

July 2009.

Paper for Joint Commissioning Group - Adult

Subject: Project Plan and Impact of Flu Pandemic

Overview:

This paper aims to give the group an update on the progress of the project plan for re-designing substance misuse services in Sunderland.

In particular, owing to the current flu pandemic, all NHS hosted staff working within the partnership may be co-opted to work within Anti-Viral Centres. This considerably reduces capacity to carry out the necessary work in support of the plan.

Summary:

At the meeting of the Joint Commissioning Group on 06 July 2009, it was agreed that a major re-design of substance misuse services in Sunderland was necessary. The main drivers behind this were:

- A requirement to achieve greater value for money from existing budgets and address over commitment of Pooled Treatment Budget (approx. £400,000 savings required in 2009/10)
- The necessity to halt declining performance and improve upon it
- The necessity to remove duplication and wastage from the current system, introduce greater coordination of care and provide an emphasis on recovery/successful client journeys through treatment

At the time of writing this document, the Project Initiation Document for this piece of work has been circulated to members for consideration and feedback.

Final agreement to proceed must be obtained from the Safer Sunderland Board (sitting on 31st July 2009), though it is felt to be very unlikely that the board will disagree with the course of action.

Project work was due to begin immediately following authorisation by the board, though subsequent to the meeting on 06 July 2009 it has become apparent that PCT staff from the partnership are to be co-opted to work within Anti-Viral Centres as part of emergency flu measures.

As such, the Director of Commissioning and Reform for NHS SoTW has advised us that major pieces of work, such as the re-design of services, should be delayed until emergency flu measures are completed.

The main issues caused by the delay are as follows:

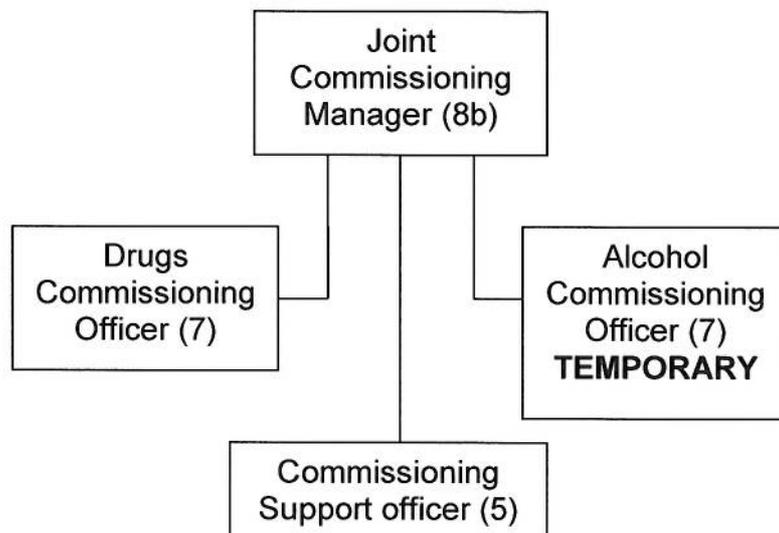
- Inability to reduce costs within 2009/10 to the extent required

- Instability of services during the period leading up to redesign
- Necessity to improve performance in spite of identified systemic problems with the system

However, in a positive sense, the delay will allow greater scope for a rigorous and thorough consultation process to take place.

In order to mitigate the issues above, the following measures and further steps are offered for consideration:

- Delay the commencement of the project to allow sufficient staff to be made available to carry out the work properly and in compliance with World Class Commissioning principles
- Ensure that Safer Sunderland Board approval is gained to proceed in due course
- Utilise the interim period to carry out a comprehensive package of consultation work in advance of the re-design
- Reduce costs to the partnership via the following measures:
 - Suspend/abandon appointment of Service User Involvement Officer to the Commissioning Team and seek other arrangements
 - Stand down components of the Independent Review Team, retaining the Hidden Harm Coordinator, Tier 4 Coordinator and admin/finance post
- Utilise the interim period to consolidate the core commissioning team structure as follows:



It is estimated that the measures above could make cost savings of £100,000.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that -

- The group agree to delay the commencement of the re-design project, but also that in the mean time it is passed through the Safer Sunderland Partnership
- The group consider the emergency measures and authorise cost savings to be made to minimise over commitment of funds in 2009/10
- The group allow the Joint Commissioning Manager to consolidate the team during the period of delay, as described above

Ben Seale
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