

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

14 NOVEMBER 2023

BETTER CARE FUND (BCF) QUARTER 2 NATIONAL RETURN

Board Sponsor

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Author

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Priorities

This report is relevant to the following Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prevention & inequalities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Homes, Communities & Places |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mental Health & Wellbeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Jobs & Opportunities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Healthy Living at All Ages | |

Safeguarding

This report does not have a direct impact on safeguarding children.

This report has a direct impact on safeguarding children or adults.

The Better Care Fund supports the timely, safe and appropriate discharge of patients from the Acute and Community Hospitals. It also aims to enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer, through a number of different initiatives and services.

Item for Decision, or Information & Assurance

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decision | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information/assurance |
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Recommendation

- 1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the Better Care Fund Quarter 2 national return which was submitted to NHS England on 31 October 2023 in line with national requirement submission deadlines.**

Background

- 2 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is one of the government's national vehicles for driving health and social care integration. It requires integrated care boards (ICBs) and local government to agree a joint plan, owned by the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB).
- 3 The vision for the BCF over 2023-2025 is to support people to live healthy, independent, and dignified lives, through joining up health, social care and housing services seamlessly around the person. This vision is underpinned by the two core BCF

objectives set out in the national conditions. Worcestershire's Better Care Fund 2023 - 2025 plans have been developed in line with meeting the national conditions and ambitions to commission services that have an impact on the metrics.

Better Care Fund Quarter 2 Reporting

- 4 As stated in the BCF planning requirements 2023-25, the national programme informed the system of quarterly reporting recommencing from Quarter 2. The reporting template has been refreshed following planning and reporting previously being paused due to the Covid19 pandemic. Worcestershire's submission has been completed and returned to NHS England on 31 October 2023 to meet the mandatory national submission deadlines and can be seen at **Appendix 1**. It was discussed at the September Health and Wellbeing Board meeting that the deadlines for the reports unfortunately are not within the timescales of the board meetings. Therefore, the reports are submitted to meet the national deadlines but are to be discussed retrospectively at the next board meeting. Actions can then be taken forward for the following quarterly reporting period.
- 5 The reporting template collects information to ensure that the BCF plans in Worcestershire continue to meet the required national conditions. It also updates on the current local position to meet the metric ambitions developed in the plan and some narrative to highlight any challenges and achievements experienced throughout the quarter that may have impacted on the performance. In Worcestershire the report demonstrates that the system is currently on track to meet all metric targets from the data collected through Quarter 1 and Quarter 2. Challenges remain largely based upon complexities of need within the hospital discharge pathways and surges of demand throughout the acute hospitals and intermediate care.
- 6 Alongside reporting on the metrics performance, the report also collected refreshed estimates of capacity and demand for intermediate care for the winter period. This data collection is new for the BCF and there have been significant challenges to ensure that terminology used in the templates reflects how intermediate care is provided on a local level, to ensure that the right data is available. The aim of the capacity and demand plans are to support local systems to reflect on where there are increases on demand in certain areas within intermediate care. Furthermore, to consider how any gaps in the capacity is managed to sustain the overall flow of the system and improve outcomes for people utilising intermediate care. As highlighted within the report, in Worcestershire, there are no significant gaps identified, challenges remain present for simple and timely discharge activity which is being progressed through local based UEC programmes.

Better Care Fund Future Reporting

- 7 The BCF policy framework sets out that reporting for 2023/2025 will include the collection of activity data. This had not been possible for the national Q2 reporting template, the national BCF development teams have been working with local systems to shape how this can be collected in future reporting. It is intended that the activity data will be included within the Q3 report to provide insight into some of the services within the BCF 2023/2025 plan. This data will be presented alongside the financial monitoring and forecast update. Please note that the Q3 reporting template and submission deadline for this return has yet to be specified by the BCF national programme.
- 8 Additionally, to the Quarterly reporting, the requirement to submit fortnightly and monthly returns to the Better Care Fund Team continues. These reports require details of how the additional hospital discharge funding has been utilised across the hospital discharge pathways.

- 9 Partners throughout the Health and Social Care system in Worcestershire are working together to develop and provide further detail on the metric ambitions set for Worcestershire and how these relate to performance in other local systems. Further information on this can be provided at the forthcoming BCF development session.

Impact on health disparities

- 10 The BCF is crucial in supporting people to live healthy, independent and dignified lives. Through joining up health, social care and housing services to enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer and provide people with the right care, at the right place and time. As previously highlighted, within the BCF 2023-2025 narrative plan, there is a specific section relating to how the BCF plan contributes to reducing health inequalities and disparities for the local population, taking account of people with protected characteristics.
- 11 An Equality Relevance Screening has been completed in respect of these recommendations. The screening did not identify any potential Equality considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

- 12 Reporting to Health and Wellbeing Board on a quarterly basis is deemed to follow good practice guidelines.
- 13 The BCF is a ring-fenced grant. It has been agreed that any over- or underspend will be jointly attributable to NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB and the County Council.

There are no HR implications within this report.

Privacy Impact Assessment

- 14 Non arising directly from this report

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Worcestershire Better Care Fund Quarter 2 Report (Available online)

Background Papers

None