

Health Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Tuesday, 18th October, 2011.

Present:- Councillors Chohan, Davis, Long (Vice-Chair), P K Mann (Chair),
Munawar, Plimmer, Rasib, Sharif and Strutton

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillor Walsh

PART I

98. Declarations of Interest

None were received.

99. Member Questions

None were received.

100. Tuberculosis (update) - Presentation by Asmat Nisa, Consultant in Public Health & Assistant Director, Public Health Directorate, NHS Berkshire East

Asmat Nisa, Consultant in Public Health and Assistant Director, Public Health Directorate, NHS Berkshire East, outlined a presentation on Tuberculosis (TB) detailing the cause of the disease, the infection rate and ways in which it could be cured. The Panel was advised that TB could be cured through treatment and could be effectively controlled and prevented through the BCG immunisation. Ms Nisa advised that a multi-agency strategy group had been set up and within its strategic plan refresh the PCT had committed to prioritise TB under its 'Staying Healthy' programme. It was noted that the TB service had been enhanced through investment, the recruitment of additional staff, the provision of weekly BCG clinics and community outreach. Testing had been extended to cover new entrants and data collection had been improved using a local database.

The Panel noted the progress to date in preventing TB which included visiting hard to reach groups and the formalisation of the BCG pathway for neonates born in the area. It was also noted that provision had been made to screen contacts of all cases of TB to detect transmission of infection earlier and other measures including the creation of a new TB infection control policy for the Acute Trust. It was highlighted that the TB service was currently located at King Edward Hospital, Windsor but there were plans to have outreach clinics in Slough.

Members raised a number of questions / comments in the ensuing discussion. In response to a question regarding the success rate of treatment, the Panel was advised that patients were generally compliant with the medication given and that anyone over the age of thirty-five would not be required to have the BCG vaccination and the antibiotics would cure the infection. Ms Nisa explained the symptoms of TB and the ways in which close contacts with TB patients were managed. It was highlighted that there was no upward trend in the number of TB cases reported and that in Berkshire there were between fifty to seventy-five cases each year of which eighty percent were normally in Slough.

Health Scrutiny Panel - 18.10.11

A Member asked how many patients were hospitalised each year due to TB and how many deaths occurred. He also asked for information about the use of KAT and spitting and was there any evidence that this caused the spread of TB. Ms Nisa advised that she did not have this information to hand but this would be forwarded to the Panel. In response to a further question she also advised that she would provide further detail on the strains of TB which were found in Slough.

Ms Nisa confirmed that the prevalence of houses in multi occupation were a causative link in the incidences of TB and there was also clearly a link with the number of migrants coming to Slough from countries where TB was endemic. The Trust was working with Slough BC to address this issue.

Ms Nisa discussed representation on the TB Strategy Group which included members from the Polish and other communities. In response to a further question it was confirmed that BCG immunisation in schools had stopped in 2004 but this was still given to newborn babies if they were at a high risk of TB. Also clinics were provided for children born elsewhere who had not previously received the BCG immunisation but the immunisation could only be given with the approval of parents.

Resolved - That the Panel thank Ms Nisa for her comprehensive presentation.

101. Male Cancers/ Cervical Cancer Screening- Presentation by Asmat Nisa, Consultant in Public Health & Assistant Director, Public Health Directorate, NHS Berkshire East

Ms Nisa, Consultant in Public Health and Assistant Director, Public Health Directorate NHS Berkshire East, outlined a presentation on Male and Cervical Cancers. explaining the causes, risk factors and prevalence. The Panel noted the detail of the screening programme for cervical cancer and who was eligible. Ms Nisa discussed initiatives to increase the uptake of screening in Slough and it was highlighted that younger women were less likely to respond to an invitation to be screened and work needed to be done to increase this.

Members raised a number of questions / comments in the ensuing debate and a number of other points of detail.

It was noted that if certain GP practices were not meeting the required targets for screening then measures would be put in place to ensure that this would be achieved.

Male Cancers

The Panel received a presentation on the three most common male cancers, lung cancer, prostate cancer and bowel cancer. Ms Nisa discussed the causes and risk factors of the respective cancers and mortality rates.

Health Scrutiny Panel - 18.10.11

It was confirmed that the incidences of lung cancer were significantly higher in Slough due to the number of smokers and this was being addressed through a smoking cessation programme. In the previous year a target of 960 quitters had been set. In response to a member question regarding the suggestion that other commercial environmental factors could contribute to the level of lung cancer in Slough, Ms Nisa advised that she would find out whether any research had been done in this area. In response to a question about liver cancer, Ms Nisa advised that she had provided the presentation to deal with three main cancers but could provide further information on this if required.

A Member asked whether Panel Members could assist with the promotion of campaigns and Ms Nisa advised that she would be delighted to take up this offer and would invite any members who volunteered to be involved in the process.

Resolved - That the Panel thank Ms Nisa for her comprehensive presentation.

102. Consideration of reports marked to be noted/for information

None were received.

103. Forward Work Programme

A Panel Member requested an update on the situation regarding the East Berkshire Car Parking Review and it was agreed that this would be included within the next agenda as an information report.

The Programme was updated as follows:

- East Berkshire –NHS Car Parking Review- 8th December 2011.

The following items were removed from the un-programmed list as there would not be an opportunity to scrutinise these items.

- Effects of economic downturn on mental health of population
- Access to NHS Dentistry (particularly Orthodontics)

Resolved - That the report be noted.

104. Date of Next Meeting- 8th December, 2011

The date of the next meeting was noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.18 pm)