



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

Primary Care Cluster Priorities 2023/ 24

Summary





1. Introduction and purpose

The purpose of this summary report is to provide Health Board Leadership Team (HBLT) with a summary of the key priorities, as outlined within the draft 2023/ 24 Cluster Plans. Themes within and across Clusters are identified in order to highlight how Clusters are responding to local population need, as well as build a picture of common themes across the health board footprint.

The report provides evidence of how Clusters intend to deliver against the Ministerial Priorities around primary care access to services, as set out within this year's NHS Planning Framework:



Improved access to GP and Community Services



Increased access to dental services



Improved use of community pharmacy



Improved use of optometry services



Implementation of a 24/7 urgent care service, accessible via NHS 111 Wales to support improved access and GMS sustainability

It is important to note that full multi-professional cluster working is still in its infancy across the Health Board, and whilst efforts to ensure that Cluster Plans are reflective of the key actions for delivery across each of the contractor professions, limited round-table discussion has taken place in order to develop a comprehensive set of shared priorities. Work will commence in the New Year to build a culture of enhanced collaborative working, and shared action planning.

The deliverables outlined within this summary report represent a significant contribution to achieving the Ministerial Priorities; however, it is important that they are considered alongside Health Board and IHC actions for improving access to primary care services, which will be described in the forthcoming Primary Care Strategy.

2. (Shared) Cluster Priorities

Whilst Clusters have each identified a range of priorities for (continued) implementation, it is possible to identify a number of common themes across which cut across Clusters.

Work has commenced in order to expand the scope of Clusters to include all primary care independent contractor professions; implementation is still very much in its infancy. Therefore, whilst individual 2023/24 plans have sought to include information and priorities from across those Professional Collaboratives already established, they nonetheless continue to be 'GP heavy', particularly in terms of how Cluster funding is utilised.



It is our intention to build on this strong starting position, in order to ensure that the Cluster plans developed for 2024/ 25 are fully reflective of the shared priorities of all Professional Collaboratives within a given Cluster.

The five (5) priorities outlined below represent key shared ambitions across the Clusters:



Accelerated Cluster Development

Accelerated Cluster Development, and the establishment of Professional Collaboratives, multi-profession Clusters and strategic-level Pan-Cluster Planning Groups will continue to be a priority for Clusters and the Health Board in 2023/24.

Work here will include the further development of the required infrastructure to support collaboration, but also the strengthening of cluster planning and development work. Early conversations will commence with regards primary care/ cluster commissioning as well as the development of primary care delivery vehicles (Community Interest Companies)



Widening the Primary Care workforce / MDT

Central to the strategic vision for primary care across north Wales is the widening of the primary care workforce, and the expansion of an MDT workforce model. This way of working is central to our approach to improving access (by widening the range of professionals people are able to see in order to meet their need), and delivering greater sustainability (by expanding the workforce beyond GPs in response to recruitment challenges).

This shared Cluster priority is a continuation from 2022/23, and includes initiative such as:

- Advanced Physiotherapists, including 1st Contact MSK Physiotherapists
- Advanced Pharmacists
- Paramedic support/ mentorship programmes
- Development of HCA roles within primary care
- Advanced Nurse Practitioners, including ANP roles within care homes



Chronic disease backlog (planned care)

Whilst considerable efforts were made in 2022/23 to begin to reduce the backlog of chronic disease reviews created in large part as a result of Covid-19, workforce pressures, and the challenge a balancing 'recovery' with ongoing Covid presentations, meant that the level of progress made fell below what had been anticipated at the start of the year.



Consequently, Clusters have continued to identify reducing the backlog of planned care reviews as an ongoing priority for 2023/24. Initiatives being taken forward by Clusters include:

- Central hub to undertake spirometry assessments
- All-Wales diabetes prevention programme
- Recruitment of chronic disease nurses
- Doppler assessment services
- My Life Diabetes project
- Roll-out of Long-term Conditions Hub

Some of the initiatives being taken forward in 2023/24 represent a continuation of successful projects started in 2022/23. However, the introduction of new initiatives, which do not simply rely on increasing capacity/ offering additional sessions, demonstrates that Clusters have learnt from what did not work last year and are willing to adapt their approach.

The Health Board will continue to monitor the impact of these initiatives on reducing the backlog of chronic disease reviews in order to ascertain their success, or otherwise.



Improving the Mental Health of our communities

Providing low-level Tier 0/1 mental health support within our communities is a key priority across all Clusters, and work is set to continue in 2023/24 to ensure positive outcomes are achieved for the people, families and communities of north Wales. Clusters have continued to identify a number of local initiatives that support the delivery of Tier 0/1 mental health support, including:

- ICAN services, including unscheduled care and suicide crisis services
- GP active MIND monitoring
- Psychological trauma services

Work this year has identified the need to review the range of Tier 0/1 mental health services available within our communities, and to work with the MHLDD division in order to develop a framework and/or compendium of best practice that Clusters and the wider Health Board can benchmark it services against.

Work will therefore be undertaken across all Clusters to review the range of Tier 0/1 mental health services funded via Clusters as well as other funding sources, in order to develop a streamlined and consistent commissioning plan for implementation in 2024/25. This work shall fully align with the Health Board's 'Re-affirming Our Commitment to the Third Sector' programme.



Social models of health and well-being

Central to the strategic vision for primary care is the proliferation of a social model of medicine, which seeks to empower citizens and draw upon the assets available within communities to improve population health and well-being. Clusters have, for some time now continued to prioritise this agenda, with initiatives including:

- Community development nurse
- Support to carers
- Strengthening COTE services by using third sector and community groups
- Family well-being practitioners
- Health promotion co-ordinators

Work will continue within Clusters to deliver a social model of care. However, and working closely with colleagues in Public Health, Clusters will seek to review the range of social prescribing initiatives against a north Wales framework for delivery, and recommission accordingly. This work will feed directly into the work of Pan-Cluster Planning Groups, as it will include discussion around the appropriate use of wider partnership funding, including the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) monies.

3. Delivery against Ministerial priorities

The information below provides an overview of the actions to be taken by Clusters in 2023/24 in order to deliver against the key Ministerial priorities for primary care. **This information should be red alongside the Ministerial Priority Templates submitted by the Health Board primary care teams**, which provide a comprehensive set out actions and milestones for delivery against each of the 2023/24 Ministerial priorities.



Improved access to GP and Community Services

Whilst all GP practices are required to comply with the requirements of their GMS contracts with regards access, a key priority identified by Clusters is the East is the need to continue to work towards achieving the primary care access standards (Phase 2).

Improving access to GP and/ or community services should also be understood in its wider sense. Here then, Clusters have identified a range of opportunities to improve access to services, aligned to Health Boars vision to deliver care closer to home, and an increase in the services available within communities to meet people's needs.

Examples of initiatives being taken forward by Clusters include:

- The development and/ or expansion of treatment rooms/ primary care hubs within the community
- The improved management of frequent attenders (risk stratification)
- Home visiting services
- Care co-ordination and frailty services

In addition, Clusters will continue to implement a variety of initiatives, which enable a greater number of services to be accessed and delivered within local communities; including:

- Point of care testing
- Minors surgery training programmes
- Local ear wax services
- Catheter care maintenance services
- Dermatoscopy



Improved use of community pharmacy

A range of shared priorities for improving the use of community pharmacy services have been identified by Clusters, and include:

- Improved use of community pharmacy services
- Independent prescribing services
- Needle and syringe programmes
- Community care home services
- Blood pressure services
- Inhaler review services



Improved use of optometry services

Collaborative and Cluster working is very much in its infancy in Optometry services in north Wales. Work will commence during 2023/24 to full embed the Accelerated Cluster Development approach within independent Optometric contractors. It is anticipated that a key outcome of this work will be the improved use of optometry services.



Increased access to dental services

Collaborative and Cluster working within primary care dental services has yet to commence within the BCUHB region. Following a 'Dental Deep Dive' workshop work to establish early Collaborative conversations ahead of contract reform, will commence. A central part of this work will be to identify opportunities for increasing access to dental services at a Cluster level.



Implementation of a 24/7 urgent care service, accessible via NHS 111 Wales to support improved access and GMS sustainability

Clusters are committed to working together with the Health Board to deliver urgent same day services, with work underway to review and further refine our delivery model in north Wales.