

Health and Wellbeing Board

15 November 2023

Better Care Fund 2023-2025: Quarter 2: Quarterly Reporting Template

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr J Somper, Portfolio Holder for People – Adult Social Care, Health & Housing

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: V Broadhurst, Executive Director of People - Adults

Report Author: Sarah Sewell

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

1. To retrospectively approve the Better Care Fund (BCF) Quarter 2 2023/24 Quarterly Reporting Template.

Reason for Recommendation:

1. NHS England (NHSE) require the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) to approve all BCF plans, this is one of the national conditions within the Policy Framework. This includes planning documents at the beginning of a funding period, and template returns reporting progress against the plans mid-year, and at the end of the year.
2. There is usually a relatively short window of time between NHSE publishing the reporting templates and the submission date. NHSE allow areas to submit their plans under delegated authority, pending HWB approval. At the HWB meeting on 12 January 2022 delegated authority to approve BCF plans, if a HWB meeting could not be convened within the NHSE sign off period, was granted to the Executive Director for People – Adults following consultation with the HWB Chair.

3. NHSE published the Quarterly templates during the last week of September 2023, setting a mandatory return date of 31st October 2023, therefore submission was made on behalf of Dorset Council and Dorset NHS in line with delegated approvals. Retrospective approval is therefore sought from the Board at its meeting on 15th November 2023.

1. Report

- 1.1 The Quarter 2 Quarterly Report is a single document (Appendix A) that consists of several elements:
 - 1.1.1 Confirmation that National Conditions are being implemented
 - 1.1.2 Reporting of local performance against the BCF Metrics in Q1 and Q2
 - 1.1.3 Narrative against Capacity and Demand Assumptions
 - 1.1.4 Refresh of Capacity and Demand Data for November 23 to March 24
- 1.2 In 2023/24 the BCF provides Dorset with total funding of c.£146m.
- 1.3 The Dorset health and social care landscape continues to challenge performance; Dorset are on track to meet 2023/24 targets for:
 - 1.3.1 Avoidable Admissions
 - 1.3.2 Discharge to Normal Place of Residence
 - 1.3.3 Falls
- 1.4 Performance is not on track for:
 - 1.4.1 Rate of Permanent Admissions to Residential Care
 - 1.4.2 Reablement
- 1.5 Performance in relation to permanent admissions to residential care is an area Dorset Council have been closely analysing as despite an improving availability of homecare, admissions were higher than was expected. Over the last 6 months, the rate of admissions appears to have slowed from the strong trajectory seen over the 18 months prior.
- 1.6 This measure tracks only new admissions and does not account for overall movement in the care home population. Analysis shows that whilst it appears there is an increased need for Care Home beds, the DC funded care population has remained stable. Care Home occupancy (from Capacity Tracker) is around 85% of available beds which suggests that current CH capacity is not under

pressure. Permanent admissions are occurring due to movement from Community ASC (home), hospital discharge and capital depletion.

- 1.7 Close monitoring of this indicator continues as business as usual within Dorset Council Adult Social Care.
- 1.8 In relation to Reablement performance, the availability of therapy support continues to challenge our ambitions for Reablement in Dorset. Collaborative work across the System is ongoing, with proposals in train to attract therapists that can be dedicated to support implementation of therapy led Reablement. We continue to utilise Dorset's bedded Reablement capacity as a route to support individuals requiring more significant care at home as a step-down option prior to being supported at home. This supports a journey of recovery to more resilient independence, reducing re-admission risks. Again, this is being kept under close review by Dorset Adult Social Care as business as usual.
- 1.9 Despite performance against the above metrics being off target, there are related achievements for Dorset to be proud of. As described in Appendix A our ongoing implementation of a Discharge to Assess Model is enabling more people to be supported home from hospital more swiftly, with local home care market recovering during the last year and now offering sufficiency to support flow out of intermediate care pathways onto long term care where needed.
- 1.10 Capacity and Demand data has been refreshed, although this is an area that Dorset have requested additional support from the National Team. Initial conversations are scheduled with BCF Team in early November.
- 1.11 Despite there being some gaps in capacity to meet anticipated demand, Dorset has a strong narrative around our collaborative System approach, particularly to embedding Discharge Assess which provides System Resilience. Whilst Winter will undoubtedly challenge the Dorset System, our quarterly report evidences our plans to support and respond to pressures.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The Council and Dorset NHS are required to work within the financial envelope and to Plan, hence continuous monitoring is required. Joint commissioning activity and close working with System partners, including Acute Trusts, allow these funds to be invested to support collective priorities for Dorset.
- 2.2 The Joint Commissioning Board of the Council and Dorset NHS continue to monitor BCF budgets and activity for 2023-25 Plan.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 All partner agencies are mindful in their strategic and operational planning of the commitments, which they have taken on to address the impact of climate change.

4. Well-being and Health Implications

- 4.1 Allocation of the BCF supports individuals with health and social care needs, as well as enabling preventative measures and promoting independence.
- 4.2 Dorset, like many other areas across the South West and nationally, is continuing to experience many challenges in providing and supporting the delivery of health and social care. For Dorset, as referenced above, one of the highest risks continues to be the challenge brought about by lack of therapy led care and support.

5. Other Implications

- 5.1 Dorset Council and Dorset NHS officers will continue to work closely with Dorset System Partners to plan measures to protect local NHS services, particularly around admission avoidance and hospital discharge to ensure flow is maintained to support and respond to additional demand.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 Dorset Council and Dorset NHS officers are confident the BCF Quarterly Report provides appropriate assurance and confirm spending is compliant with conditions.
- 6.2 The funds provide mitigation of risks by securing continuation of essential service provision and provides preventative measures to reduce, delay and avoid demand.
- 6.3 Dorset is actively working to alter approaches that enable enhancement of provision to mitigate risks, and promote recovery, regaining and maintaining of independence.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.1 It is important that all partners ensure that the individual needs and rights of every person accessing health and social care services are respected, including people with protected characteristics so the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 are met by all partners.

8. Appendices

A: Better Care Fund 2023-25: Quarter 2 Quarterly Reporting Template

9. Background Papers

[2023 to 2025 Better Care Fund policy framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/better-care-fund)

Health & Wellbeing Board, 20th September 2023, Item 6 : [Better Care Fund report.pdf \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](#)