

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25 NOVEMBER 2019

AUDIOLOGY

Summary

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is to receive an overview of Audiology services in Worcestershire.
2. Audiology is part of the HOSC's work programme since HOSC members wanted to know more about services available.
3. Representatives will be present from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.

Background

4. Worcestershire Acute Audiology Department provides diagnostic assessments and clinical management for clients with hearing and balance impairment and provides support for people living with tinnitus. The Audiology Service sees people of all ages from birth through their entire lifespan, delivering a seamless service during childhood into adulthood.
5. The services are provided on 4 main hospital sites (Worcester, Kidderminster, Redditch and Evesham). Satellite clinics are run in 6 health centres/community hospitals with a further 6 sites offering battery collection.
6. Direct access for hearing assessments/ hearing aid fitting and aftercare/ hearing therapy is available from GP, Paediatricians, Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists and Ear Nose and Throat specialists (ENT). The Audiology Service also receives private referrals and requests for industrial audiology testing. Tinnitus counselling and balance testing are accessible via ENT.
7. Once clients are fitted with a hearing aid/white noise generator they are able to self-access the service for life. Domiciliary visits are also provided if their GP writes a referral to the service explaining they are housebound.
8. The Service has two service level agreements (SLA's) with the Community Health and Care Trust to provide school entry hearing screening for pupils who attend special schools in the county and diagnostic testing for <5 years of age. Professionals from Acute and Community Trusts can refer into these diagnostic clinics.
9. Audiology also manages the Newborn Hearing Screening Programme in Worcestershire and performs diagnostic assessment on the babies referred from the screen. The Audiologist covering these clinics will inform the parents of the diagnosis, fit hearing aids where appropriate and refer on to ENT and Paediatrics.

10. The department reports key performance indicators (KPIs) on the Newborn hearing Screening to Public Health England, KPI's on Any Qualified Provider (AQP) hearing aid activity to Worcestershire NHS Commissioners and KPI's on the diagnostic 6 week wait to the Trust.

11. The department has a close association with Aston University training both under and post graduate students on practical placement within the team. We are an accredited training centre by British School of Audiology

Equality and Diversity Implications

12. When seeing patients whose first language is not English the department books an interpreter for them through AA Global. For patients with a severe hearing loss whose main route of communication is sign language a signing interpreter from Deaf Direct is booked

Purpose of Meeting

13. HOSC Members are invited to consider the information on Audiology in Worcestershire and to agree:

- whether any further information is required
- whether any further scrutiny work is required at this stage

14. In doing so, HOSC members may wish to consider factors such as:

- performance trends of audiology services in Worcestershire
- access to audiology services

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Presentation slides

Specific Contact Points for this Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report: