

VANGUARD: Better Care Together

Case study: Children's services in Morecambe Bay



Purpose:

We have a vision that in Morecambe Bay we will be: “Working with children, young people, families and communities to help children and young people have a healthy future and ensuring access to local, high quality, safe and **sustainable services** across the Morecambe Bay area.”

As part of the work to make this vision a reality, four care pathways for parents and carers to follow have now been published and shared along with a ‘Sick Child’ assessment tool for clinicians to use when assessing the sick child.

The purpose of the pathways and the assessment tool are to:

- Provide advice on safe care to parents and carers
- Standardise good practice in the assessment of children in primary care
- Improve dialogue between primary and secondary care clinicians and colleagues regarding the management of children
- Reduce any inappropriate use of NHS services

The care pathways were prioritised with the aims of keeping children out of hospital where safe, providing care closer to home, and reducing the length of stay for children who do need hospital admission.

<p>How it works:</p>	<p>The stakeholders involved in this project include GPs, community nurses, hospital staff on paediatric wards and outpatients, urgent care, GP practice staff, school nurses, health visitors and families themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with the above partners has resulted in a series of initiatives to make seamless care a reality for the children of Morecambe Bay. • These include four public facing pathways aimed at parents and carers and a 'Sick Child' assessment tool for clinicians. • The four patient-facing pathways cover conditions which result in the highest number of emergency admissions for children as well as distress and concern to the children along with their parents and carers including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diarrhoea and vomiting - Coughs, colds and breathing difficulties - High temperature - Constipation <p>These pathways take the form of guides for parents and carers to help them understand how to manage their child's condition and explain when to seek help. The patient-facing pathways are available electronically via a web page, posters and through inserts in Red Books given to parents shortly after their child's birth.</p> <p>The 'Sick Child' assessment tool has been designed to help clinicians to assess an acutely sick child and decide the best course of action to take. It has been tested in a number of GP practices and following feedback is now being rolled out across Morecambe Bay.</p>
<p>Success so far:</p>	<p>Developments within children's services include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways launch Two successful launch events took place in Lancaster and Barrow in Furness to launch the new children's care pathways for the four conditions, providing advice to parents and carers and the assessment tool for clinicians to use when assessing a sick child. • Self-care films In line with the four public facing care pathways a series of films have been produced. These help parents and carers care for unwell children at home, instead of going to GPs or being admitted to hospital. • Consultants doing community clinics Consultants have been testing out ways of providing community clinics with the aim of improving dialogue between primary care and secondary care clinicians. The most recent pilot focused on children and young people who are frequent users of health services in Barrow-in-Furness. • Sam's house This is a visual depiction for practitioners of the Better Care Together programme for children and young people. Sam represents 'every child' and the associated Sam's house model has been created by listening to what children

	<p>and families say they want for their child's health. The model aims to show all staff caring for children the values and expectations of children's healthcare in the Morecambe Bay area for all children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Triage and Rapid Access If GPs need a second opinion, they can now phone the Paediatrics team and speak to a senior clinician. The clinician undertakes a telephone triage and can discuss options including advising the GP, admitting the child to the short stay Paediatric Assessment unit or diverting the child to a Rapid Access Clinic. • Reduction to children's admissions to hospital A pilot is underway involving a community nurse working with primary care to support and assess children who are high attenders at A&E or paediatrics. The aim is to set up a multidisciplinary approach to avoid any unnecessary admissions in future, and reduce distress for children, and their parents or carers. • Telehealth The use of video consultations between acute and primary care services to reduce unnecessary travel for parents and carers is also being explored. The initial work is taking place in Millom to reduce unnecessary travel for families.
<p>Lessons learnt:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all partners agree key priorities and focus areas. • Service user engagement is essential. • Culture change towards a system of self-care where appropriate is vital.
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