

Report for Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel – Monday 13 May 2024

Health Inequalities funding update

BSW Integrated Care Board is working to tackle health inequalities across BaNES, Swindon in Wiltshire. In BaNES, a health inequalities core network team was established in May 2023 which has been working with the BaNES Integrated Care Alliance to improve health and reduce inequalities respectively through the local implementation of the BSW Integrated Care Strategy and the B&NES Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The team works closely with partners in a number of areas including overseeing a cross-partnership BaNES Health Inequalities Network, awareness raising, supporting health inequalities work at the RU and in primary care, holding outreach events and coordinating and allocating health inequality-related funding streams and leading applications for any further grants relating to health inequalities.

Grants have been awarded to 12 projects in BaNES for 2024/25 including inclusive afterschool clubs for children with SEND, perinatal mental health support, targeted family support for vulnerable families in Twerton and developing a new service for people experiencing homelessness to access palliative and end of life care.

Royal United Hospitals awarded £21.6m grant for energy efficiency projects

A £21.6million decarbonisation grant will bring the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust one step closer to achieving its net zero goals.

The grant has been awarded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero as part of the Salix Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and will fund improvements including more environmentally friendly lighting, insulation, and heating and cooling controls.

Most of the funds will be used to de-steam much of the RUH's 52-acre site, a process that will see the hospital's ageing heating systems replaced with more energy-efficient options such as heat pumps. Together, these initiatives will make the hospital more sustainable, and a more pleasant environment for all those who use it.

When the proposed improvements are completed, by 2026, they will result in an estimated 24 per cent annual reduction in carbon emissions over which the RUH has direct control. This equates to just over 3,400 tonnes of carbon dioxide – the equivalent of just under 1,000 return flights to Seoul, or more than 150,000 car journeys from Bath to London, every single year.

Dental Van update

On 7th February, the Department of Health and Social Care published its Dental Recovery Plan with the ambition to make dental services faster, simpler, and fairer for our population. One priority is to bring dental care directly to under-served, more isolated communities via the deployment of mobile dental vans. On the same day as the dental recovery plan was published, the Secretary of State named the 12 ICBs where dental access remains most challenging, which included BSW ICB.

Since then, scoping work has been carried out nationally to map the details of existing vehicles delivering dental services across the country, with consideration to potential staffing models to reflect the expectation that the vans will deliver Band 1, Band 2a and Band 2b dental treatments. Options are now being appraised for the acquisition of vehicles, and a national market engagement exercise as part of a procurement exercise has taken place. We are still waiting for the service specification. We are keen in BSW to ensure these plans support and supplement the ongoing local work with the Public Health teams to support access and our focus on inequalities and oral health plans – as presented at the last ICB Board meeting on 28th March. We will be using our collective learning gained during the pandemic on the use of other non-van options, such as the use of local facilities for pop-up services.

We are working across the South West and as an ICB we are scoping the unmet need and vulnerable populations and key demographic areas for a targeted approach, including specific areas for the van to deliver services with a view the service will commence September / October 2024.