

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

CABINET – 13 JULY 2017

REFERENCE FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 JUNE 2017

228. Health Visiting Scrutiny Review

Councillor Janet Mote, the Chair of the Health Visiting Scrutiny Challenge Panel, introduced the report focusing on its recommendations which were partly for the Council and partly for the London North West NHS Trust. The results of the review would be fed into the re-procurement of the service which would be aimed at ages 0-19 in future and would incorporate school nursing services.

In discussion of the report, the following issues were raised:

- a) Language barriers were a problem for the service, leading to misinformation and misinterpretation. Five main languages were covered, but there were still challenges in a borough as diverse as Harrow. The review had even revealed that some health visitors were unaware of the availability of translation services. Also, the issues went beyond language into areas of cultural differences and practices.
- b) The performance data had revealed an unacceptable level of no-shows by the age of two and a half. In the re-procurement exercise, efforts would be made to evaluate the readiness of prospective providers to offer innovative solutions to the performance issues. It was suggested that best practice in other areas be carefully researched and that benchmarks be incorporated in the new contract to incentivise better performance.
- c) The Harrow Youth Parliament representative raised the question of mental health issues for young people, particularly in the teenage years, and also how the review would deal with the caseload problems identified. It was confirmed that the extension of the new service to the age of 19 would provide for mental health of teenagers to be addressed. Mental health issues were also very relevant to mothers and fathers who could suffer from depression and isolation. The review included recommendations on staffing and caseloads, and these would need to be reflected in the contract specification in future.

RESOLVED:

To refer the review's recommendations to Cabinet and to the London North West NHS Trust for consideration, as appropriate.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Background Documents:

Agenda of the Overview and scrutiny Committee – 27 June 2017: Report on the Community Safety, Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy for 2017-2020.

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