

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1. Meetings:	Cabinet
2. Dates:	15 October 2014
3. Title:	Scrutiny review: Urinary Incontinence
4. Directorate:	Resources All wards

5. Summary

This report sets out the main findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review of urinary incontinence. The review report is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration by Cabinet Members. It was considered and approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 19th September 2014.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

6.1 Receive the Scrutiny Review: Urinary Incontinence.

6.2 Agree to consider the recommendations and report back to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board within 2 months.

7. Proposals and details

This review was approved by OSMB as part of the work programme of the Health Select Commission. The key focus of Members' attention was to establish the extent to which preventive measures are promoted in Rotherham to reduce urinary incontinence, given the impact it has on people's quality of life.

There were three aims of the review, which were to:

- ascertain the prevalence of urinary incontinence in the borough and the impact it has on people's independence and quality of life
- establish an overview of current continence services and costs, and plans for future service development.
- identify any areas for improvement in promoting preventive measures and encouraging people to have healthy lifestyles

A spotlight scrutiny review was carried out, chaired by Cllr Judy Dalton and evidence gathering began in May 2014, concluding in July 2014. This comprised desktop research and a round table discussion with health partners and the Council's Sport and Leisure Team.

Urinary incontinence affects all age groups and should not be viewed as inevitable as people get older. Many forms may be treated or cured and it is vital to expand preventative work and continence promotion to try and reduce the numbers of people becoming incontinent. It is also important to ensure more people are having an assessment of the cause of the problem rather than coping as best they can with off the shelf products or struggling because they are too embarrassed to seek professional help.

Members recognised the good services provided by the award winning Community Continence Service (CCS) and that Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group has been unique in reducing expenditure on continence products in the last five years yet delivering improved outcomes for service users. The CCS does engage in preventative work and plans for future service development include greater focus on this area. One workstream will be to consider developing an integrated continence care pathway, with a single point of access.

General awareness raising with both the public and health and care professionals is needed to emphasise the importance of good bladder and bowel health and how healthy lifestyle choices can help to prevent incontinence. Pelvic floor muscle training has been proved to relieve symptoms and may reduce the risk of developing stress incontinence. More people could be encouraged to do these exercises as a preventative measure and there is scope to consider if they could be incorporated more widely within sports and fitness activities.

Recommendations

- 1 RMBC and partner agencies should ensure all public toilets in the borough are clean and well equipped to meet the needs of people who have urinary incontinence, including suitable bins for the disposal of equipment and disposable products.
- 2 Greater links should be established between the Community Continence Service and Rotherham MBC Sport and Leisure team to support people to participate in appropriate sport and physical activity.

- 3 Rotherham MBC and other sport and leisure activity providers should consider building more pelvic floor exercises into the Active Always programme and wider leisure classes.
- 4 There should be greater publicity by partner agencies to raise public and provider awareness of:
 - a) the importance of maintaining good bladder and bowel health and habits at all life stages (through media such as screens in leisure centres and GP surgeries, further website development, VAR ebulletin and a campaign during World Continence Week from 22-28 June 2015)
 - b) healthy lifestyle choices having a positive impact on general health but also helping to prevent incontinence, such as diet, fluid intake and being active
 - c) the positive benefits of pelvic floor exercises as a preventive measure for urinary incontinence, including the use of phone apps for support
 - d) the need to include the impact of incontinence due to medication, such as diuretics, within a patient's care
- 5 More work should take place with care homes to encourage staff to participate in the training offered by the Community Continence Service and to increase staff understanding of the impact of mobility, diet and fluid intake on continence.
- 6 That the Health Select Commission receives a report in 2015 on the outcomes of the project considering future service development of the Community Continence Service.

8. Finance

Any recommendations from the Select Commission would require further exploration by the Strategic Leadership Team and partner agencies on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

It is important that people have access to health services and the right advice and information to help them maintain a good quality of life at all life stages. Incontinence can have a significant negative impact on a person's life and stigma about incontinence may deter people from seeking professional help. More continence promotion and educative work about healthy lifestyles could help to reduce the number of people having preventable incontinence, resulting over time in lower demand for services.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Corporate Plan priority - Helping people from all communities to have opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing.
Health and Wellbeing Strategy

11. Background Papers

See section 7 of the review report.

12. Author

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