

Minutes of the community hubs stakeholder engagement session, held at 5pm on Thursday 17th June 2020 via Zoom

Present:

Ben Collins (BC)	Deputy Divisional Director, Integrated Elderly and Community Care Division, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Chair of this meeting.
Alison Aylen (AA)	CATS and Community Hubs Manager, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
Karen Bonner (KBcn)	Chief Nurse, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
Lesly Clifford (LC)	Associate Director of Communications and Engagement, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
KB	Thame League of Friends
NCW	Thame Town Council
Stephanie Tanner (STcl)	Clinical Lead for CATS, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
ST	Chair of Thame League of Friends
JE	Member of the public
AG	Marlow League of Friends
PL	Marlow League of Friends
BH	Representative, Rycote patient participation group
Dee Irvin (DI)	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Communications Manager, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Apologies:

JT	Marlow Town Council
PB	
Jo Birrell	Nurse Consultant, Medicine for Older People, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust
YH	Representative Unity patient participation group
KG	Thame League of Friends
AJ	Chair of Rycote patient participation group
AB	Member of the public, representative of BOPAG Marlow and Marlow Bottom
PB	Member of the public
MW	Representative, Unity patient participation group

1. Minutes and update on actions

The minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 17th February 2020 were agreed with no amends.

2. Operational Update

BC advised that due to COVID-19 CATS services within Marlow, Thame and Amersham were all suspended however a consolidated service was run within MuDAS (Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Service) to assist patients who needed these services during this time. The Chartridge ward was reopened temporarily in Amersham during the peak period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

AA advised that throughout the duration of COVID-19 and until the services reopen, AA and her staff have kept in contact with the most vulnerable patients to ensure they had everything they needed.

BC advised that COVID-19 at its peak was not as high as expected for Buckinghamshire and that the Trust coped well throughout the peak however all routine planned surgery was postponed during this time. Urgent planned care continued for patients for whom the treatment justifies the risk. The Trust is currently working on reopening the services which were closed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The reopening of services depends on first understanding what is required to provide care safely. The requirements for this will be defined by our Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) team, the Department of Health and NHS England. Then we need to work with property services to ensure our facilities meet the requirements. The first community locations to reopen will be Amersham and Buckingham hospitals and the Brookside clinic in Aylesbury. These are due to reopen in July. Thame and Marlow CATS services will be discussed in phase 2 of the reopening of services and sites.

Government guidance is changing on a daily and weekly basis.

NCW asked if it was fair to say that Thame CATS service may not open until September 2020. BC advised this would probably be the earliest Thame could reopen.

KB asked if shielding groups can start reintegrating into the community from July onwards, why would it take so long to look at reopening Thame and Marlow CATS service.

KBcn advised that the Trust needs to do the right thing and keep patients safe. The Trust will have a pragmatic view on what needs to reopen and when, and that this will continually be reviewed until all sites are fully operational again.

KB advised that safety needs to be looked at from both sides of COVID-19. We need to balance the risk of people with long term conditions not coming in and these issues getting worse, against the risk of bringing them to a clinic during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LC advised that the Trust is focusing on the safety of our patients and staff and ensuring we have the right space and capacity to adhere to social distancing rules.

AA Operational Update –

AA advised that CATS patients are still being seen via MuDAS and the silver phone. Nursing staff have been redeployed to MuDAS and RRIC (Rapid Response and Immediate Care team).

Whilst teams have been redeployed, AA advised this is a great opportunity for the Trust to look at how the CATS service is run to ensure maximum safety for our staff and patients. AA is currently looking at hosting telephone assessments. Following research carried out for CATS patients, this particular group of patients advised that they would rather have a telephone assessment than a virtual one using whatsapp, skype, zoom software. They found this software a little confusing and daunting to use.

STCl advised that the telephone and virtual meetings had been quite effective over the last couple of months and given clinicians real insight into how a patient is and what issues they are facing.

BC advised that BHT has experienced some positives from the pandemic:

- Fewer unnecessary attendances at A&E;
- Acute staff having a better understanding, appreciation and importance of community support;
- Improved processes are being implemented within a few weeks, rather than months or years.
- Alternative forms of care have been introduced such as telephone clinics. Although these aren't necessarily suitable to be a comprehensive permanent new way of working, they have identified options for developing safer or more convenient care for some patients, with the support of (e.g.) new technology.

BC advised that phase two of the pandemic (recovery) is going to be much harder for the Trust. Conceptually at least, planning for coronavirus was simple: postpone non-urgent care, and create as much capacity for COVID19 patients as possible. The peak was lower than forecast, but the consequence of is that coronavirus will be around for longer. The recovery phase therefore means we need to re-introduce planned care alongside managing COVID19. However we now have a blank piece of paper to design how BHT and our system partner work better together.

KB asked if there had been an increase in falls and injury due to not being able to have therapy during the pandemic.

AA advised that there has not been a specific increase in falls but the better balance classes have not been able to run therefore there might be an increase in falls moving forward.

ST asked if the Trust had seen an increase in mental health concerns.

BC advised that BHT were working very closely with Oxford Health with their provision of mental health services throughout the pandemic. BC explained that mental health is the only non-covid-related clinical activity which has increased.

NCW advised that Thame Senior Friendship Centre (which used to be called Thame & District Day Centre) have a Buddy system in place with their 60 members where members phone each other to check in on very frail, vulnerable and elderly members. NCW advised that this system seems to be working very well and generally members' moods are holding up considering the social isolation many of them are facing.

3. Car Parking Update

LC advised that car parking charges have been suspended on all BHT sites during the COVID-19 pandemic but will start again on 1st August 2020 (not the 1st of July as stated in the meeting) in line with local council parking charges.

LC also advised that the Trust are rolling out a new ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) system to all sites including community sites. The work will start at the main sites (Stoke Mandeville, Wycombe and Amersham) and will then be rolled out. Once we have dates for the community sites, we will let this group know.

4. AOB

NCW wanted to thank NHS staff , on behalf of Thame residents, for the amazing work they have carried out and the conditions staff have had to endure during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marlow league of Friends echoed this thanks.

AG asked what services are still being carried out at Marlow.

BC advised that all the district nurses are still using Marlow as their base and that Care UK were looking to start physiotherapy back at Marlow.

ST advised that the scanner services at Thame have continued to function regularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and Thame League of Friends would be happy to help the Trust if BHT needed any assistance to help reopen sites.

BC thanked ST and everyone for their comments and support. BC also advised that he was going on a 4-6 month secondment within the Trust and would handover to KBcn during this time. Again, he thanked this group for their continued support and guidance.

Due to a technical issue at BHT ends, BH could not join our Zoom meeting but had a telephone conversation with BC on Friday 19th June 2020.

In an email following her conversation with BC, BH asked:

Why has Thame and Marlow been singled out for exclusion from opening and left without a future opening date?

BC responded, Thame and Marlow Community sites have not been singled out for exclusion. BHT have lots of community sites, and for the first tranche we have chosen the sites which we can open safely, quickly and with most benefit to patients. There are three sites chosen that meet this criteria, Amersham, Brookside and Buckingham. The reason for these sites being chosen is that Amersham and Brookside community sites continued to be used through the COVID-19 pandemic for urgent patients by our dermatology, dental, sexual health, podiatry, Macular degeneration and cancer services predominantly and therefore already adhered to infection prevention control guidelines. Buckingham is being reopened for urgent treatment of patients because the work needed to be carried out to make this site safe for patients and staff is minimal.

Next meeting – Thursday 13th August 2020 – Meeting room, Marlow Community Hospital – we may need to hold this meeting on Zoom again. DI to send a confirmation and papers nearer the time.