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Rob Webster CBE
Chief Executive
NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

CC:

Carol McKenna, Place Lead, Kirklees Health & care Partnership
Robin Tuddenham, Place Lead, Calderdale Cares Partnership
Jo Webster, Place Lead, Wakefield District Health and Care Partnership

7 November 2024

Dear Rob

Re: Final NHSE assurance position of proposed changes to West Yorkshire ICB's (ICB) older people's mental health inpatient services

This letter confirms NHS England's support for a decision to be made on proposed changes to older people's mental health inpatient services across three of West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board's (ICB) places. This follows the provision of outstanding financial assurances, and a small number of further non-financial assurances, in line with national NHSE service change guidance¹ and builds on a strategic sense check undertaken in 2021 and a Stage 2 pre-consultation assurance review, in November 2023.

Assurance

Financial assurances have been sought for the ICB's recommended option for delivery and have been focused on the following key areas:

- A robust and detailed financial plan from both a revenue and capital perspective, aligned to South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust's Medium Term Financial Plan;
- Evidence that the capital expenditure required to deliver the change scheme is strategically supported as a Mental Health priority across the system and
- The proposals having been subject to additional financial controls in light of the changing financial climate within West Yorkshire.

From available evidence and discussions, the programme has demonstrated financial assurance for the scheme, however the following key areas have been noted by NHSE and will need to be prioritised and acted upon as part of continued assurance for the scheme;

¹ ['Planning, assuring and delivering service change for patients'](#) (NHS England: 2018, with 2022 addendum)



- The provider and system intent to maintain financial balance into 25/26 is noted and SWYPFTs commitment to deliver increased levels of efficiency plans to support this. Whilst system plans are developed it is expected the revenue consequences of this scheme and overall SYYPFTs plan continue to be kept under review until the ICB is assured of this delivery.
- Should there be a challenging financial environment when the revenue consequences of this business case arise, we would expect the ICB and SWYPFT to ensure prioritisation across all funding sources - including (but not limited to) mental health allocations across the system, not only place - to ensure this business case is affordable on a sustainable basis.
- Given the current financial climate we would expect ICS letters of support to provide increased scrutiny on the affordability of future system investment, with assurance sought on the financial affordability in the context of overall provider and system medium term financial plans, with demonstrated system assurance and sign off that has taken place, where this involves system investment it is expected this includes consideration outside of place.
- It is also noted this strategic capital investment for this is supported based on place/provider level based on allocations, it could not be supported by a clinically prioritised capital plan across system – it is recommended that this approach is reviewed and the system considers how it is getting assurance capital system risks are being managed and there is adequate mechanisms in place to ensure capital is allocated to the highest risk/ clinically prioritised areas, particularly in relation to Mental Health moving forwards.

Further non-financial assurances have been sought to ensure that Barnsley healthcare commissioners have been able to consider any potential impacts. It is also clear that travel and transport implications have been fully evaluated for the preferred option. The ICB is advised to build on improvement work emerging through the Travel and Transport Working Group, together with the use of existing Trust policies to support people with travel challenges, to mitigate access and financial risks for patients, carers, visitors and staff. Equally, the ICB is advised to continue to consider the principles of 'train, retain and reform' within the finalisation and implementation of its workforce plan.

Conclusion and next steps

Sufficient assurances have now been obtained to support the ICB, and partners, to progress to making a final decision on the proposals. The ongoing financial assurance described in this letter will form part of routine NHSE/ICB discussions.

Thank you to the WY OPMH Transformation Programme Team who have been working with the NHSE regional team throughout this process. The proposed improvements clearly stand to deliver enhanced experiences and outcomes for local



patients and families and the team is wished well for the smooth delivery of the decision-making and implementation phases.

Should you have any further queries please contact Tim Barton (timbarton@nhs.net) and Donna Cassidy (donna.cassidy3@nhs.net).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Robert Cornell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert Cornell
Acting Regional Director North East & Yorkshire
NHS England