

30th October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Brent Council Winter Plans**

I am writing to provide an overview on the Brent LA winter plan for 2020- 21. Brent LA has taken note of the directives in the letter, entitled '*Winter discharges: designated settings*' issued on 21 October 2020, from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to directors of adult services in England. We have also appraised our system in view of the guidance; '*Adult social care: coronavirus (COVID-19) winter plan 2020 to 2021*' that sets out the key actions for local systems and adult social care providers in England to cope with the upcoming winter pressures.

A full evaluation of the requirement's and Brent's adherence to these is included alongside this letter.

The general prediction is that this winter will be more challenging for the health and care system with a requirement for an integrated approach. Brent LA has worked in collaboration with local health partners and providers to develop comprehensive and clear contingency plans for managing through the winter surges and responding to the predicted surges in the Covid-19 pandemic. The plan feeds into and aligns with the London Northwest NHS Trust System Partners Winter Plans, which have been developed concurrently in line with NHS requirements, as well as our response to the market sustainability questionnaire (both attached for reference).

The plan includes, although not exhaustively, the following initiatives:

- **Managing demand (admission avoidance);** Brent LA is working closely with London North West and the rapid response service based in Emergency Department with a direct link to social care. Additionally, Brent Duty Team is a front door service providing rapid assessment and provision of social care services to prevent avoidable hospital admissions. The Duty Team service has a direct link with GPs and ICP networks.
- **Discharge hub;** Brent has been working with system partners to discuss proposals and develop the discharge hub which serves as single point of access for referrals, with multi disciplinary arrangements to screen and triage referrals to the appropriate discharge pathway
- **Housing/handyperson services;** Brent has made provisions to complete housing assessments for older people and people with mental health out of hospital setting, providing handyperson support to facilitate cleaning and removal of obstacles for safe mobility at home.
- **Discharge to Assess (D2A);** Brent LA has fully implemented discharge to assess, making it accessible to all new and existing service users in all major acute and non acute hospitals, with adequate care provision – commissioned from a number of home care providers
- **Workforce planning;** Brent LA has a robust contingency planning arrangement for staff especially in the Hospital Discharge team that includes planning annual leave during the winter period to ensure that there is availability of social care staff at the peak season.

Recruitment is in progress for additional 4 x FTE locum Social Workers funded through the BCF/Winter pressures to provide additional capacity during the surge

- **Capacity and resources;** to support the winter pressure surge Brent LA has;
  - 11 block beds purchased to support placements and respite in a nursing home.
  - 5 discharge to assess beds purchased where assessments can be carried out during the winter period
  - 10 extra care flats available for use as step down facility to support discharges and assessments out of hospital.
  - 20 intermediate care beds jointly purchased with Brent CCG to provide short term inpatient rehabilitation and Reablement in a secure environment
  - A dedicated clinical team of 16.5 people supporting both the beds and to support at least the equivalent of 15 beds rehab support at home. The team will be aligned to the ICP team, remaining under the employment of LNW Trust
  - Procurement of double-up packages of care for up to 5 people per week in receipt of rehabilitation at home for an average of 3 weeks, procured by the council on behalf of the CCG
- **Health Inequalities Programme;** established a community action plan to drive this joint work to protect people from COVID-19 and tackle entrenched health inequalities in the short, medium and long term, and focussed at both a hyper-local level and Brent-wide
  - Co-ordinating a range of activities across partners to mitigate the potential impact of a second wave of Covid-19.
  - Increasing uptake of preventative services in the short-term (flu vaccinations and health screenings).
  - Improving control and management of specific health outcomes in the medium and long-term (diabetes, hypertension, obesity, mental health and cardiovascular disease).
  - Raising health knowledge and self-care in the long-term.
  - Increasing access to health services in the short and long-term.
- **Care Home Quality and Support;** this established forum has continued to provide support for providers, working closely with ASC commissioning team and the local NHS Enhanced care home, CCG, public health and NW London teams to provide daily points of contact and to support responses to any issues, and rollout of PPE, testing and infection control training and general support
- **Governance and activity monitoring;** Brent LA and partners have put in place regular review of system performance through the weekly reports on length of stay, delayed transfers of care (DTocS), Home First discharges and monthly reports on care purchases. Monthly operational and steering group meeting of system leaders to monitor system performance and address bottlenecks, with regular joint Gold command meetings to address and unblock any operational issues.

I trust that the information provided here and in the attached template gives you the assurance that our winter plan is a result of robust and collaborative approach to take us through the challenges ahead.

If you require further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me as above.

Yours sincerely,

**Carolyn Downs**  
**Chief Executive, Brent Council**