Dear Primary Care Colleagues

Thank you for all that you and your staff continue to do for your patient population at such a difficult time. The CCG are endeavouring to support you, on-going, with patients on your Serious Mental Health (SMI) and Learning Disability (LD) register with their annual review checks, which are a notoriously difficult task for surgeries.

As you are familiar with in recognition of the pressures faced by Primary Care due to the Covid-19 Pandemic we commissioned First Option Health Care (FOHC) to mobilise three teams to work across BSW and undertake annual health checks. This resource commenced from March and to date has completed 749 AHCs.

The team undertake all elements of the SMI checks [including blood associated with MH related medication), and part 1 of the LD AHC - encouraging individuals to book part 2 through their surgery, In addition pulse oximetry baseline reading are taken for all, individual health care action plans are updated, people are also provided with individualised health and wellbeing resources, and sign posted to local services and sources of support. Patient records are updated with the corresponding review codes applied. We are also working with Third Sector Service to introduce outreach practitioners to further support and enable people to engage with their reviews, and any after care support they may require, we anticipate this will commence early autumn.

It was originally planned to conclude the contract with FOHC at the end of June/Q1, however in recognition of the ongoing pressures, and in entering into a new year and therefore refreshed requirement for AHCs we have worked with FOHC to extend the contract until at least Q3.

Feedback from people having their AHC’s and Primary Care colleagues is that SMI reviews have been very well received, with a number of life threatening conditions identified and managed through the reviews. Whilst the LD AHCs have also been well received by people, a concern has been raised about how readily people are prepared to book in a second appointment for the physical examination, and also a preference has been shared by many primary care colleagues to manage LD AHCs in house.

On the basis of the feedback, and with a view to optimising the impact of their resource, for the extended period FOHC are available to undertake outstanding 21/22 SMI AHCs. They can of course undertake part 1 of any LD AHCs if you feel this is a particular pressure, your patients with more complex needs, or those who require a home visit – which FOHC can accommodate.

A DPIA has been completed to enable FOHC to appropriately access System 1, but they will of course need each practice to enable their system permissions.

To reaffirm, FOHC completing AHCs for your patients does not detract from the associated payments.

As some context to the current level of need across BSW we have 5,264 outstanding SMI AHCs, and 4,640 outstanding LD AHCs.

To opt in to have FOHC undertake any of your outstanding AHCs, or if you have any queries contact georginaruddle@nhs.net (Georgina Ruddle, Assistant Director Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Autism, BSW CCG).

Kind Regards,

Georgina

Dr Georgina Ruddle C.Psychol

Assistant Director Mental Health, Learning Disabilities & Autism

NHS Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Groups,

Southgate House, Devizes, SN10 5EQ

Email: georginaruddle@nhs.net