

The West Midlands Cancer Alliance (WMCA)

23 March 2021

Board Briefing Note

For the attention of WMCA board members, accountable officers, CEOs, cancer managers and cancer leads in CCGs and trusts:

The West Midlands Cancer Alliance (WMCA) Board met on 23 March 2021 to review the work and progress of the partner organisations in the WMCA. The meeting was chaired by David Loughton CBE, CEO of the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (RWT). The Board has representation from the six West Midlands Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) from both commissioning and provider organisations. It also has representatives from specialised commissioning, primary care, Public Health England, Health Education England, Healthwatch, Macmillan, Cancer Research UK and a patient advocate.

Actions from WMCA board meeting 8 December 2020:

- Gaynor Walker raised the NHS statement at a national level for consideration and David Loughton followed up regionally to expedite the statement in the Midlands.
- David Loughton contacted Simeon Green to offer support round accessing primary care and provided feedback on what proportion of A&E attendances were as a result of not accessing primary care.
- Belinda Dooley has liaised with STPs to gain the hospice overview with which further work is still ongoing prior to a more detailed update being provided.
- Cancer collaborative and EAG feedback reported back to the board and in part covered off by the Cancer Collaborative update below.

Response to Covid-19 and Update

The main areas of focus in the last two months has shifted from the three adopt and adapt programmes; endoscopy, cancer and breast screening, to supporting the recovery of cancer surgery, mutual aid through the cancer hub and cancer performance. The key elements of the cancer recovery plan that NHSE/I have supported to date have been:

- Getting accurate **data** - Understanding the scale of the problem;
- Utilisation of the **cancer hub** and supporting clinical **prioritisation**;
- Maximising use of **independent sector**;
- Seeking **inter regional mutual aid**.

Finance 2020/2021 and Forward Planning 2021/2022

The funded is to be distributed in two ways. Firstly, a 'fair shares' allocation to support delivery of restoration and recovery of cancer services, early diagnosis projects, delivery of Faster Diagnosis Standard and timed pathways, personalised care, treatment programmes and funding for the core team. A targeted allocation of monies will be available to support national priority programmes such as Rapid Diagnostic Centres mobilisation and Lung Health Check programme expansion. At the time of meeting 2021/22 planning guidance. and subsequent funding allocations had not yet been notified to alliances. The WMCA have commenced planning based on funding allocations previously notified by the national team in preparation.

Transformation updates

WMCA eMDT Platform; The framework for the eMDT system has been built and is intended to enable access to radiological images and reports to ensure these are available for MDT purposes in order to generate timely and effective patient treatment decisions. In addition, the approach aims to standardise and regionalise MDT information requirements to increase equity across all tumour specific MDTs. The initial focus is on the four challenged tertiary referral pathways (Upper GI, Lung, Head & Neck, Gynaecology) as the primary use for this system.

Digitalisation of Pathology; The proposed service model for the West Midlands will link the cellular pathology departments across ICSs which has the potential for improved diagnostic timelines as well as increased efficiency and productivity and most importantly for the patient benefit. Work to finalise all governance arrangements is anticipated to be completed prior to the end of March 2021 deadline.

Rapid Diagnostic Centres; Work to mobilise RDC pathways across the WMCA has regained some momentum as COVID pressures ease and ICS plans to mobilise pathways are getting closer. The appointment of an RDC clinical lead has been successfully completed and Dr Paul Ferguson, from UHNM, will be working with the alliance to help lead this programme. The connection to the emerging Community Diagnostic Programme is also being built and further work to align these programmes is in development.

Lung Health Checks; The planned expansion of the programme is expected to be extended to 50 sites across England in 21/22. Additional information from the national team is due to be released imminently. WMCA is working with colleagues from PHE to consider regional population characteristics so to identify where lung cancer outcomes could be most greatly improved. Dr Imran Hussain from UHNM is to start working with the WMCA for one day a week as well as offering support to the Coventry and Warwickshire STP to help guide and expand this programme.

Cancer Collaborative Update

An introduction to the concept and greater context provided, about the developing commissioning approach, based on the good work already achieved by the Cancer Collaboratives over the past 12 months. The proposal focuses on those more specialist services, where networks can be further established to deliver greater economies of scale as well as achieving equitable and sustainable recovery of specialist cancer services. Clinical stewardship training is also being planned to train those leaders empowered to inform and deliver future initiatives.

Grail Study

The West Midlands have been selected to participate in a national study and the need to recruit 20,000 volunteer patients to participate is the ambition. The trial is due to start late summer. The blood test aims to trial the identification of cancer markers within the blood so to diagnose cancer at an earlier stage and improve future population outcomes. Further work is required to ensure the messaging / communication is clear and concise, as is the need to effectively manage any increases in the number patient who receive a cancer diagnosis.

For further information please contact Belinda Dooley, Head of West Midlands Cancer Alliance, email: bdooley@nhs.net , Telephone: 07811489265.

Date of next Board Meeting

Tuesday 11 May 2021

Please find below a table showing you who your West Midlands Cancer Alliance STP Provider/CCG representatives are:

STP	Cancer Alliance Board representative STP Provider and CCG Representatives
Coventry and Warwickshire	Lydia Fresco/ Rachael Danter Lydia.Fresco@uhcw.nhs.uk rachael.danter@cwstp.uk
Staffordshire	Christopher Luscombe / Mark Seaton Christopher.Luscombe@uhnm.nhs.uk Mark.Seaton@northstaffs.nhs.uk
BSOL	Mark Cook / Harvir Lawrence Mark.Cook@uhb.nhs.uk Harvir.Lawrence@nhs.net
Hereford & Worcestershire	Jon Barnes / Graham James / Mari Gay Jon.Barnes@wvt.nhs.uk Graham.James3@nhs.net marigay@nhs.net
Shropshire & Telford	Stephen McKew / Steven Trenchard Stephen.Mckew@nhs.net steve.trenchard@nhs.net
Black Country	Matthew Lewis / Paul Tulley Matthew.Lewis@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk p.tulley@nhs.net