

Wellbeing Prescription Contract 23-24

Strategy & Resources Committee Tuesday, 31 January 2023

Report of: Julie Porter

Purpose: To update Members on the proposal of the Wellbeing prescription service to extend the current contract by 1 year and set out the plans for the future of the service.

Publication status:

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

A detailed report about the Wellbeing Prescription service was considered in January 2022 by this Committee. The current contract funded by Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System (ICS) is due to end in March 2023.

The future model of the service is being reviewed as part of a longer-term Social Prescribing offer across East Surrey Place partners. This report provides an overview of opportunities to develop the service and seeks agreement to extend the current contract for one year to enable all partners to make recommendations to the new model.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Building a better Council

Contact officer Julie Porter Head of Communities and Partnerships
JPorter@tandridge.gov.uk –

Recommendation to Committee:

- A. that the extension of a one-year contract with Surrey Heartlands ICP, until 31st March 2024 be agreed

- B. that the future work of the Wellbeing Prescription Service be supported, to develop an East Surrey Place Social Prescribing development plan including Primary Care, District and Boroughs, health and social care providers. This will then inform a new contract proposal to be implemented from April 2024.

Reason for recommendation:

The continued delivery of the Wellbeing Prescription Service supports the Council's strategic priority of building a better Council. The service is one of the most direct examples of how the Council positively influences the health and wellbeing of residents across the district.

Introduction and background

1. Social Prescribing is about connecting people with health problems to practical, social and emotional support within their community. This can be anything from help or advice with employment, housing, or benefits, to taking part in social or leisure activities.

2. The Wellbeing Prescription Service has been supporting both Tandridge and Reigate and Banstead residents since 2015. It allows GPs and other local services to refer residents to a trained Wellbeing Advisor who can help them improve their health and wellbeing. Residents living in East Surrey can also self-refer to the service.

3. The Wellbeing Advisor meets with clients for up to an hour to discuss their needs, providing expert advice, encouraging behavioral change and signposting to local or national services. More recently the team have been delivering more group sessions and carrying out outreach work in the community. Examples of these include workshops on Introduction to Sleep, Mood and Food, Healthy eating and Cholesterol, Mental wellbeing and managing the effects of the cost-of-living crisis.

4. The service is offered to all 18 East Surrey GP Surgeries. The highest number of referrals last quarter came from Warlingham Green Medical Practice, Greystone House Surgery, Oxted Health Centre and Tandridge Council Officers.

5. The main reasons for a referral to the service include helping the client get active, lose weight, meet new people, stay mobile and prevent falls, maintain independent living or improve their emotional wellbeing. In Q3 22/23 The most common reason for referral was Emotional Wellbeing (40.6%), with Weight Management/Healthy Eating sitting at (39.0%). This is the first time that the need for emotional wellbeing has been the highest priority for residents. Which reflects the current need impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.
6. On average, clients are offered three appointments with an advisor, with a variety of appointment types; face to face at home, in a GP practice or public setting, via video or phone and group workshops.
7. The team have promoted the service and engaged with residents through their outreach work. They have worked in a number of community settings such as:
 - Freedom Leisure Caterham - Wellbeing Walk
 - Horley Health Club- ABC Health checks
 - Lingfield Community Centre
 - Westway Community Centre Action for carers
8. Through this work residents did not need to visit their GP practice as they would have done.

Performance and Monitoring

9. In the year 2021/22 the service received over 2800 referrals. In 2022/23 YTD the number of referrals has been 2316 (for Q1 -Q3)) and the forecast referrals for the full year 22/23 is 3080 showing and increase of 10% on 21/22
10. In 21/22 the most common reason for referral was weight management/eating well (53%) followed by support for emotional wellbeing (36%).
11. The majority of appointments were by telephone (75.7%), followed by home visits (13.3%) and digital/online (6.1%).
12. All referrals are responded to within 5 working days, with clients opting for a video or telephone appointment predominantly offered with a first appointment within 2 weeks. Clients requiring a home visit are also provided with a first appointment within 4 weeks, however to mitigate the increased waiting time for home visits, two additional staff have been trained to complete home visits.

Outcome Measures

13. The use of Elemental software within the Wellbeing Prescription service allows advisers to measure the range of outcomes experienced by clients referred to the service.
14. Using the software 'MYCaw' clients identify their main concerns and then rate how worried they are about each concern using a standardised severity scale. Most recent data (2021/22) demonstrated that of the cohort 75% and 72% recorded a reduction in severity of concern for their 1st and 2nd concern respectively.
15. User feedback from the service is also positive demonstrating the wide range of interventions and touchpoints to other services that clients are able to access with support from the team.
16. Examples of the work of the wellbeing prescription team

Example 1

Background: Male client, referred from GP- Five home visits completed. Client wanted support with:

- maintaining independent living,
- support with housing,
- Information on finance and benefits.

Client has Type 1 Diabetes, which is managed well, but his risk of foot ulcers had increased, and he'd been advised to avoid walking. During the first appointment, he shared he felt totally alone, he didn't know who to turn to for help and was worried about how to manage a move from his private rented accommodation to somewhere purpose built and more suitable for his needs. He was also very concerned about his finances as his work was impacted by being unable to walk.

Support and referrals: *The first appointment predominantly focussed on building trust and rapport, he shared he struggled with trusting professionals, due to past poor experiences. His priority was on moving from his current unsuitable 1st floor flat. He did not have any experience of social housing and how to navigate this and was at risk of losing his property. A referral was made to Parashoot, Surrey Fire Safe and Well and Surrey Disability Register. Discussed options for mobility aids and a wheelchair for his future home.*

The Advisor arranged with GP surgery to have his medical records coded as housebound, enabling his COVID booster to take place at home and medication deliveries.

Outcome: *The Parashoot referral led to a Housing Officer being appointed, which helped move the client into a band where he will get the next available suitable property. The Housing Officer is in contact with the client on a regular basis reducing his feelings of isolation*

Example 2

Female client referred by Community Matron

Reason for Referral: *Maintaining independent living, carer support, finance and benefits and falls prevention.*

Circumstances: *Client lives with son, in rented accommodation. Type 2 diabetes, history of heart attack, broke hip, broke shoulder. Mobility poor. Son is not working as now his mother's carer. Receives no benefits other than state pension, both living off this, therefore, struggling to pay bills.*

Signposting/Referrals:

- *Red cross Wheelchair*
- *OT referral*
- *East Surrey Rural Transport*
- *Westway Community Centre*
- *Benefits Galore*

Outcome:

- *Since receiving her wheelchair the client has been able to get out of the house and has been able to go on trips on buses.*
- *OT assessment has been completed*
- *Benefit Galore has helped with applications for attendance allowances, carers allowances and universal credit.*

Feedback

Stakeholder satisfaction

17. A partner and stakeholder satisfaction survey was circulated to all referrers to the wellbeing service in April 2022.
 - 96% stated they felt well informed about the service
 - 75% were likely to recommend the Wellbeing Prescription Service
 - Suggested improvements included: additional appointments in the community, improvements in communication with stakeholders about client progress, more regular updates from advisors and the creation of a newsletter.

Client Satisfaction

18. Two customer satisfaction questionnaires have been created one is disseminated to clients who have just one appointment or those unable to answer long questionnaires. A second longer questionnaire is shared with clients that have completed their final follow up appointment. The survey can be completed electronically on any device and if this isn't possible, such as for house bound clients, a paper version will be left with the client with a prepaid envelope. In quarter two 135 responses were received, 77% gave a promoter score of 9 out of ten.
19. Some recent client feedback included the following comments;

"I would sincerely recommend this service to anyone as being comforting, supportive and offering practical help in many different areas."

“This service should be rolled out to all families struggling to know how to best support relatives with difficult terminal conditions such as dementia. Our advisor helped me shortcut days of research to find social options for my parents and advised on applications which will save my parents thousands of pounds which they will eventually need to cover care costs. Her recommendations have made their home safer and future-proofed against health and fire emergencies. She did all this with clarity, care and incredible responsiveness.”

“The Advisor was so helpful and gave us so much information that we needed, and we could use. This has helped us to connect with lots of useful services ie transport, hearing aids, social and many more services we required”

“Very happy with the help I received. And very thankful for the help and advice I received to get the best out of the future. Wished I had been referred before or realized that this service was available. Thank you so much.”

20. Patient feedback was completed via the East Surrey Place Citizen Steering Group in July 2022. The following recommendations were summarised as:

- Recommended a change in marketing images to attract younger people to the service
- Stressed the importance of quality checked services
- Open -ended referrals – to allow more time to action tasks
- Offer additional activities such as basic cooking, online/at home gym sessions
- Additional communication via leaflet as online can be confusing and
- Increase access (currently 9-5) options for evening and after school appointments.
- Transport is a barrier to accessing activities
- Limited options for onward referral to services specifically for those with a disability (visual and physical impairment)

All of the above are being looked at with the new service plan for 2023/24. Discussions have already started with The Westway centre and Lingfield Community Centre to look at delivering workshops to meet some of these needs. In addition, the team are working with East Surrey Rural Transport to improve community transport links.

Resource and funding

21. The team consists of 8.5 FTE and is overseen by the Head of Customer Engagement and Partnerships. The current contract is funded through the East Surrey Better Care fund. This contract is due to expire in March 2023. It is envisaged that the contract sum will remain the same as 2022/23.

22. All direct costs of the service, including staffing, equipment, training and specialist software is covered by the ICP's external funding.

23. On the basis that the support costs for 23/24 are calculated on a similar basis to 22/23, the estimated support cost budget would be £161,000. This includes HR and Payroll support along with leadership team, Information technology, financial services, office services and secondary pension. These will be met from the Wellbeing reserve balance (not general reserve), which is from previous years underspends of Wellbeing grant. Neither is coming from TDC's revenue expenses. We have now taken a more commercially sustainable approach and moving forward when a new contract is negotiated all grants will have to cover 100% of the costs.
24. As the employing authority, if the contract was not extended past 31/3/24 for any reason, the Council would need to minimize any risk for cessation costs e.g. redundancy and enhanced pension costs. An Memorandum of Understanding will need to be entered with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council in order that they too share this responsibility.
Tandridge contribution would be £64,000. This contingency has been factored into the wellbeing reserve fund.

Well-Being Prescription Service – Looking forward

25. The proposal for the future of the service is to supplement the Wellbeing Prescription service with additional social prescribing link work roles based within GP surgeries to work alongside the advisors and deliver localised demand specific wellbeing services. (Paragraph 20 refers to some of the demands)
26. The idea will be for a single Social Prescribing model across East Surrey to unite a range of providers under the 'Wellbeing Service' banner allowing access to centralised case management software (Elemental). Social Prescribing Link Workers, Wellbeing Coaches, Health Advisers, can be employed by partner organisations but be matrix managed by the Wellbeing Service providing a network of support, training opportunities, including motivational interviewing and behaviour change, and clinical supervision.
27. To accommodate the proposed changes the service will need to be re-commissioned and this is not achievable in the existing timescales (current contract expiration March 23). It is therefore recommended that the current contract is extended for 1 year (April 2023 to March 2024) to allow for re-organisation of the service across East Surrey.

Risks

28. Loss of the Wellbeing Prescription from April 2023 will have a negative impact on residents' health and wellbeing who currently use the service – or will potentially use the service over next few years.
29. Reputational, withdrawing a service from residents and our partner agencies without consultation
30. The service is a partnership service with established partnerships networks which means it can deliver services in an integrated, transparent and low-cost way.
31. Without the income from the extension of the contract, the Council would need to reduce £161,000 of HR and Payroll support, leadership team, information technology, financial services, office services and secondary pension expenses. Alternatively, the Council could seek £161,000 of new sources of income to replace the gap left by the cessation of the Surrey Heartlands ICP grant.

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

Although significant progress has been made to improve the Council's financial position the financial environment remains challenging. The UK is experiencing the highest levels of inflation for decades, putting significant pressure on the cost of delivering our services. Coupled with continued increasing demand and fixed Government funding this requires an increased focus on financial management to ensure we can continue to deliver services within available funding.

In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium term financial outlook beyond 2023/24 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.

The Council has a duty to ensure its expenditure does not exceed the resources available. Wellbeing contingency reserves held by the Council provide confidence that the 1 year contract extension can be funded at this stage without a general fund pressure. Financial control is maintained in year through the budget monitoring process, whilst mitigating actions will be taken to reduce the risk of expenditure exceeding available funding. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the recommendations.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

Given that the Wellbeing Service is being reviewed by East Surrey Place partners and that there is little time to conduct a compliant procurement process before the current contract comes to a natural end in March 2023, extending the current service provisions through a new one-year contract does appear to be the only viable option. Therefore, without the requested extension for one year and exemption from CSOs, this may lead to a gap in services with detrimental impact on resident's health and well-being as well as a negative impact on the reputation of the Council to carry out duties to deliver these services.

Equality

The proposals within this report demonstrate a fully inclusive approach in that the service is accessible to all and addresses the needs of the more vulnerable members of the community.

Climate change

This report contains no proposals that would negatively impact the Council's climate change ambitions.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None

----- end of report -----