



February - March 2021

PROGRAMME UPDATE

Keeping stakeholders, parents and carers informed about Dudley's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Programme

SEND Culture & Communications project

Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) & Designated Medical Officer (DMO)

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2012, which was designed to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) must provide a Designated Medical Officer (DMO) or Designated Clinical Officer (DCO). In Dudley we have both a DMO and a DCO.

The DCO/DMO helps Dudley CCG to meet its statutory responsibilities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and agrees the health services within an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

The DCO/DMO plays a key part in implementing the SEND reforms and in supporting joined up working between health services, local authorities, parent participation forums, schools and colleges.

The DCO/DMO provides the point of contact for health colleagues, local authorities, schools and colleges seeking health advice on children and young people who may have SEN or disabilities and is a source of expertise on matter relating to SEN for the CCG, LA, Healthcare Providers and other local agencies and organisation

The roles of the DCO/DMO and what they do has been shared with all partners through the attached newsletter below.



Since the DMO/DCO have been in place the partnership working between the CCG, all health professionals and DMBC has been significantly improved, both from strategic and operational perspectives. The DCO is instrumental in ensuring that:

- There is improve communication and links between Health, Education and Social Care professionals to ensure coordinated and integrated services.
- We work with families and providers to secure jointly commissioned services that are identified as being appropriate to meet the needs of the local population.
- All health services are reflected in the Local Offer and that health providers are cooperating with the local authority in the review of the Local Offer.
- A clear process is in place for mediation arrangements regarding the health element of EHC plans
- Coordination of EHC assessments with other key health assessments, for example, Children and Young People's Continuing Care assessment, Looked-after Children's Health Assessments.
- Health advice, from our providers, is given to local authorities, schools and colleges about children and young people with SEN or Disabilities.
- Assessment, planning and health support is carried out for children and young people with SEND, recognising the requirement to incorporate the transition to adult services and up to the age of 25 years.
- Health information is made available to the LA's mediation services to resolve disputes outside of tribunals.
- Ensure that services are in place to support timely support for Children and Young people with a Learning Disability and/or Autism to avoid unnecessary admission to in-patient specialist placements as part of the NHS 'Transforming Care Programme'. -
- Support is provided to schools with their duties under the ['Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions'](#) guidance

Good Outcomes Training

Initially training was delivered which was aimed to increase the understanding of the SEND agenda and EHCPs amongst Health Professionals. 100% of those attended stated that their knowledge had increased following the training.

Feedback gathered from those sessions highlighted the need for more in depth training and in particular, training that gave guidance when writing good outcomes.

Good Outcomes training was developed in partnership with Educational Psychologists, LA SEND Professionals and Parents/Carers and is currently being delivered. Feedback so far shows that again, 100% of health professionals felt that their knowledge had increased after the training and some more ideas for next training sessions has been gleamed.

Health Advices Template and EHCP sign-off

Discussions held at the Developing Health Pathways meetings and the Good Outcomes training have helped to identify that a new template for asking for EHCP advices from health professionals was required. What became apparent is that terminology was not always understood in the same way by all health/education and social care colleagues. This led to confusion and disparity with the advices returned to the SEND Case Officers.

The new health advices template has been developed to match the way in which is easily understood by health professionals and SEND Case Officers and will guide the health professional to document exactly what the case officer requires to produce a quality EHCP.

Further work is underway to develop a process whereby any the CCG can agree funding for any additional provision in the EHCP outside providers' contracts.

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