## District Nursing Review

### 1 Introduction


It has been recognised that the existing district nursing service will need to change in order to address this agenda. Whilst the district nursing service is not clearly understood within the current care context, there is a need to ensure that the role is clearly stated and the potential for the service maximised.

The environment of care has moved and will continue to move into the community and the district nursing service will form a major part of the community services workforce. It is recognised that there is a need to ensure that nursing resources are maximised to address increasing workload and that services are safe.

The Board is asked to consider and agree in principle the implementation of the recommendations highlighted by the review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Financial Assessment and link to Financial Recovery Plan</strong></th>
<th>Financial Assessment will be undertaken by each of the 5 task and finish groups as work progresses.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Risk Assessment will be undertaken as work progresses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Operating Framework</strong></td>
<td>District Nursing Service contributes to the implementation of the number of key AOF targets e.g. chronic disease management.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standards for Health Services Wales</strong></td>
<td>District Nursing Service impacts on all areas except Standard 17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Equality Impact Assessment</strong></td>
<td>The Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as work progresses on any service change</td>
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2 **Background**

Earlier this year Aneurin Bevan Health Board worked in partnership with the Royal College of Nursing to review the district nursing service.

The Terms of Reference were set and agreed and the reviewer was asked to:

Scope the existing professional community nursing structures and processes across Aneurin Bevan Health Board:

- Examine roles and responsibilities in the Community Nursing Team including line management and lines of reporting and accountability to the Board.
- Outline the current community nursing service establishment and skill mix.
- Identify current provision of education and training for the Community Nursing Team.
- Examine community nurses’ contribution to the continuing care agenda.

To review and evaluate existing professional structures in community nursing across Aneurin Bevan Health Board in the context of guidance including:

- The Primary and Community Services Strategic Delivery Programme for Wales.
- WAG Community Nursing Strategy.
- WAG Post Registration Career Framework for Nursing.

To make recommendations for future structure and processes in community nursing at the Health Board with reference to:

- The Primary and Community Services Strategic Delivery Programme for Wales.
- WAG Community Nursing Strategy.
- WAG Post Registration Career Framework for Nursing.
- Other relevant WAG strategies.
- The current professional and strategic literature on best practice in community nursing practice.
3 Key Issues

The district nursing review highlighted 17 recommendations that need to be addressed.

These recommendations fall under 5 key areas which include:

- Workforce – role review
- Information Technology
- Education and Training
- Leadership
- Service Specification

Opportunities exist within the new Aneurin Bevan Health Board, now in the early stages of planning its direction and structures, to develop excellent community nursing services and furthermore, strategic imperatives dictate that attention be given to the best ways of achieving this.

The following recommendations collectively offer a framework for positioning nursing as the cornerstone for patient care in their own homes and communities.

Recommendations arising from the work are set out below:

1. That service specifications be developed and utilised across Gwent in respect of the district nursing service and other community nursing services.
2. That consistency of approach to service specification and delivery of district nursing services is assured across Gwent.
3. That the continuing health care (CHC) process is reviewed for expediency.
4. That the role of CHC co-ordinator be considered as additional to the District Nursing “core” role, thereby enabling the band 7 team leader to fulfil the requirements of the job description for the benefit of patient safety and staff management.
5. That engagement with the District Nursing workforce occurs as soon as possible to enable their involvement in planning for potential new ways of working for patients (including a range of opportunities around programmes such as Frailty and Setting the Direction).
6. That recognition is made of skills required to provide safe and responsive care to patients in their homes and that this is matched against skills held within the District Nursing service.
7. That support and development plans are put in place to enable the District Nursing service to prepare for or adapt to future working patterns.

8. That an authoritative Head of Community Nursing should be appointed in order to ensure a strategic approach to achieving consistency of service delivery and development across Gwent.

9. That leadership is considered both as a means of motivating and improving staff morale as well as managing and directing towards objectives.

10. That imaginative ways are adopted towards achieving effective leadership to support the “four pillars” of community nursing practice.

11. That a sound strategic approach is taken towards the development of the District Nursing workforce to ensure its “fitness for purpose” and sustainability in the current and future context of care delivery.

12. To achieve this, consideration should be given to the appointment of a Head of Education for Community Nursing across Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

13. That planning of “community nursing” across Gwent occurs with full understanding and recognition of the District Nursing potential contribution to both “core” and “specialist” services.

14. That such planning recognises that district nurses believe they hold the skills required to take forward new ways of working as well as incorporating existing (inherited) supplementary community nursing services.

15. That additional-supplementary nursing teams should be considered as to how they could function within and enhance the provision of core community nursing services.

16. That a smooth interface with general practice across Gwent is considered as essential to continuity of patient care – and that this is facilitated at a senior level, whereby strategic agreements can be made and supported in their implementation.

17. That urgent consideration is given to the need for new I.T. solutions to enable district nursing to function efficiently and effectively within the modern NHS.

4 **Next Stages and Actions**

The report has been agreed in principle by the Executive Team and has been shared with all levels of staff who welcome the possibility of the introduction of the recommendations.
Five Task and Finish Teams for the 5 key areas have been set up to address and implement the recommendations highlighted. These teams are led by Divisional Nurses and will report back to the District Nursing Review Group in the next 3 months highlighting how the recommendations will be implemented.

It is recognised that it is important to align these changes in support of the development of community-based services, including frailty and the development of community resource teams, across the organisation. This will ensure that the role of District Nursing has prominence in the Boards direction for a shift to community-based services, supported by appropriate infrastructure.

The full review paper is available to Board members on request.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

There are opportunities to develop excellent community nursing services that will be able to address the political and professional context in the future. The recommendations from this review, if fully implemented, will progress the organisational objectives regarding the development of the community services in which the district nursing service will play a major part. Progress will be reported back to the Board and will be aligned with strategic service changes taking place.

The Board is asked to consider and agree in principle the implementation of the recommendations highlighted by the review.

Report Prepared and Sponsored by:
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10 September 2010