



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
Social Care, Health & Well-being Cabinet Board**

16 September 2021

Report of the Head of Adult Services – Ms A. Thomas

Matter for Information

Wards Affected All wards

**HEALTH BOARD PROPOSALS TO CHANGE OLDER PEOPLE
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Purpose of the Report

To inform Cabinet Board about proposed changes that are being made by Swansea Bay University Health Board (UHB) to Older People Mental Health Services.

Executive Summary

- Swansea Bay UHB are consulting on proposals to change the number of in-patient specialist older people mental health beds they provide.
- Pre-COVID there were 112 hospital beds for Older People Mental Health in the region, this is proposed to change to 75. Tonna hospital in Neath will have 15 beds and Ysbryd Y Coed in Swansea will have 60.
- The Health Board plan to re-furbish Tonna hospital.
- Short term assessment for the region will be at Ysbryd Y Coed.

- Older People Mental Health services will not be returning to ward G in Neath Port Talbot Hospital, this ward is proposed to be used for Orthopaedic patients’.
- Tonna Hospital will continue to provide day hospital services, but ward G (NPT hosp.) will no longer provide a day hospital.
- Hospital based respite will continue in Tonna Hospital, within the 15 beds, but will become a regional service.

Background

The Health Board have been reviewing the number of mental health beds for older people that they need, due to the low number of beds being used, and staffing challenges associated with supporting the number of beds that they had prior to COVID. Therefore, late in 2019 the Health Board temporarily closed 14 beds (Suite 4) at Tonna Hospital because of acute staffing problems and started a public engagement on closing these beds permanently in March 2020. Due to the pandemic they paused this engagement. The Health Board have now reviewed these proposals in the light of changes made to services so that the health service could cope with Covid-19 demands and the need to increase the number of orthopedic operations that they can carry out. As a result, the Health Board have withdrawn their original proposals (March 2020 engagement) and developed an alternative set of proposals.

The Health Board’s Older Peoples’ Mental Health Services have been changing and developing for a number of years to provide more community based services and support for people to stay at home for as long as possible, as well as establishing services which support care homes to be able to care for people more appropriately and for longer. Their focus has been, and continues to be, ensuring people are cared for at home or as close to their home as possible with the right people supporting them to do this.

The Health Board had identified prior to the pandemic that their specialist older people’s mental health beds (for people with the

highest level of needs who couldn't be cared for anywhere else) were not fully used and that there were problems staffing the 112 beds they had prior to the temporary changes due to the pandemic, across three sites and 6 wards across Swansea Bay.

The services the Health Board have developed to support people at home, in care homes and in the community mean that demand for admissions to older people's mental health beds is decreasing. On the evidence available to the Health Board from benchmarking against other similar services and their own information on the usage of beds over a significant period of time they believe the bed numbers proposed for Swansea Bay will be enough to meet the needs of those older people who require the highest level of care.

The Health Board also state comparison across the UK demonstrates that there is currently a significantly higher than average number of older people's mental health beds in Swansea Bay than other areas. The number of patients being admitted into their mental health beds has, and is, continuing to reduce across all our sites.

Impact on the Local Authority

There is a risk that the changes being proposed by the Health Board to Older People Mental Health Services will have an impact on the Local Authority. Unless there is significant investment by the Health Board into community services, people who would have been admitted to hospital for assessment and care, will remain in the community, likely being cared for by their families and being supported by Domiciliary Care Workers or within Care Homes, both of which services are often funded by the Local Authority. The staff employed within care homes and domiciliary care, have many skills, but with less admissions to specialist older people mental health hospital beds, there is a greater risk that these staff will be required to support people with more challenging needs. If there are to be less beds, support will be required over a 24 hour basis by the Health Board, to provide specialist care to vulnerable older people, who would historically have been admitted to hospital. Without this

specialist care, it will be left to families, carers and Local Authority employed or commissioned care staff to meet people's needs.

The consultation document points out there has been investment into community services, but the details of what services have been developed or what services are planned for the future are not outlined. It is therefore difficult to determine the impact of the changes will have on individuals, their carers, families and Local Authority provided and commissioned services. Currently there is only one care home in the County that is able to provide specialist dementia nursing care and should there not be sufficient community services developed by the Health Board, to compensate for the reduction in beds, there is a lack of confidence from Commissioning colleagues in the Local Authority, that care homes could be a replacement for hospital care. A recent trend is a request from care homes for the Local Authority to fund one to one support for individuals, if care homes are unable to meet people's needs within their existing staffing numbers, due to the challenges being presented by individual resident's needs. There is a risk that this trend will increase, resulting in additional costs for the Local Authority.

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing has written to the Chief Executive of Swansea Bay University Health Board outlining the concerns of the Local Authority, to the proposed changes.

Financial impact

There are no specific financial impacts associated with this report, however as outlined above there are risks that the changes being proposed by the Health Board will have an impact on Local Authority finances as demand for services changes.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes.

Valleys Communities Impacts

No Implications.

Workforce impacts

There are no specific workforce impacts arising from this report, however the changes being proposed by the Health Board may impact on Local Authority staff as outlined above.

Legal impacts

There are no legal impacts in relation to this report.

Risk Management

There are no known risks associated with this item.

Crime and Disorder Impacts

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the Council in the exercise of its functions to have “due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent:

- a)** Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment);
- b)** The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- c)** Re-offending the area”.

There is no impact under the Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Counter Terrorism Impacts

The proposals are likely to have no impact on the duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts

Section 2(1) of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a general duty where a person exercising relevant functions must have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which:

- (a) increase the risk of violence against women and girls, or
- (b) exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.

The proposals contained in this report are likely to compliment and work alongside the impact on the above duty. VAWDA SV is included in the priorities of the Board under exploitation.

Consultation Outcome

Not applicable.

Recommendation

Not applicable – for information only.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

Not applicable – for information only.

Implementation of Decision

Not applicable – for information only.

Appendices

Public Engagement Document by Swansea Bay UHB on changes to Older People Mental Health Services.

List of Background Papers

None.

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