

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 13 NOVEMBER 2020

REVIEW OF DELIVERY MODEL FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION PROVISION FINDINGS

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills and the Director of Education and Early Help have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on the review of the delivery model for medical education provision ahead of the findings and proposals being discussed at Cabinet in February 2021 (presentation attached at Appendix 1).

Background

2. The Medical Education Team (MET) is a service delivered by Worcestershire Children First (WCF), providing education for children who are unable to attend school because of medical needs including mental health difficulties. In January 2020 Cabinet approved a timeline and process for conducting a review of the MET provision and service. In June 2020 Cabinet approved an extended timeline to make the recommendations in December 2020. It has recently been agreed to postpone to February 2021. Implementation of proposals will commence in September 2021. The additional time was needed because of the stakeholder engagement and participation required to coproduce the new model that had been delayed by COVID-19 and is critical to include health commissioners and providers.

3. The MET has continued to support pupils during COVID-19. All pupils have had access to online learning, telephone subject support and safe and well checks from staff and some vulnerable children have been taught onsite. Work packs, emails activities and online materials have been provided for Maths, English, Science, Business Studies and PSHE, providing continuity of curriculum for students. A resilience course for older students and additional activities focused on emotional health and wellbeing have been an integral part of the offer.

Consultation and Coproduction

4. The availability of stakeholders such as schools, parents and health professionals to engage and participate in the MET Review has been severely limited by COVID-19. This engagement was crucial to the success of any proposals for the MET service. In July 2020, post national lockdown, the review 'picked up pace' and a multi-agency steering group met virtually and regularly, to progress the core activity of the review whilst facilitating the engagement of the following key stakeholders:

- a) Children, young people and parents who currently access the service or have done previously;
- b) Staff and management of the Medical Education Service;
- c) Staff and management of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Alternative Education Providers and Special Schools;
- d) Staff and management in the NHS – including both commissioner and providers (particularly relevant to mental health);
- e) Staff and management in Worcestershire Children First Early Help Services and Social Care.

5. The outbreak of COVID-19 meant that it was not possible to hold face to face meetings and workshops, so the following were completed instead:

- 10 surveys from health practitioners
- 24 surveys from social care and family support practitioners
- 24 surveys from parents
- 5 questionnaires completed by children and young people
- 6 questionnaires completed by MET staff
- 2 facilitated group discussions with health practitioners
- 2 facilitated group discussions with MET staff
- 9 interviews with parents
- 5 interviews with schools

6. These methods of coproduction and consultation activity were ‘the best fit’ to evidence the individual and collective priorities, aspirations, challenges and potential solutions during a national lockdown.

7. Whilst engagement with stakeholders was underway, a data analysis task was being completed by WCF commissioning colleagues. They examined the Medical Education Team records 2003 - 2020 to profile the scale and nature of referrals, the demand for the MET, and the support provided. The data produced from this analysis was compared to:

- profiles of the children’s and young person’s population in the county,
- public health strategic assessments (particularly concerning mental health)
- school attendance records held by WCF.

8. It was compiled into a report for the steering group and stakeholders to empower decision making.

9. In addition, desk top research into the medical education arrangements and provisions in ten other local authorities (including all of Worcestershire’s neighbours and two statistically similar authorities in other parts of the UK) was simultaneously reported to the steering group for their consideration.

10. The information produced, using the methods outlined above, enabled three task and finish groups to co-produce the proposals included in the presentation.

Next steps

11. A report detailing a revised timetable for developing a new model of delivery for medical education provision will be discussed at Cabinet in February 2021.

Purpose of the Meeting

12. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- Consider the update provided since the last report to Panel on 16 June;
- Determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny; and
- Agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Presentation – Worcestershire Children First: Medical Education Review Findings

Contact Point

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- [Agenda and Minutes of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel 23 January 2020](#)
- [Agenda and Minutes of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel 16 June 2020](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)