

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

26 FEBRUARY 2025

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND ADULT SERVICES

Care and Support Hubs

Following approval by the Executive of an investment programme of up to £60m for 5 new care and support hubs providing specialist dementia care and intermediate care services, work will start later this month to implement this decision. As well as addressing current gaps in the care market and responding to increasing numbers of people being discharged from hospital, the proposals will replace outdated buildings and will also see some more care services being commissioned from the wider care sector. This is a significant investment in the sector, and I am grateful to members for their support in making this decision.

North Yorkshire Drug Analysis Project (NYDAP)

I am keen to share an example of cross-organisation working to combat harm from drugs. Following two deaths in Ryedale, tablets were tested by our drug analysis provider, University of York, and it was confirmed that they contained a Nitazene - a type of synthetic opioid which is increasingly being found in illicit substances including counterfeit medicines and due to its high potency and toxicity presents a serious risk of overdose. A county-wide drug alert was issued, with urgent information distributed to key stakeholders and at-risk communities. Due to the prompt broadcasting of the risk within the community through the convening of the Local Drug Information System panel and subsequent drug alert, concerned interested parties provided partner agencies with further information highlighting potential Nitazene risk, resulting in police arrests and further recovery of controlled drugs that again NYDAP engaged with showing the presence of Nitazene.

The ability to access drug testing so quickly has made a huge difference to our ability to intervene at pace when high risks are identified. Yorkshire Ambulance Service have confirmed no non-fatal overdoses have been identified in the same location or timeframe, and I have no doubt that these prompt actions have saved lives. Further information can be obtained from the Drink Drug Hub - <https://drinkdrughub.co.uk/>

Public Health Peer Review

Public Health will be undertaking a Peer Review between the 24th and 26th February as part of sector led improvement work. Undertaking a Public Health Peer Review is voluntary and should provide a valuable opportunity to reflect, take stock and enable future planning through an independent, objective, and purposeful process.

The review will consider:

- How well is Public Health working across the unitary Council?
- What is the potential breadth, depth, and impact of public health across the Council?
- Are we focused on the right priorities? Do we need to pin down the concrete things that we are doing to address health inequalities and describe what success looks like?

Adult Social Care Assurance Inspection Programme/Care Quality Commission

As part of the national Adult Social Care Assurance Inspection Programme for all councils, we have received notification from the Care Quality Commission that they will inspect North Yorkshire between now and May. A detailed self-assessment and other evidence have been submitted to CQC and workshops have been held with those members who are most likely to be involved, as well as other preparations taking place with frontline colleagues, people who use services and partner agencies.

Hospital discharges

We continue to see high levels of hospital activity, with high numbers of people being discharged. I am very grateful to the continued efforts of our social care teams, the care sector and NHS colleagues who are responding on a daily basis. Recent NHS national data has shown that 93% of North Yorkshire patients are discharged on the planned date or within 24 hours of that date – although it is worth noting that discharges have nearly doubled since 2019 and in some weeks are 3 times higher. We estimate that we are funded to support 12.5 discharges/day so this excess demand creates an in-year financial pressure in the region of £3-4m, whilst impacting the capacity we have available to meet acute community casework and to address our own community waiting lists.

North Yorkshire Health Collaborative

Following Executive and ICB approval in December, work is underway to establish the North Yorkshire Health Collaborative, which will be chaired by our chief executive and will bring together NHS chief executives and various council and voluntary and community sector senior officers to oversee £850m of council and NHS prevention and community services. A further report will be brought to Executive in the spring and work is underway to review the future role and focus of the North Yorkshire Health and Well-being Board in light of this development.

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HARRISON