

Cabinet

25 February 2025

Questions submitted by Councillors

Question from Cllr Gill Taylor

NHS Continuing Healthcare (NHS CHC) is a package of care for adults aged 18 or over which is arranged and funded solely by the NHS. In order to receive NHS CHC funding individuals, have to be assessed by integrated commissioning boards (ICBs) according to a legally prescribed decision making process to determine whether the individual has a 'primary health need'.

The initial application is carried out with a health care professional, there is then an assessment to decide if there are grounds to progress the application. There are several routes to apply depending on need but many residents apply through the Standard NHS CHC route. Nationally the conversion rate for this is around 20%, it is a post code lottery and I'm pleased to say Dorset is higher than the national average at 34%. This does however mean that 66% of applications are turned down. (Q1 24/25 figures)

For residents who go through the application process, it is really traumatic when they are already dealing with a very difficult situation. I'm saying this from personal experience. When the applicant is self funding it means that, if refused, they will get no financial assistance with the health care aspects of care.

For residents who are not self funding, there is an impact on the budget of Adult Services. The needs of the client are assessed and where necessary they are supported in applying for CHC. If they are turned down, as 66% of them are, the council is liable for the cost of all their ongoing care.

Due to my personal circumstances, I speak to many health care professionals who have given me anecdotal stories of residents they are trying to help being refused.

I understand that concerns have been raised from a member of the public whose mother has applied for CHC and also from the MP for West Dorset.

I have previously asked for this issue to be scrutinised by the People and Health Scrutiny Committee due to the impact it is having on self funding residents and the Dorset Council and I ask the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to make this request again.