

Leeds Community Equipment & Telecare Service – Budget Pressure and Waiting List

Date: 21st July 2021

Report of: The Deputy Director Integrated Commissioning

Report to: The Director, Adults & Health

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the current financial position of Leeds Community Equipment and Telecare Service (LCETS) which has resulted in a backlog of equipment purchases for adult customers with assessed needs, and to gain agreement on next steps to address this.

The report:

- describes the current issue and its impact
- outlines recent initiatives that have taken place within the wider service to achieve greater efficiencies
- proposes action to alleviate the immediate issue
- proposes further analysis as to whether this is a recurrent under-funding issue that requires an increase to the joint Leeds City Council/Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group pooled fund.

The initiative contributes to the Best Council Plan by supporting self-care, with more people managing their own health conditions in the community. It also supports delivery of Leeds' Health & Wellbeing Strategy, in particular Priority 12, the best care, in the right place, at the right time.

Recommendations

The Director of Adults & Health is recommended to:-

- a) Note the current financial and backlog position of LCETS.
- b) Approve the one-off use of £213k Spring Budget improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) underspend to alleviate and clear the current backlog.
- c) Note the plan to carry out further financial analysis of the position of LCETS to establish whether there is an underlying recurrent funding issue and report on this in September 2021.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

LCETS is a Leeds City Council service that is core-funded through a pooled budget of £5.8M which is part of the Better Care Fund Section 75 Partnership Agreement between Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (Leeds CCG) and Leeds City Council (£2.9M LLC/ £2.9M CCG). This includes funding for both adults' and children's equipment. Leeds City Council (Adults & Health) has the lead commissioner role within this arrangement. LCETS provide quarterly performance data to commissioners through contract meetings and LCC and NHS adults and children's commissioners meet quarterly to monitor.

As at June 2021 there were 145 requests for new equipment that have been placed on a waiting list due to managing the budget spend and ensuring that funding for new equipment can last the whole financial year. The total value of the equipment on the waiting list is £213,000. This breaks down as follows

Table 1 – LCETS Equipment Waiting List June 2021

Equipment type	No. items	Approx. £ value
Seating	67	£120,000
Shower chairs	34	£30,000
Specialist beds, walkers and home other home aids	44	£63,000
total	145	£213,000

The average current waiting time (taken from those that are still waiting) is 84 days.

In 2018/19 LCETS received additional funding to deal with the waiting list and at the end of financial year 2018/19 the waiting list was: 15 people/ total value £14.59k.

Since then the waiting list has grown:

At the end of Financial year 2019/20 the waiting list was: 152 people / total value £140K.

At the end of Financial year 2020/21 the waiting list was: 169 people / total value £209k.

The relationship between additional in-year funding and the level of the waiting list in recent years will be used as part of the analysis that to inform future service funding requirements.

The proposal is being put forward in order to clear the immediate pressure on the service so that service users can receive their equipment as soon as possible. Further assessment will then be conducted on whether the current pooled budget is sufficient for 2022/23 and what contingency can be identified with the Clinical Commissioning Group for any shortfall.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: all

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

The proposal will allow those people who are currently waiting for equipment (145 equipment items) to be provided with those items with immediate effect (subject to supply chain limitations outside of the control of the service).

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

This proposal has been developed with partners through the existing contract management arrangements. The existence of the waiting list and the need to find a solution has been discussed at the Multi-agency LCETS Advisory Group as part of the service performance reporting. The group includes a broad range of stakeholders including representation from LCC, Leeds CCG and the Telecare and Equipment Service User Group (TETSUG).

The Executive member briefing for this report is on 16th July 2021.

What are the resource implications?

The clearing of the existing backlog requires £213,000 of non-recurrent Spring Budget (Improved Better Care Fund) underspend as a one-off addition to service funding as an internal Adults and Health transfer. The longer term revenue requirement for LCETS, initially for 2022/23, is currently being assessed and this assessment will be presented back to the Integrated Commissioning Executive in September 2021 to allow time to build into LCC and CCG planning and budget setting processes for 2022/23. Any resulting resource implications for LCC and the CCG will be taken through appropriate governance processes at that point.

There are a number of factors that affect demand for community equipment and therefore have a financial impact:

- Increased demand due to demographics (ageing population; children and adults living longer with physical impairments)
- Increased costs due to inflation (including equipment costs)
- Increasing demand for more expensive (Level 2 and 3) equipment with higher unit cost
- An expectation of ever faster response times in order to support 'system flow' (e.g. to support Discharge to Assess, Home First etc.)
- An increasing strategic focus on providing care within people's own homes rather than in hospital or in a care home (e.g. Virtual Wards)
- An increasing strategic focus on prevention and self-management
- Over specification of assessor equipment requests

It should be noted that the service has undertaken and is exploring a number of options to drive down costs and make efficiencies. These include:

- Improved stock management of peripheral stores
- Monitoring assessor decisions/ equipment prescribing
- Review of monitoring of reuse of existing equipment
- Review of the Level 1 stock list
- Reaching re-use targets (see Table 2 below)

Table 2 – Recycling (re-use) performance

Outcome	Indicator	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
			2019/20	2019/20	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
Recycling of equipment is maximised	% equipment by value that is re-cycled	80%	Adults 77%	Adults 75%	Adults 80%	Adults 84%	Adults 84%	Adults 85%	Adults 83%	Adults 91%

What are the legal implications?

The immediate funding will allow people with an assessed need for equipment to receive it more quickly.

The injection of £213k non-recurrent into the LCC LCETS service makes this a Significant Operational Decision, and is not eligible for call in.

The report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

There are still significant issues with supply chains for the production and international shipping of community equipment. In such circumstances, LCETS will explore alternative equipment options and/or will keep service users/their assessor updated on progress.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

The initiative supports Health and wellbeing by supporting self-care, with more people managing their own health conditions in the community and by working as a system to ensure people get the right care, from the right people in the right place

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

Do nothing – this would mean that people who have had their needs assessed as requiring equipment, would continue to wait for equipment. This may mean that alternative and more intrusive care, e.g. home care input, is required. Doing nothing would be negative from a customer care perspective.

b) How will success be measured?

Success in the short term will be measured by customers no longer waiting for equipment beyond the agreed timescales (subject to supply chain dependencies).

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

Immediate in order to clear the backlog.

Appendices

Equality Assessment

Background papers

None