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Coronavirus update

Welcome to the seventeenth bulletin providing you with an update of what has been taking place across Morecambe Bay to tackle the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 continues to remain high across the North West including in Lancashire and Cumbria (see page 2 for latest figures). However, you may have seen the positive news that preparations are underway to ensure people across the country can access a COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of where they live, once it has undergone strict clinical trials and approved for use by the independent regulator.

Plans are currently being produced to identify which groups will be able to get the vaccine first and how the wider rollout might look. As you would expect, this might mean that smaller numbers of people - who have been prioritised as the most vulnerable - will be vaccinated first, with larger number of people being offered later in the new year.

The NHS has well established plans for delivering and routine immunisations for children and pregnant women. Building on these tried and tested approaches, plans will support existing available services in primary care.

We want to reiterate how proud we are of our colleagues across the Bay Health and Care Partners, GPs, Integrated Care Communities, voluntary, third sector and other partners who continue to support our communities across the Bay during what has been an extremely hard time. As we move into winter it is important that we continue to support each other and follow the guidance from the government to help combat the spread of the virus.



Aaron Cummins



Jerry Hawker

Joint Chief Executive Officers - Bay Health & Care Partners

Tackling the pandemic

Within the following pages you'll find out more about how we are continuing to respond to the pandemic.

COVID Vaccination Programme

Since the summer, the NHS has been working with its partners to put plans in place to ensure it can safely and effectively deliver a mass COVID-19 vaccination programme when a vaccine becomes available. A multi-agency programme board is now in place for the North West and an initial operational plan has been developed, which will be further refined over the next few weeks. Extensive preparations will ensure people across the country can access a vaccine, regardless of where they live, once it has undergone strict clinical trials and approved for use by the independent regulator.

NHS planning is based on the latest information on the vaccine development including which groups will be the priority to get vaccinated early in the programme. This might mean that smaller numbers of people – who have been prioritised as the most vulnerable – will be vaccinated first, with a larger number of people being offered later in the new year.

The NHS has well established plans for delivering routine immunisations. Building on these tried and tested approaches, plans will support existing available services in primary care.

As clinical trials progress and we understand more about the requirements of the vaccine – such as storage, transportation and how it is administered – we will continue to refine our plans to ensure we have the right resources in the right place. Like seasonal flu, it is important that certain groups who might be more vulnerable receive their vaccination first. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) regularly review the latest information on vaccine trials and update their advice on the groups that should be prioritised for vaccination, if and when a vaccine is available. The latest information can be found [here](#)

We will ensure we have enough trained and experienced vaccinators to deliver an effective COVID-19 vaccination programme without impacting on the other NHS services our patients rely on, including primary care. Running a series of tests and practice exercises over 1-2 days, have helped national, regional and local planners refine and improve their plans. These practical sessions have helped NHS planners build in feedback and improvements from a range of voices, including volunteer members of the public, GPs, NHS partners, Royal College of Nursing and health service operations teams. We will provide a safe and effective vaccination programme while continuing to offer timely access to other NHS services. Plans will be finalised when we have certainty on when and what vaccines will be approved for use.

We are working closely with relevant Royal Colleges to plan for the safe and effective delivery of both Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations. This includes involving healthcare professionals during the design of delivery models, pilot exercises and working through the regions to manage expectations on roles and COVID-19 vaccine supply to the mass and mobile sites. It is important that health and care staff are vaccinated against the seasonal flu virus as soon as possible this winter, so that the COVID-19 programme can start as soon as the vaccine is ready to deploy.

Further updates on the COVID-19 programme will be shared as soon as possible. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the programme, please speak to your line manager

You can find more information about the COVID vaccine research programme:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/research/coronavirus-vaccine-research/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-advice-from-the-jcvi-25-september-2020>

Reactivation of NHS Nightingale Hospital North West

The NHS Nightingale Hospital North West in Manchester has been reactivated to provide additional capacity for the region's health and care system.

The Nightingale is providing rehabilitation and assessment under the national Discharge to Assess Pathways 1 and 2 for patients who do not have COVID-19 and who need further support or assessment before they can be discharged home or to their usual place of residence. This is creating additional capacity in acute hospitals for patients who are severely ill with COVID-19 or other conditions during the pandemic.

Some alterations have been made to the facility during the summer, which now includes a patient gym as well as a home-style bedroom and kitchen for occupational therapy assessment and rehabilitation.

The Nightingale is staffed by GPs, and nursing and therapies staff from acute and community providers, and from NHS Professionals and other agencies.

The NHS Nightingale Hospital North West admitted its first patients on 28 October, and will operate for as long as is necessary.



Latest Regional Figures

NHSE/I release regular national data that show how trusts across the country are performing against a number of measures. You can find the latest figures [here](#).

Additional beds

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust is working with partners to provide additional step-down beds in the community for non-COVID negative patients who need rehabilitation before they return home.

The additional beds will help to free up capacity in the Trust's hospitals over the winter months. The Trust is working to secure approximately 16 beds at Risedale, in Barrow, and 12 beds at Kendal Care Home by the end of November.



‘Get Millom Moving’ Initiative awarded £3,000

An innovative and exciting project to inspire people living in Millom to move more was awarded £3,000 last month by Sport England. The ‘Get Millom Moving’ initiative is aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of people who are managing three or more long-term conditions.

Ninety people who are managing from long-term conditions such as asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, hypertension and diabetes will take part in a month-long exercise programme. They will be encouraged to exercise individually following the government’s restrictions for coronavirus (COVID-19) and will be guided by Millom Integrated Care Community’s (ICC) Case Team if they need any advice or support.



The funding will be used to buy each person taking part:

- a set of exercise equipment
 - an exercise diary
 - a pedometer – an electronic device which counts steps
 - a pulse oximeter - measures the pulse and the percentage of oxygen saturation in the blood.
- The device is used to take pulse and oxygen readings before and after exercise.

‘Get Millom Moving’ is led by Millom ICC, Active Cumbria and Sport England.

Jenny Riley, Development Lead for Millom ICC, said: “The concept of the project came about from some preventative work we were looking into regarding people with long-term conditions and how increasing their exercise could vastly improve their health and wellbeing. Millom ICC has been using indoor sports equipment for well over a year now with the elderly to improve health and wellbeing, core strength and mood improvement. Before the pandemic, there were monthly coffee mornings where people could come and have a coffee and a natter and then have an hour’s exercise in Waterloo House Surgery’s new physiotherapy suite.

“This project is quite unique and emphasises the importance of health and wellbeing of people with long term conditions. It encourages them to take control of their health and hopefully encourage them to keep this up once the programme is finished.”

Richard Metcalf, Active Cumbria Development Officer, said: “This innovative project with Millom ICC expands on our previous work within the surgery. With the onset of the COVID pandemic insight was indicating that those with long-term health problems were less likely to be active, therefore further compounding physical and mental health issues. The Sport England - Tackling Inequalities Fund/ was specifically set up during the summer to address inactivity and support those with long term health conditions to increase activity.

“Delivering the activity within their own homes will certainly help the patients at this difficult time and by using the activity diary we will be able to monitor progress. One step is better than no steps, five minutes gentle activity is better than no minutes.

“We are really keen to get as much learning from this project and then expand across the county. We greatly appreciate Jenny and Millom ICC staff for their commitment to this project and supporting their patients.”

Transformation of Outpatient Services will see greater emphasis on digital innovations

Outpatient Services at UHMBT are being transformed to enhance patient experience and to deliver high-quality care in more efficient and sustainable ways.

In 2018/19, approximately 540,000 outpatient appointments were attended; of these, 157,000 were new referrals and 382,000 were follow up appointments.

To help improve Outpatients, we are aiming to modernise and digitise the service. By getting the transformation right, it will reduce delays and harm, reduce appointments of low clinical value, improve patient experience, improve staff experience, improve performance and reduce waste in Outpatient Services.

During the COVID-19 response, we reduced face-to-face appointments and introduced new technologies such as video consultations on the 'Attend Anywhere' and 'AccuRx' systems which enabled us to continue seeing urgent outpatients in a safe location. The response to video consultations has been phenomenal from both a patient and a staff perspective.

Dr Colin Brown, Chief Clinical Information Officer, UHMBT, said: "It's important that we provide the safest possible care for our patients during the pandemic. The innovative Attend Anywhere and AccuRx online conferencing tools allow clinical staff to provide clinics from any setting which is a great benefit to those clinicians who are shielded and working from home during this time."

To read the full story on the plans for Outpatient Services at UHMBT, please click [here](#).



Lina finds her purpose

A woman from Barrow-in-Furness says the Building Better Opportunities Getting Cumbria to Work project (BBO GcW) has helped her find a purpose and put a road map in place to achieve her career goals.



Lina Harb Tyson said she had felt 'a bit lost' after moving to the United Kingdom from Lebanon and having a new baby. But BBO GcW had offered her invaluable advice and support and she was now hoping to find paid work and also set up her own interpreting business.

You can read the full case study [here](#).

TYPE 2 DIABETES
KNOW YOUR RISK

NHS

Every 2 minutes

someone finds out that they have Type 2 diabetes.

HEALTHIER YOU
NHS DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAMME

People across Morecambe Bay supported to ask for help

Families and individuals across Morecambe Bay who have become vulnerable due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic are being encouraged to ask for help as part of the #Ok2Ask campaign.



Back in March, Morecambe Bay's Integrated Care Communities (ICCs) identified that people who had lost their jobs due to coronavirus were struggling to feed themselves and their families and did not realise that they could access support.

#Ok2Ask

The ICCs worked closely with around 30 organisations to create a leaflet, Twitter campaign and a series of helpful films to break the stigma around asking for support and to showcase where people can access mental health, financial, health care and food bank services. By July, one of the #Ok2Ask films on Facebook had reached 8,541 people (23% male and 75% female). The top audience for views were women aged 35 to 44. Morecambe Bay's #Ok2Ask videos can be found here <https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/morecambe-bay/news/latest-videos-ok2ask-campaign>

Since the campaign launched in March partners involved have seen the following:

- Lancaster Coronavirus Support Line has helped around 1,200 some of the most vulnerable and elderly people across the city. The support line is staffed by volunteers from Hope Church Lancaster.
- SAFE: Pop Up Project has engaged with 27 young people up to 25 years old across the Morecambe, Lancaster and Carnforth area via zoom, offline activity packs and phone calls.
- Carnforth COVID-19 Support Group along with the support of Carnforth Town Council, Carnforth Free Methodist and a group of volunteers, have supported residents by doing their shopping, collecting prescriptions, walking their dogs and offering advice and support. The volunteers have also referred people most in need to the Salvation Army. The charity has recorded more than 500 records of assistance including helping people with foodbank parcels in conjunction with Morecambe Bay Foodbank.
- The Well Communities has successfully engaged over 350 people from April to September in Lancaster and Morecambe, has received 20 more phone calls to its Morecambe office and around 15 more website request for help every week.



Emma Paul, Carnforth ICC and East ICC Development Lead, said: "When the virus first hit in March, one of our development leads highlighted that there was a couple that had come forward who had lost their jobs and could not feed their family. The couple had well-paid jobs but had no savings and didn't realise they could access support from local food banks or financial support.

"This really rocked us all and we knew we had to do something to break the stigma of asking for help and communicate what help and support people can access across the Bay.

"The campaign was adopted in South Lakes to start with and has been rolled out in North Lancashire, South Cumbria and North Yorkshire."

The organisations that have supported the project are: The Well Communities; SAFE: Pop Up Project; Alzheimer's Society; St Mary's Hospice, Ulverston; Barnardo's; Lancashire Age UK; Lancaster City Council Community Hub; Samaritans; Hope Church Lancaster; Carnforth and Milnthorpe Primary Care Network; CancerCare; Ulverston Food Waste Project; South Lakeland District Council; Cumbria County Council – South Lakes Community Learning and Skills; South Lakes Citizens Advice; Cumbria Tourism; Windermere and District Foodbank; Cumbria Victims Charitable Trust; Barrow Borough Council; B.M.G Barrow Men's Group; Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service; Manna House, Kendal; Age UK Barrow and District; Carnforth COVID-19 Support Group; Copeland Borough Council; Lancaster District CVS.

Since the #Ok2Ask campaign was launched, Cumbria County Council has extended their support for people facing hardship through the Help is Here campaign with 250,000 support booklets delivered to households in Cumbria. Lancashire County Council is supporting the #LancsTogether campaign, working alongside emergency services, NHS organisations, district councils and a number of local and national organisations, to keep critical services running, look after our most vulnerable people and to support and protect the communities of Lancashire.



Karen Evans, Chief Officer, South Lakes Citizens Advice, said:

“The campaign has helped us to reach those people in the South Lakeland district who don't normally access our services – it's been a different channel that has helped us to make sure that people are aware of what we offer and the level of support we can give to them. #Ok2Ask has also been a fantastic opportunity to build new relationships with different organisations.”

Keeley Wilkinson, Project Manager for SAFE: Pop Up Project, said: “We have been able to support the emotional health and wellbeing of these young people and young adults during this time and have seen a rise in the amount of 1:1 support we have been providing for young people and adults that use our group.”



Lancashire and South Cumbria residents urged to spot the signs early for Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

Almost 10,000 people are newly diagnosed with pancreatic cancer each year in the UK. The disease affects men and women equally, with incidence increasing from the age of 45. The average age at diagnosis is 72. Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month's goal is to bring much-needed focus and attention to the disease, especially the need for increased awareness of cancer signs and symptoms.

Pancreatic cancer is the fifth most common cause of cancer death in the UK and has the lowest survival rate of any of the 21 common cancers – with fewer than 4% of patients surviving five years or more.

The NHS is committed to providing essential cancer services during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the outbreak, there was a sharp drop in the number of patients referred for investigations and appointments for suspected cancer. This has improved for most types of cancer, as more people are talking to their GPs about their concerns.

For cancers of the upper digestive tract, which includes pancreatic cancer, during the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic, the number of people presenting to their GP with symptoms that may result in a referral to hospital was less than 40% of the expected numbers. Although this has increased to some degree, and is now nearer 85%, any drop in referrals is concerning. More patients are being diagnosed in A&E, when it is more likely they will be unwell or have advanced disease.

It is important people don't wait to contact their GP during this second national lockdown or during local restrictions. The NHS is still here for you if you have signs or symptoms of cancer. Anyone with concerns should continue to come forward for help and treatment. NHS services have put a range of measures in place so that people can be treated safely throughout the pandemic. Pancreatic cancer is a common disease, but often it may not have any symptoms, or they might be hard to spot and this makes it difficult for individuals to get diagnosis and treatment.

Symptoms of pancreatic cancer could include:

- jaundice: the whites of your eyes or your skin could turn yellow, you may also have itchy skin, darker pee and paler poo than usual
- loss of appetite or losing weight without trying to
- persistent changes in bowel habits – poo becoming loose or harder
- back pain
- pain at the top part of your tummy and your back, which may feel worse when you are eating or lying down and better when you lean forward
- nausea – feeling sick
- vomiting – being sick
- new diagnosis of diabetes.

Read the full article on the signs and symptoms of pancreatic cancer [here](#).



‘If you have become jaundiced (where the white of your eyes or your skin goes yellow) or have lost weight with abdominal or back pain, nausea or vomiting, or a change in your poo, please contact your GP for advice. It’s really important to get any symptoms of pancreatic cancer checked out as soon as possible. Early diagnosis saves lives.’

Dr Neil Smith, Local GP and Primary Care Director for Lancashire and South Cumbria Cancer Alliance

What to do if you have a dental problem

If you have a dental issue during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that you know how to access help when you need it.

All dental practices in the North West are now open and have resumed face-to-face care. Due to the requirements around personal protective equipment and infection protection and control measures all dental practices are currently unable to see as many patients as before and may not yet be able to offer the full range of services due to increased infection, prevention and control measures. Some dental practices may be required to close if the staff are required to self-isolate. In this case, patients will be advised by the dental practice of how to access emergency and urgent dental care until face-to-face care is available again.

If you need dental help or advice, please contact your dental practice over the phone first, rather than in person. You will be assessed over the phone and may be given advice, medication or a face-to-face appointment if needed. To find out more click [here](#).

Watch Morecambe Bay Respiratory Network COVID-19 education sessions

Morecambe Bay Respiratory Network recently held COVID-19 education sessions for all staff across our Bay Health and Care Partners. If you did not get the chance to join the sessions you can watch them on the below links.

Session 1 focused on acute presentation and management of hospitalised COVID patients and COVID-19 medical pathway. You can watch session 1 (held on Tuesday 13 October) here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILyJdCtnyY>

Session 2 focused on COVID-19 follow up in primary care and COVID-19 rehab pathway from conception to implementation. You can watch session 2 (held on Wednesday 4 November) here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Miw7Osk1Ndg>

Morecambe Bay Primary Care Winter Resilience Service

The Winter Resilience Service was born from the learnings of Phase 1 of COVID as well as the recent series of outbreaks in GP practices that have affected practices' ability to function. The service is intended as a supportive safety net for practices, so if they are affected by a significant increase in demand or staffing issues, there is an alternative back up plan that they can activate. This also provides system resilience so a primary care function can be maintained, managing patient demand in the community, and preventing it from tipping into A&E and other urgent care services. It is Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group's (MBCCG) constitutional duty to ensure there is general medical services access for patients within Morecambe Bay, so this plan goes some way to provide that assurance.

Communications to Date

The plan was developed jointly with MBCCG, several GPs, and was also shared with the GP Federation for discussion on operationalising the plan. MBCCG has engaged with practice managers by e-mail and through telephone contact, as well as through the new Winter Dial-In Teams call each week and practices are very grateful for the supportive offer. The model has also been shared at Integrated Care System (ICS) level, where it was well-received and has led to other Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) areas contacting MBCCG for further details so they can set up a similar service. The plan consists of three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold (see infographic).

Bronze Level

The Rapid Assess and Treatment (RAT) element of the Bronze level went live for North Lancashire practices on Monday 2 November 2020, and for South Cumbria practices on Monday 9 November 2020. Due to the general increase of demand within the practices, and increasing workforce pressures, the Bronze RAT was initiated to assist practices with in-hours appointments. The bronze level can easily be stepped up into Silver or Gold within a few hours' notice, which is invaluable as we move into the Winter period and Phase 2. Within the Bronze RAT, there are approximately 230 daily appointments that are available across all practices within Morecambe Bay (to provide an equitable service). All appointments are released on the day, so there is no advance booking because MBCCG may need to withdraw the appointments and give them to specific practices as the need arises on the day (this would be difficult to do if they are advance booked). It has been well received and used by the practices, with great feedback and suggestions coming from the practices to shape the service. MBCCG will be monitoring it on a regular basis to ensure that it is being used correctly and equitably across Morecambe Bay and will speak to practices that are utilising more than their fair share. It is very flexible and therefore can be changed at short notice if required. The other elements of Bronze are stepping down of services; this hasn't been activated yet but could be in future, as demand increases. The buddying arrangement is already in place for many practices and well used for support around workforce issues, MBCCG has encouraged practices through the Winter Dial-In to make the necessary arrangements now so buddying can work efficiently when required including enabling smart cards and data sharing.

Silver and Gold Levels

These levels are specialised support packages for individual practices and the practice would contact MBCCG to have a discussion about what support is needed and it would be agreed on a practice by practice basis. Support available includes additional remote consultations, face to face appointments at a local hub as well as a call handling service. At Gold Level, the practice is essentially unable to function and this is where the entire practice demand would be re-directed. The technology and capability that sits behind enabling Silver and Gold have been tested, so it works when required. MBCCG have also established a contingency fund that practices can access if they have staff that they could use to backfill workforce gaps, for example, part-time staff may be able to work overtime. This model may be preferable for some smaller or rural practices where the patients have a close relationship with their practice clinical teams.

Remote Kit Drop

This has been designed and enabled due to ICS funding for IT kit, where the MBCCG could order more laptops and kit to enable remote working. There is a stock of laptops, all charged and loaded with practice software ready to drop off if a practice needs this support to get staff enabled to work from home. This has involved a lot of support from UHMBT IT also, to have the capability to set up the kit as well as be able to add the temporary correct users at short notice and deliver the kit.

Practice Resilience Scheme for Morecambe Bay CCG Practices



Bronze Level Response (Demand Increasing/Staffing Partially Reduced)



Practice refers selection of patients to Remote Access Team (RAT) for remote telephone/video consultation

Practice still sees face to face appointments if required after RAT assessment



Practice postpones non urgent services e.g. minor surgery clinics, joint injection clinics, coil fittings and chronic disease reviews



GP Practice calls in buddying arrangement with neighbouring practice to assist with some demand

Silver Level Response (Demand Significantly Increased/Staffing Significantly Reduced)

OPTION 1



Practice refers all patients to Remote Access Team (RAT) for remote telephone/video consultation

Practice still sees face to face appointments if required after RAT assessment

OPTION 2



GP Practice requests money to activate contingency staff pool (from own staff resource)

OPTION 3



GP Practice calls in buddying arrangement with neighbouring practice to take calls and/or appointments

Gold Level Response (Practice Unable to Function)



Practice informs CCG and places message on website and phoneline
Practice diverts all calls to: Local Provider Call Centre



Call centre admin triage calls and refer to Remote Access Team (RAT) for remote Telephone/Video Consultation



If face to face appointment required, patients sent to local hub (GP Practice or Local Provider)

Recovery Solution (Silver and Gold Levels)



Rapid Access Remote Kit Drop
Delivery of Enabled Laptops with Soft Phones and AlwaysOnVPN so practice can function remotely

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Community support for residents

Cumbria CVS has been involved with Support Cumbria, an official collaboration of partners across Cumbria, working together to provide community support to residents and organisations during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. It is a central database of individuals who have registered their interest in volunteering in Cumbria, during COVID-19 and for use in future emergencies

Support Cumbria was launched at the start of lockdown in March 2020 to enable anyone interested in volunteering to register their volunteer offer, e.g. shopping, driving, collecting prescriptions, telephone befriending, etc. Any new COVID-19 related volunteering opportunities were then sent to potential volunteers in targeted geographical locations, relevant to their chosen area of interest.

During our second lockdown, the request for more volunteers in South Cumbria continues. There is an ongoing need for more volunteers to help organisations providing vital support - e.g. helping with Community Meals from Westmorland General Hospital and Furness General Hospital, Light Up Lives, Action for Well Being and the Lighthouse in Kendal.

Cumbria CVS has helped these groups recruit new volunteers using Support Cumbria, as well as advertising through our existing networks and social media.

During 2020, all organisations, whether working in the statutory or the third sector have had to adapt to the challenges and opportunities that COVID-19 has brought, we've been creating new ways to support them through those challenges.

An example is the work Cumbria CVS has done to recruit a team of digital virtual volunteers to help raise the profile of volunteering in Cumbria via social media but also to allow us to look at new ways of recruiting and supporting volunteers. We've created a Volunteer Induction video, new volunteering videos to attract more people into volunteering, interviewed volunteers via WhatsApp or Zoom and encouraged volunteers to access online training to support them in their roles, e.g. Health Education England e-Learning for Healthcare (HEE e-LfH) Volunteer Passport training. See here <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/coronavirus>

Cumbria CVS can support organisation to recruit volunteers and implement good practice in volunteer management.

Please visit the Cumbria CVS website for volunteering resources and information relating to COVID-19 at <https://cumbriacvs.org.uk/coronavirus/covid-19-volunteering/>

Resources include:

- basic Volunteer guidelines
- safe return to volunteering and checklist
- retaining volunteers during a pandemic
- COVID-19 Volunteer handbook
- COVID-19 Volunteer risk assessment
- online Volunteer training

For more information or if Cumbria CVS can support your group or organisation contact Judith Smale, County Volunteer Support Officer, Cumbria CVS on 01768 800350 or email info@cumbriacvs.org.uk

Supporting the mental health of children and young people

Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria (HL&SC) is seeking the feedback of young people and their parents and carers to help it develop its Healthy Young Minds website, which contains information, resources and guidance to support young people's mental health.

Due to COVID 19 restrictions, HL&SC has been unable to carry out focus groups in person and have therefore looked for alternatives such as online video calls and surveys to hear from local people. HL&SC would like to invite you to complete our short, anonymous survey to help it understand what content you would like to be able to access on the [Healthy Young Minds website](#).

Minister of health thanks ambulance service

North West Ambulance Service is delighted to have received a personal letter of thanks from Minister of State for Health, Edward Argar MP to the entire ambulance workforce for its outstanding efforts over the past year and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter reads:

“While the ambulance service always does amazing work; day in, day out, year in, year out; they have faced significant additional challenges this year. I recognise the great flexibility and resilience demonstrated by ambulance staff who have taken on new roles and adapted their ways of working while under intense pressure. I am also extremely proud of the collaboration that has taken place across ambulance trusts, including their provision of mutual aid across regions to ensure patients receive the help they need.



“The diverse skills and experience of all ambulance staff; whether it be giving advice to people over the phone through 999 or NHS 111 calls, assisting with patient transport, or helping patients on scene as part of an ambulance crew; coupled with the amazing dedication and compassion of the teams never fails to strike me, and goes to the heart of why our ambulance services are rightly held in such high regard and affection by me and the people of this country. As Minister for the ambulance services, it is always deeply humbling to me to see the amazing work the services do, and I am incredibly proud to work with you all. Please do pass on my huge gratitude to all who work in our ambulances services and for all they do.”

We are the NHS campaign

Now in its third year, the ‘We are the NHS’ campaign is back to celebrate the extraordinary work of nurses, allied health professionals and healthcare support workers and inspire a new cohort to consider a career in the health service and be part of the NHS’s future. Recruitment for the NHS has never been more vital, as those on the frontline of healthcare continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating their unwavering commitment, humanity and passion in keeping the UK public safe. ‘We are the NHS’ shines a light on some of the most in-demand roles in the NHS; all varied, exciting and challenging in equal measures. You can find out more [here](#).

Cumbria continues to deliver services

Cumbria County Council has continued to deliver services, whilst making savings despite a very challenging year. During 2020 the impact of COVID-19 has been significant on everyone and it has placed additional pressure on the council's budget and on its finite resources. Despite this additional pressure, the council has remained focused on protecting the most vulnerable and on supporting Cumbria's communities.

Funding for the council remains an unknown as the government has taken the unusual, and unprecedented step, in announcing that it will not set an Autumn 2020 budget. There will be a one-year Spending Review for 2021/22 which will be published on 25 November - which means that Cumbria, alongside all other councils, will be unclear about any future financial settlement and this makes forward planning very difficult. With no budget announcement from government, we project the assumption that Cumbria County Council will have an additional £17 million of savings to find in the coming year to achieve a balanced budget.

Pressures on Council services continue to increase and costs continue to rise. One key decision facing the council is whether or not to increase council tax in the coming year. After very careful consideration and given the uncertainty of future funding Cumbria County Council is now seeking resident's views on a proposal to increase the county council's share of council tax by 1.99% for next year. You can read the full story [here](#).

New Digital Infrastructure Strategy for Cumbria

Cumbria County Council's Cabinet has agreed the council's new Digital Infrastructure Strategy which sets out ways in which to improve broadband and mobile connectivity across the county. You can read the full story [here](#).

PALS service

PALS is running a full service, just not face-to-face. PALS has been offering a full service throughout COVID and will continue to do so. Please share this message with everyone.

- The PALS telephone number is 01539 715577
- The PALS email address is pals@mbht.nhs.uk

Christmas guidance set out for University students

The Government has published guidance on how higher education providers can support students to travel home at the end of the term, if they choose to do so, while controlling coronavirus transmission risk. To view the guidance please [click here](#).

Find the latest advice for Lancashire

You can find the latest Government advice for Lancashire, information about COVID-19 outbreaks and council services at <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus/>



New £2.5 million operating theatre opened

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT) is delighted to have launched a new £2.5 million operating theatre at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI). The new operating theatre was officially handed over by the contractors to the Trust on Friday 30 October with a go live date of Monday 2 November. It features the latest design and technology to enhance care for patients and create a vastly improved working environment for staff.



The new theatre has been built to provide capacity while existing operating theatres at the RLI are being refurbished and upgraded. The project was managed by the UHMBT Capital Services Team and the building work was funded with Public Dividend Capital (PDC) from the Department of Health.

Danny Bakey, Deputy Associate Director of Operations for the Critical Care and Surgical Care Group at UHMBT, said: “We are very excited that the work on the theatre is now finished and that we can use it to provide additional capacity. The theatre will give us much more flexibility and offer us facilities that will deliver an enhanced experience for our patients and staff.”

The completion of the new theatre means that there are now seven operating theatres in Lancaster - five main theatres and two theatres in the Women’s Unit. The new theatre is sited between the Cardiac Care Unit (CCU) at the RLI and the existing operating theatres. You can read the full story [here](#).

COVID-19 and the Northern Powerhouse

The Northern Science Health Alliance has released a report which puts a spotlight on the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on the North compared to the rest of England. You can read the full report [here](#).

Have your say on Bay proposal

Residents, businesses and organisations can now have their say on a proposal to create a new unitary authority around Morecambe Bay. A consultation launched on 10 November after three neighbouring councils formally submitted an outline proposal to Government. Barrow Borough Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council agreed the Bay bid on Thursday and leaders of the three councils are urging residents and businesses to ‘Back the Bay’ and show their support for the new-look authority proposal. You can read more [here](#).

The local government in Cumbria is also proposing to replace its seven existing council’s with one new council. You can read more about the proposal [here](#).

Find the latest advice for Cumbria

You can find the latest Government advice for Cumbria, information about COVID-19 outbreaks and council services at <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/>



Keep up to date

We are keeping staff, stakeholders and the public up to date in various ways, including a daily email bulletin for staff, this e-update for stakeholders and regular information for the public.

If you want to keep up to date, you can access recent news on our website:

www.healthierlsc.co.uk/morecambe-bay

Or social media:

Twitter: @MorecambeBHCP

Facebook: UHMBT



This newsletter has been created by the Bay Health and Care Partners:

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT); Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group (MBCCG); Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative; Lancashire and South Cumbria Care NHS Foundation Trust; Cumbria County Council; Lancashire County Council; North West Ambulance Service (NWS).