

Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board

NHS Board Meeting

19 August 2008

Board Paper No. 08/37

Report by the Director of Acute Services Strategy Implementation and Planning

WINTER PLAN 2008/09 – PROGRESS REPORT

Recommendation:

Members are asked to:

- Receive an update on Winter Planning for 2008/09, which includes reference to lessons learned from 2007/08 and the work underway in developing the 2008/09 Winter Plan.

1 Purpose of the paper

The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of lessons learned in 2007/08, to provide an update on issues raised nationally and regionally and to set out the work underway in developing the winter plan for 2008/09 and the key timelines.

2 Background

The 2007/08 Winter Plan for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde was developed on a single system basis with all partners in the delivery of key services involved. A system wide Winter Planning Group was established and in addition an Executive Group with representation at senior level from across the key organisations was established. These groups ensured a co-ordinated approach to the planning and delivery of services and are being further developed in progressing with the 2008/09 Winter Plan.

2008 continues to see a rise in both attenders and admissions across the A&E departments. Although the winter plan period is generally assumed to be mid December to end March, May and June 2008 have had the busiest weeks in terms of A&E activity and admissions in the last 5 years. Despite this, the Board continued to achieve 98% against the 4 hour A&E Waiting Time target each month since December 2007.

In planning winter 2008/09, it is important to understand the reasons why there is an increase in activity, to put in place any initiatives to stem the growth and also being clear about the expectation of target delivery across all parts of the organisation.

3 Lessons learned from 2007/08

The lessons learned from 2007/08 to guide winter planning for 2008/09 are as follows:

3.1 Communication

This covers two aspects – communication between partners and the work of the Corporate Communications team.

It was acknowledged that communication between partners was aided through the establishment of a Board wide group enabling partners to develop relationships so that they knew who to contact when necessary.

Corporate Communications played a key role in promoting the message about how to access healthcare services, particularly during the extended festive period. This work was undertaken in collaboration with the national team to ensure a more corporate approach Scotland-wide. As in previous years, a booklet was produced and circulated widely. The key message was that ‘we’re open’.

It has been agreed that this dual approach to communication is vital in planning for winter 2008/09.

3.2 Information Sharing

Through the Health Information and Technology Directorate, work was undertaken to ensure that information, both proactive and real time, was shared with all partners.

Although generally well received by partners, and acknowledgment that the information was beneficial, it has been agreed that more work is needed in refining this for 2008/09.

3.3 Escalation Plan / Senior Decision-making Rota

An Escalation Plan and Senior Decision-making Rota were produced to detail the specific pathways of communication and how/when to move to the next stage. Contact details were available for a Director across each of the principal partners on each day of the extended festive period.

This is to be repeated in 2008/09.

3.4 Occupational Health

The Flu Vaccination Programme for staff raised a number of issues in 2007/08. Uptake was generally low, with percentages of staff groups ranging from 2-23% across GGC.

Work is underway in planning how uptake can be significantly increased in 2008/09.

3.5 Winter “All Year Round”

Historically, planning has occurred for pressure periods over the winter months due to a number of reasons – increase in cold/influenza type viruses, adverse weather etc. However, as highlighted in 2 above, it is becoming increasingly more common for peaks in activity to happen all year round.

This is one of the reasons it was decided to continue with the Winter Planning Group and Executive Group all year round. Target delivery remains a priority 12 months of the year.

3.6 Public Holidays

In 07/08, it was widely acknowledged that Christmas Day and New Year's Day falling on a Tuesday helped ease the pressures in the system as GP surgeries, Pharmacies and other support services worked as normal on both Mondays. Having GP surgeries opened as normal on Monday was seen to be a major contributory factor to successfully dealing with pressures over the festive period.

However, as in 2006/07, the two public holidays each week will run immediately before a weekend, effectively meaning a four day out-of-hours period in the 2008 winter / festive period.

This has been raised with the national team (see section 4 below) and will continue to be raised as a concern. Planning has commenced as to how the issue will be addressed locally for the 2008/09 festive period.

3.7 Innovation

In attempting to address problems encountered in previous years, a number of new initiatives were introduced in 2007/08. Many worked well and were positively welcomed by patients. However some did not work so well - for example, extra consultant-led clinics were introduced on 24 and 31 December to provide assistance to GPs and offer an alternative to admission. These clinics had no attenders.

Work is underway to 'assess' the value of the new initiatives introduced and which should be in place in 2008/09. Key to this is identifying the resources necessary in introducing additional services / initiatives. In considering proposals for 2008/09, learning from other Boards across Scotland will also be important.

3.8 Winter Plan Executive Group

The "day to day" running of NHSGGCs Winter Plan was overseen by the Executive Group. This group met as often as required and comprised a senior representative of the key partners involved in Winter Planning. The Executive Group reported to the Board wide group on a regular basis.

This group will continue to meet in planning winter 2008/09.

4 Progress to Date

Since the update report to the Board in February 2008, the Winter Planning Group and Executive Group have continued to meet to progress the winter planning process for 2008/09. The Winter Planning Group in focussing on lessons learned in 2007/08 in its April 2008 meeting agreed there were key messages to be shared with the Scottish Government Health Directorate (SGHD) and the national Emergency Access Delivery Team.

4.1 Issues raised with the SGHD and Emergency Access Delivery Team

Issues raised are as follows:

- The 4 Day festive holiday period – the team were asked to consider GPs opening on the Saturday mornings to break up the 4 days as this had been a key factor in how well Christmas and New Year 2007/08 had been managed. The national team considered the suggestion and advised that this would not be possible but that alternatives should be developed which would further support the Out of Hours GP services to meet the demand. A national group has been established to look at this along with identifying potential funding sources.
- The National Advertising Campaign – this is considered as an initiative which contributed greatly to managing winter and the team were asked to ensure that a similar campaign would be supported in 2008/09 and that it be funded on a recurring basis. It was agreed nationally that this would be funded and co-ordinated through NHS24.
- Clarity about the role of the Emergency Access Delivery Team in co-ordinating Winter Planning at a national level. It has been confirmed that the group will continue to have an overview and be the forum to which national issues should be identified for discussion/resolution.

As a result of this correspondence, it was agreed that Regional Events would be held in July 2008 and a National Winter Planning Event would be held on 23rd September 2008.

4.2 Regional Event

On 31 July 2008, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde in collaboration with the Emergency Access Delivery Team, hosted a Regional Winter Planning event in Glasgow. This event was very well attended by Boards and other partners across the West of Scotland. The purpose of this event was to:

- Share the learning from 2007/08 winter planning experience and celebrate areas of success;
- Explore emergent issues and outline how further improvement to winter planning can be made;
- Highlight any new issues for 2008/09, and discuss possible solutions;
- Review the critical path and timelines for robust whole systems winter planning for 2008/09;
- Ensure that arrangements are streamlined across the whole health community, including escalation systems;
- Explore the process and work on reducing A&E attendances;
- Consider the improvement journey in regard of the maximum 4 hour wait and further opportunities to ensure sustained performance.

In addition, a 14 Day Challenge was set for each of Board areas. This is to identify, by site, the number of repeat attenders over last 6 months, the top 20 reasons for attending, by age group; by admission; by transportation and to map this against the SPARRA 2 data. The aim of this is to identify specific areas where work could be progressed with community partners to reduce attenders at A&E, by supporting people within their community setting. Work to address this is underway.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DATE OF MEETING.

The point was very clearly made at the event about the impact of the 4 Day Festive Holiday period and a plea to consider how, in the medium and longer term, GPs can be asked to support this. For 2008/09, it is important Boards learn from other Boards initiatives that are being put in place to counter the impact. There were also messages about the involvement of Health Protection Scotland (HPS) to ensure co-ordinated national approach to outbreak management and the impact of Managing Medical Careers (MMC).

4.3 Preparation for the National Event on 23 September 2008

As last year, it is expected that Boards at the highest level will be represented at this event. Boards are expected to share their draft winter plans at the event with finalised Winter Plans being submitted to Boards for formal approval in October 2008.

In preparation locally, a Winter Planning meeting will be held on 11 August 2008 to ensure all partners have in place their winter planning processes for 2008/09. All partners have been asked to update and refresh their section of the winter plan to be available by the 4th week in August. These will be collated and shared by end August for further refinement before submission to the national event. Following the national event amendments will be made as appropriate and the winter plan will be considered by both the Winter planning Group and Executive Group before submission to Board in October 2008 for formal approval.

5 Recommendation

The NHS Board is asked to:

- Receive an update on Winter Planning for 2008/09, which includes reference to lessons learned from 2007/08 and the work underway in developing the 2008/09 Winter Plan.