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Email only

20 August 2018

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information received on 23 July 2018 in relation to the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (Trust). We are dealing with your request under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested information regarding Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). Specifically you asked for:

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust replies:

Background

In February 2017, Lord Boateng asked the government “what assessment they have made of the measures adopted in Scotland which provide guidance and support for children and young adults affected by foetal alcohol spectrum disorders.” Lord O’Shaughnessy replied that “Early intervention services can help reduce some of the effects of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and prevent some of the secondary disabilities that result. Responsibility for commissioning these services lies with clinical commissioning groups. [Hansard, Written Question HL5052, 10 February 2017. <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-01-27/HL5052/>]

This government policy was reiterated in July 2017 when Lord Campbell-Savours asked the government “what support they are providing for persons whose condition has been described as foetal alcohol spectrum disorder.” [Hansard, Written Question HL500 and Written Answer, 18 July 2017, <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-05/HL500/>] In response, Lord O’Shaughnessy for the government wrote that “It is recognised that Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) can have a significant impact on the early development of children, their behaviours and their life chances. Early intervention services can help reduce some of the effects of FASD and prevent

some of the secondary disabilities that result. Responsibility for commissioning these services lies with clinical commissioning groups.” This was again repeated on 8 May 2018 by Steve Brine, Parliamentary Under-secretary at the Department of Health and Social Care. [Hansard, Written Question 139045, 8 May 2018. <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-27/139045/>]

The following conditions fall under the Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) umbrella: Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND), Alcohol-Related Birth Defects (ARBD), Foetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) and partial Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS)) or neurodevelopmental disorders linked to prenatal alcohol exposure (NDPAE)

Request for Information

In light of the above information I would like to ask you to provide:

1) Copies of any policies that the Trust has on the prevention of FASD, and on the diagnosis and post-diagnostic care pathway for patients with an FASD. Also your policy on the training of Trust personnel to manage patients with FASD.

Answer: Paediatricians, mainly Community Paediatricians, as part of their caseload, assess children referred with concerns about neurodevelopmental issues and possible diagnosis of FASD. Guidance documents are being developed for the assessment of a child with suspected FASD.

There is no dedicated post-diagnostic service provided by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. Paediatricians' access training locally, regionally or nationally according to their training needs. There is no specific training of Trust personnel to manage patients with FASD.

2) Any information you hold on services your Trust provided for FASD for

- a. prevention education following the 2016 Chief Medical Officers' guidelines that the safest course is not to drink while pregnant or attempting to become pregnant;**
- b. diagnosis for both children and adults;**

Answer: Please see response to Q1 above in regard to children.

c. post-diagnostic care in the financial years beginning 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Answer: No information is currently available to answer this question, as no dedicated post diagnostic care service exists. Review of children following diagnosis is undertaken in follow up clinics according to their health needs.

3) Information on the number of Doctors in your Trust who currently provide diagnostic and/or post-diagnostic services for FASD? Please provide their names and posts. Whether your Trust employs specifically trained professionals, including but not limited to nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists, to provide specialised services for patients on the FASD spectrum? If so, in what specialties, and how many? Please provide their names and posts.

Answer: The following Consultant Paediatricians assess children referred into the service, some of whom may have been subject to concerns including FASD:

Anne Kelly
Jemma Dobson
Maria Willoughby
Susan Haves
Samantha Barwick
Amma Oppong
Rebecca Casans
Christine Powell
Kirsty Yates
Rajesh Balu
Sobia Ahmad
Rebecca Dearden

The Trust does not employ specifically trained professionals to provide services for patients with FASD

4) Information on training provided to personnel in your Trust on FASD, or provided by others and accessed by your personnel.

Answer: Information not available, as indicated in response to Q1 (above), The Trust does not provide specific training for FASD and does not keep data about who has undertaken training outside of the Trust about FASD.

5) Information you hold on whether your Trust sends patients for FASD diagnosis to the National FASD Clinic in Surrey (<https://www.fasdclinic.com/>)? Did you refer any patients to the National FASD Clinic in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, and in 2018, and if so, how many in each year?

Answer: No, the Trust does not send patients to the National FASD Clinic in Surrey.

6) What was your budget for services for FASD in each financial year since that starting in 2013 and including the current financial year?

Answer: There is no specific budget for FASD

7) Please provide copies of any agreed plans you have to expand the budget or services in coming years.

Answer: There are no such plans at this time.

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust website.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review by writing to:

The Chief Executive
County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
Darlington Memorial Hospital
Hollyhurst Road
Darlington
DL3 6HX

If, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.gov.uk.

There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Tyrrell
Freedom of Information Officer