

PE1845/HH: NHS Dumfries and Galloway submission of 16 January 2023

Dumfries and Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership is acutely aware of the challenges in ensuring access to health and social care within remote and rural areas.

This is reflected prominently within its Strategic Commissioning Plan 2022-25 which was adopted on March 10 2022, and which is designed so that models of care, informed by a strategic needs assessment, reflect the needs of local communities.

The first tactical priority set out in the Strategic Commissioning Plan is seeing people supported to live independently at home and avoid crisis, with sustainability of community-based care and support a prime consideration.

The second tactical priority is that fewer people experience health and social care inequalities, while the third is that people and communities are enabled to self-manage and are supported to be more resilient.

The approaches set out in Strategic Commissioning Plan underpin a number of pieces of work currently being undertaken within Dumfries and Galloway which address challenges around health and social care provision in remote and rural areas.

Under the umbrella of the Community Transformation Programme, we are seeing the continuing development of multi-disciplinary teams within our communities, helping people to live in their own home for longer, and providing support around discharge from hospital and community rehab.

Meanwhile, a review of care and support at home provision is currently taking place, informed by widely-acknowledged challenges around recruitment and retention of staff. This work involves looking at how need is managed, and around potential innovations - working with partners including third sector colleagues around maximising community resources.

Additionally, a major piece of work is getting underway reviewing the community bed base across the entirety of the region. An extended period of engagement and consultation proposed to conclude in September will inform the creation of a model for provision within our communities.

Beyond this, another major engagement programme is taking place around maternity services in Wigtownshire, working with the community to consider the most safe, appropriate model for these services going forward.

All of the work referenced here very much takes into account the needs of people living in remote and rural parts of Dumfries and Galloway.

The Health and Social Care Partnership has a role in the work currently being led by Sir Louis Ritchie on the future of rural health care, and organisationally is very keen to be involved in future national work around defining approaches to health and social care within remote and rural areas.