

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES****11 November 2014****Report of the Director of Public Health****COMMUNITY SPECIALIST NURSE FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE****1. Purpose of the Report:**

To approve the provision of grant funding of £42,500 to Avenue House Medical Centre, Chesterfield for a Community Nurse Specialist post for homeless people for 2015 – 2016 based at Pathways homelessness centre in Chesterfield.

2. Information and Analysis:

- 2.1 Studies have consistently shown that the experience of homelessness and living in temporary accommodation can exacerbate existing problems and disadvantage families in a number of ways. This can include the quality and type of accommodation which homeless households are placed in, the disruption to social and other support networks and the negative impact on the education, health, and well-being of homeless families
- 2.2 Pathways has been operating in Chesterfield since 2007. It is the only agency of its kind providing help and support to homeless and vulnerably-housed individuals in Chesterfield and the surrounding area. Since 2007 the centre has worked with over 600 clients. During 2014 the number of new individuals presenting as homeless was 156 (a significant increase from 37 in 2007/08). Of those 71 were supported to find accommodation and 21 were rough sleeping.
- 2.3 Twelve months ago Pathways was facing significant funding issues and as a consequence downsized the premises and reduced the staffing levels. In line with the cutbacks a new service model was implemented. A model of service was developed that could be delivered within the constraints of a much smaller building, with a smaller staff team, and yet could still achieve the mission of helping local people in housing crisis. 12 months after making these changes the service has not only achieved these aims but has also surpassed previous outcomes. Following a period of sustained fundraising which raised £100,000 over 3 years from Henry Smith, £21,000 from the Lloyds Foundation and over £30,000 from the community, the centre has been able to secure its future until 2016/2017. Pathways is now looking to the future and

putting together a development plan that will help the service become more sustainable. The provision of healthcare to clients is seen as fundamental to this plan.

- 2.4 Clients registered with Pathways present with a multitude of health and social care problems linked to their homeless status. This includes low or no income, debt, poor literacy and numeracy skills, lack of general work skills, alienation from family, poor general physical health, poor oral health, mental health problems, and drug and alcohol dependency
- 2.5 Many homeless people have complex health needs that impact on their daily functioning, wellbeing and life expectancy (the average life expectancy of a rough sleeper is 42, almost half the average life expectancy in England which is 79 for men and 82 for women). They are more likely to suffer poor mental, physical and emotional health than the rest of the population, and ill health is often associated with poverty and homelessness.
- 2.6 For some homeless individuals difficulties in accessing integrated care means they present late in the pattern of illness with problems that could have been prevented or treated at an earlier stage.
- 2.7 In December 2013 Derbyshire County Council agreed to provide grant funding for the provision of a Community nurse specialist to provide healthcare to Pathways' clients. Since 2010 the post had previously been funded through Derbyshire Primary Care Trust. The service is hosted by the Avenue House Medical Centre. The post holders (job share) work out of Pathways and are key members of the team. The nurses provide specialist clinical support to enable clients to understand and manage their health condition.
- 2.8 Liaison with other health, social care organisations and voluntary agencies is a key aspect of the role. This can help to facilitate a more effective and co-ordinated approach in supporting homeless people with their health and social care needs. During the past year this has included:
 - the mental health unit at Chesterfield Royal providing a clinic for a quicker and supported transition for people on the wards into appropriate housing leading to fewer beds being blocked.
 - Derbyshire Sexual Health Team which includes one of the nurses running a joint drop in clinic at Tennyson Avenue since January enabling clients to have a cup of tea and a chat and have a full sexual health screen at the same time.
 - local schools offering them the opportunity for Pathways to visit and discuss health and homeless issues. One school has adopted Pathways as one of their chosen charities
 - from October 2014 a member of the local community podiatry team is to commence a clinic on site at Pathways every fortnight to meet, assess and provide treatment for any foot issues clients may be facing.

- an application for funding of a Deep Tissue Massage Clinic was successful and as a result, Pathways now have a regular clinic run by 'Affordable Community Massage' every 2 weeks that is open to clients, to help with anxiety, aches and pains, discomfort, stiffness and sciatica. Its effectiveness will be measured over a period of time. So far this has been an extremely beneficial service with clients reporting to feel the increased positivity after each session.
- the dentist is continuing to attend monthly offering a much needed service to those who attend.
- interest from a local optician keen to run a clinic for clients at Pathways on a regular basis. This should hopefully be commencing soon.

The addition of these services helps in the delivery of a more holistic, robust service to clients. The team have also held various weeks focusing on oral health, mental health and sexual health aimed at providing information and raising awareness. The volume of individuals presenting with some kind of health issue is on the increase and the team continue to work to ensure that some of the most vulnerable members of the community receive a high standard of health care. Supporting this service will make a valuable contribution to Derbyshire County Council's commitment to reducing health inequalities.

3. Financial Considerations:

£42,500 has been allocated in the Public health budget for the provision of this service.

4. Human Resources considerations:

DCC are providing funding only and accept no employment or future redundancy liability for the post, and that the employment and related matters are managed by the Avenue House Medical Centre/NHS.

5. Other considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: equality and diversity, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

6. Key Decision:

No

7. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No

8. Background Papers:

Healthcare for Single Homeless People March 2010 by the Office of the Chief Analyst Department of Health.

Health and Homelessness: Understanding the costs and role of primary care services for homeless people. St. Mungo's July 2013

Various documents in public health

9. Officer's Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member agrees to provide grant funding of £42,500 to Pathways for the provision of a Community Nurse Specialist post for the homeless to be based at Pathways homelessness centre in Chesterfield.

Elaine Michel
Director of Public Health