

Health and Social Services Committee

HSS(2)-10-06(p6)

Meeting date: Thursday 15 June 2006

Venue: Committee Room 3, Senedd, National Assembly for Wales

Title: Palliative Care paper to note

Purpose

The Health and Social Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee scrutinised palliative care at its meeting of 17th November 2005. (HSSSSC(2)-02-05 refers). As a result of the discussions which took place it was agreed that a paper to note be provided on the trend of expenditure by Local Health Boards and Health Commission Wales on palliative care, over the last three years including increases in staffing levels.

Summary

Local Health Boards are responsible for commissioning palliative care services within their discretionary allocations. However, funding for palliative care is not ring-fenced within those allocations. Information on Local Health Board spend on Palliative Care services is not routinely collected so a specific exercise has been undertaken to collate this information.

Part of the difficulty in obtaining this information rests on the fact that palliative care services are not easily defined. They have an increasing role in the care of all those with incurable diseases, including chronic deteriorating conditions and non-malignant conditions. On this basis LHBs do not routinely commission palliative care as a separate speciality as it is an integral part of a wider service, not a discrete service that can be identified and costed separately. The information attached certainly under represents the actual spend for palliative care across the specialities for this period.

Health Commission Wales is not responsible for commissioning adult palliative care services and only commissions children's palliative care when it relates to paediatric oncology, where it is not separately specified. Based on this commissioning process the service is not identified separately within HCW's contracts and it is therefore not able to provide information relating to spend.

The information attached provides LHB spend over the last three years. The figures include spend at Trust and Voluntary sector levels, as well as funding provided for continuing care. All three funding streams will provide palliative care, to varying degrees across all specialties, which is where the difficulties arise in the current budget information systems which cannot strip out palliative care as a distinct service.

Increases in Palliative care staffing levels

Human Resources collect data on a staff group basis, not on a care group basis. The only data held specifically for palliative care relates to medical staff and is as follows:-

- In September 2000 we had 28 medical staff in palliative care of which 10 were consultants
- In September 2005 we had 45 medical staff on palliative care of which 16 were consultants

In general staffing terms, staffing levels in NHS Wales have risen from 68,623 in September 1997 to 94,123 in September 2005, a rise of 25,500 people (37.2%)

Financial Implications

The ongoing funding for palliative care is within LHB discretionary revenue allocations. The Health and Social Care Resources Directorate has seen and noted the contents of this paper (LMD 2563).

Next steps

Officials are finalising proposals for a study of all palliative care provision in Wales to overcome the difficulties around identifying provision and spend . The project will investigate all NHS and independent sector provision, the associated funding streams, and gaps in provision . It will recommend the best way to address these gaps.

Appendice 1: Table showing Palliative Care Spend

Local Health Board	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	£	£	£
South East Wales Network			
Cardiff	£1,353,058	£1,559,782	£1,578,047
Newport*	£365,794	£392,978	£409,259
Vale of Glamorgan	£633,497	£636,248	£646,178
Monmouthshire*	£127,095	£214,805	£187,505
Bridgend	£1,705,231	£2,038,224	£2,271,498
Blaenau Gwent*	£223,995	£849,750	£334,769
Rhondda Cynon Taff	£1,303,000	£1,433,000	£1,607,000

Merthyr Tydfil	£232,684	£261,094	£275,329
Caerphilly*	£419,179	£558,307	£525,097
Torfaen	£239,000	£430,203	£417,988
Total South East Wales Network	£6,602,533	£8,374,391	£8,252,670
South West Wales Network			
Neath Port Talbot	£274,199	£501,089	£415,488
Pembrokeshire	£2,542,449	£2,629,576	£2,112,106
Carmarthen	£1,132,163	£1,410,940	£1,557,438
Ceredigion	£234,632	£247,041	£383,778
Powys	£345,584	£497,411	£426,161
Swansea	£867,000	£1,044,000	£1,092,000
Total for South West Wales Network	£5,396,027	£6,330,057	£5,986,971
North Wales Network			
Anglesey	£250,350	£292,900	£280,895
Wrexham	£462,913	£527,387	£646,210
Flintshire	£260,000	£270,000	£380,000
Gwynedd	£623,389	£665,839	£700,923
Conwy	£280,837	£336,899	£333,730
Denbighshire	£365,362	£360,906	£589,650
Total for North Wales Network	£2,242,851	£2,453,931	£2,931,408
Overall Total for Wales	£14,241,411	£17,158,379	£17,171,049
* For reasons already specified Gwent NHS Trust is unable to breakdown palliative care spend within its budgets and is therefore not reflected within SE Wales figures.			