuity (i.e. Seasonal Flu, sicker and frailer patients), as well as limited capacity (across the ambulance, mental health, community and acute sectors, all of which contribute to urgent and emergency care performance), workforce shortages (particularly in community nursing), and ongoing capacity challenges in primary and social care.

The Winter Place Plan for Brent will focus on:

- Taking preventative action to mitigate where possible, the impact of illness of individuals, families and the health and care system, through our flu, and COVID immunisation delivery, particularly amongst groups experiencing the highest levels of health inequalities
- Communication with local citizens to support them to navigate the local health and care offer, so care can be provided by the right service and/or individual in the right place
- Support to all residents experiencing homelessness and asylum seekers through on-site vaccination clinics by the Brent Health Matters Teams and / or Find and Treat Team.
- Improving patient flow to free up hospital beds by providing effective, prompt and high impact interventions in and out of hospital care.
- Continuing to strengthen our support and capacity in primary and community teams to prevent admissions to hospital and ensure a robust discharge pathway out of hospital
- Reducing variation in inpatient care and length of stay for our mental health service users by implementing in hospital efficiencies and bringing forward discharge processes
- Securing efficient discharge pathways to reduce the length of time our citizens spend in the hospital once medically fit to leave by maximising the use of DHSC funding

Seasonal Infections

- As at the end of week 40 (12/10/23), COVID 19 rates had shown a slight increase in the UK.
- As the weather becomes colder and people mix more indoors, COVID 19 infections are expected to further increase.
- Data is limited but there is no evidence at present that BA.2.86 infection is more likely to cause serious illness than other circulating variants nor that the protection offered by vaccination will be less.
- Flu rates and flu admissions remain low and stable.
- The usual seasonal increase in Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in young children has begun. RSV is usually mild causing cold like symptoms, but in babies, and the elderly, can be a more serious disease.

Prevention 1

There are a number of prevention activities taking place throughout the winter period to support the health and social care system which include:

- A robust flu and COVID vaccination programme across all cohorts
 - The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has advised that the public health intervention with the greatest impact is the vaccination of eligible groups. Accordingly, the autumn COVID vaccination programme has been brought forward, which commenced on 11th September. The aim of this programme is to vaccinate as many eligible people as possible by the end of October.
 - Several Community Pharmacies, local PCNs and the Brent Civic Vaccination Centre are also supporting the acceleration programme for COVID and, where possible, dual vaccination with Influenza.
- Primary Care – GP Delivery Model and enhanced services
 - GP Surgery services are available during the core hours of Monday – Friday between 8am and 6.30pm. Services are required to be open during these times including Christmas and New Year’s Eve. Practices are required to confirm their opening hours with the NW London Primary Care Teams. There is also a redirection service available from NHS 111 back to practices.
 - Primary care has an enhanced service for carers.
 - Primary care also has an enhanced service for under-represented groups providing pro-active health and wellbeing assessment.
- Brent Well & Warm Programme
 - The Brent Well and Warm service offers vital support to vulnerable residents by providing access to practical high quality energy advice and assistance, helping residents to keep bills down and to heat their home more efficiently. The service aims to provide a valuable safety net for those most vulnerable and fuel poor residents, who are suffering hardship through being unable to heat their homes.
 - The service has funding until Spring 2024 and scope for up to a further 794 consultations over the course of this winter.

Prevention 2

There are a number of prevention activities taking place throughout the winter period to support the health and social care system which include:

- Communication and engagement campaigns with local communities
 - There is a programme of communication taking place and plans to support local citizens in navigating the local health and care offer so that the appropriate service and/or individual can provide care in the right place.
 - NW London-wide communications and engagement winter plan to support residents with decisions about their health and the services they use, by providing information and redirecting people at the point of need.
- Brent Council Winter Communications Campaign
 - As in previous years, the NHS in London with UKSHA (UK Health Security Agency) and OHID (Office for Health Improvement and Disparities) will be producing a number of key public messages on keeping well in Winter.
 - Key messages are likely to include the importance of vaccination but also respiratory and hand hygiene, warmth in the home, keeping active and tips for mental wellbeing. Partners will amplify these messages through their usual communications channels for example the Council's website, e-newsletter and social media.
- Housing and Asylum Seekers support
 - The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) is activated by St Mungo's when the weather drops to 0 degrees or below, whereby individuals sleeping rough are prioritised for shelter.
 - All people experiencing homelessness and asylum seekers housed in the Interim Accommodation Sites are encouraged to have their flu vaccine through attendance at their GP practice and arranging for on-site vaccination clinics by the Brent Health Matters Teams and / or Find and Treat Team.
 - The Hospital Based Outreach Team for people experiencing homelessness will continue to provide a multi-disciplinary health intervention, social care, housing, advocacy, and practical input so that patients are discharged in an improved situation, reducing hospital re-admittance and homelessness.
 - The Council's commissioned services for single homeless people and rough sleepers will operate as normal throughout the winter months.

Trust Providers Plans

Providers have a number of initiatives to support winter resilience:

- Central London Community Healthcare
 - The Brent Rapid Response Team will maintain business as usual levels of activity for winter 2023/24 of over 3,000 patient contacts per month (including follow up visits). The service averaged 450 referrals per month for 2022/23.
- London North West University Hospital Trust (LNUHT) Acute Initiatives to support Winter Resilience
 - For the 2023-24 winter plan, the Trust submitted the following summary plan to the ICB:
 - £2,990k (Oct 23 – 31 March 24) for 32 beds at Northwick Park Hospital.
 - Additional winter flow schemes £2,000k (1 Oct 23 – 31 March 24).
- CNWL Initiatives to Support Winter Resilience
 - The NWL MHLDA Provider Collaborative ran a joint planning session to share practice, understand and respond to winter challenges in 2023/24. Senior operational leads in Adult, Older Adult and CAMHS services attended, agreeing high impact actions and a shared understanding of challenges facing the system this winter.
 - A number of short and long term activities are now being considered by the Provider Collaborative to improve acute pressures further. In the short term, these focus on joint communications to partners – particularly around how to access crisis alternative services - and consistency of processes that are common across both Trusts (such as CRFD definitions).

Integrated Care Partnership Approach

- The Winter Planning Programme was initiated by DHSC with a specific focus on strengthening discharge pathways and reducing length-of-stay in the hospital, delivering on the best outcomes for our residents to be better supported at their place of residence.
- Total Funding Allocation of Winter Schemes as Part of BCF Discharge Funding is £3.5m for 23/24:
 - DHSC Direct Local Authority Allocation £1.87m
 - NWL ICB DHSC Allocation £1.67m
- Fifteen schemes have been included, with most re-instated in 23/24, and they have undergone a rigorous review process at Brent ICP Task and Finish Groups. There has been joint agreement and buy-in from all stakeholders that these schemes should be included in the 23/24 programme.
 - Overnight Service
 - 24-Hour Complex Care
 - Take Home and Settle Service
 - Additional Social workers/7-day working
 - Step-Down Beds
 - Enhanced Dementia Support Following Discharge
 - Trusted Nurse Assessor
 - Bridging Provisional Proposal
 - Northwick Park Hospital Adult Mental Health Emergency Centre (7-day working)
 - Emergency Support Increase Rapid Response Capacity for Urgent Mental Health Provided
 - Community Equipment

Brent system risks to the delivery of the winter plan 23/24

There is a risk that...	Leads to...	Local Action...
Winter demand exceeds acute capacity	Significant pressures on all unplanned care services	Monitoring capacity and working with partners to mitigate risk and manage capacity.
Staffing will be insufficient for winter capacity plans	poor staffing, capacity being limited and low morale	Schemes specifically targeted to promote staff wellbeing, improve recruitment and improve attrition rates - performance monitored by staff impact measure