

PROPOSED CONSULTATION ON A FUTUTRE MODEL FOR THE REFFERAL AND PROVISION OF HEARING AIDS FOR ADULTS WITH MILD HEARING LOSS

To: HEALTH COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 16 March 2017

From: Director of Corporate Affairs, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, Jessica Bawden

Director of Transformation & Delivery: Primary & Planned Care, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, Sue Watkinson

Electoral division(s): Countywide

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable

Purpose: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG have been developing a revised policy on the provision of hearing aids. The revised policy stipulated that people with moderate or severe hearing loss be provided with hearing aids but that, people with mild hearing loss would not be provided with NHS hearing aids. This paper is asking for approval to proceed to consultation on the revised policy proposals.

Recommendation: The committee is asked to approve the process for public consultation on a future model for the referral and provision of NHS hearing aids for adults.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In January 2017 a briefing note was sent to the members of the committee detailing this proposed consultation. This report provides more details on that consultation and the appendices are the draft consultation document and draft consultation process plan for approval.

At present the testing and provision of hearing aids are available via NHS services to patients with any degree of hearing loss.

In the same way that the CCG now asks patients to buy medicines for minor conditions over the counter from the pharmacy or supermarket, we propose to ask people to provide their own hearing aids when their problem is assessed as mild with the agreed exceptions.

The proposed reduction in service is only the provision of the hearing aid, not the testing or other non-hearing aid assistance to patients with mild hearing loss. The CCG will continue to fund hearing aids to people with moderate, severe or profound hearing loss.

- 1.2 The CCG has to evaluate every service that it commissions to see if it offers good quality, outcomes, and is good value for money, as well as whether it is an effective and equitable way of allocating our resources for the benefit of the whole population.
- 1.3 The proposal would save the CCG approximately £392,000 over each year if fully implemented.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is proposing a Clinical Policy to restrict provision of NHS hearing aids in adult patients with mild hearing impairment.
- 2.2 It is important to note:
Provision of hearing aids for moderate or greater degrees of hearing loss will continue as will all hearing testing.
- 2.3 There are a number of conditions and circumstances where even mild hearing loss can have more significant effects on patients and these are proposed to be as follows. Patients in these categories would not be expected pay for hearing aids due to the increased burden on them that even mild loss can cause.

We propose no restrictions on the provision of hearing aids for the following, even if their hearing loss is mild, as it has more significant consequences for these groups of people:

1. Patients under the age of 18

2. Patients with:

- hearing loss since childhood
- a high level of suspected or confirmed diagnosis of dementia
- a learning disability
- an auditory processing disorder
- severe multiple sensory impairment

- tinnitus
- sudden onset hearing loss
- multiple severe physical disabilities
- elderly patients who are at risk of falls, isolation and depression due to the hearing problem
- patients already receiving NHS hearing aids where replacement is required.

3. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Financial Implications

The proposal would save the CCG approximately £392,000 over each year if fully implemented.

3.2 Governance

The normal CCG policies development process has been followed in recommending proposed policy changes that result in people with mild hearing loss not being provided with NHS hearing aids, apart for the exceptions listed above

3.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following impact assessments have been completed:

Equality Impact Assessment

Health Impact Assessment

Health Inequality Impact Assessment

Quality Impact Assessment

Sustainable impact Assessment

Public Health Rapid Review

3.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The draft Consultation Documents and Process Plan are distributed to committee members for discussion. The CCG is seeking approval from this committee for the consultation process.

The Consultation Process plan is a working document and provides details of pre-consultation, consultation and post consultation arrangements. This will continue to be updated throughout the process to reflect any adjustments required though feedback received during the consultation period and will be published on the CCG website.

Subject to approval, the CCG plans to go out to full public consultation on this issue from May – July (TBC) Once the consultation is complete, the CCG will produce a full consultation feedback report which will be presented to the CCG Governing Body to inform the decision-making on this issue.

Source Documents	Location
<i>NONE</i>	

Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft consultation process plan

Appendix 2 Draft consultation document.