Shifting the Balance of Care

Shifting the Balance of Care (SBC) describes changes at different levels across health and care systems – all of which are intended to bring about better health outcomes for people, provide services which reduce health inequalities; promote independence and are quicker, more personal and closer to home. This means we need to develop clinical and care pathways that may involve shifting location, shifting responsibility; and identifying individuals earlier who might benefit from support that might sustain their independence and avoid adverse events or illness. This means we are shifting:

- **towards prevention…**
  - by increasing the rate of health improvement particularly in deprived communities by anticipating and addressing the need for care at an earlier stage;
  - changing the emphasis from services focused on acute conditions towards systematic and personalised support for people with long term conditions;
  - developing continuous, integrated care rather than disconnected episodic care.

- **who delivers care …**
  - by providing more care and treatment in the community requiring professionals and staff to develop their skills, expertise and roles. This requires real partnership working between organisations and professionals, and agreement on outcomes and care pathways delivered by community based multi-agency teams. It means shifting our view of individuals as passive recipients of care towards full partners in improving their health and managing their conditions.

- **location of services …**
  - by improving access to care and treatment through changes in the location of services;
  - providing a wider range of diagnostics and specialist services in communities and maximising the use of new technologies. Here we expect to see some changes in clinical and hospital based activity as we develop the community infrastructure, information systems and workforce capacity.

**Who is involved?**

Shifting the balance of care requires a partnership approach between the NHS, Local Authorities and the third sector. Community Health Partnerships play a key role as they bring together professionals with communities, providing a local forum for discussion and action between people and Health Care Workers, Social Workers, Independent Contractors, Specialists, Housing, Transport and third sector organisations.

**Where are we going?**

Services and care must continually adapt to the changing needs and aspirations of individuals and their families. Partners need to get the pace of SBC change right in their local areas and they need to use information on activity, quality, cost and inequalities to understand the baseline, agree local priorities, and be able to measure the consequential shift in the level and range of services, care and support required locally across the whole spectrum of SBC (see overleaf).
What is the SBC Improvement Framework?

The SBC Improvement Framework defines the scope of shifting the balance of care. It covers eight improvement areas (see diagram below) which are critical to working with stakeholders with acute, primary, social care and housing interests and have been drawn from existing policy initiatives and wide stakeholder discussions. It brings together key policy strands and collaborative processes into an overarching framework that will help Health Boards and their Local Authority partners to deliver HEAT targets and better Community Care Outcomes. It has been developed as part of the work of the Shifting the Balance of Care Delivery Group and has the support of the Ministerial Strategy Group for Health and Community Care.

SBC Improvement Framework directly supports the delivery of HEAT targets and Community Care Outcomes which inform Single Outcome Agreements and the Scottish Government National Performance Framework. The links between the eight improvement areas and targets and outcomes are shown in the diagram below;

For the next 12 months the work of the Shifting the Balance of Care Delivery Group is focused on:

- **Knowledge Transfer** – ensuring that information about SBC reaches partner organisations and individuals through the growing learning network.
- **Alignment with other work streams and national targets** – ensuring that SBC principles and priorities remain a priority for other work areas.
- **Identifying and removing barriers** – addressing perceived barriers to progress and working to ensure national solutions to problems.

**Getting involved**

Find out more about SBC and join the learning network by visiting our website [http://www.shiftingthebalance.scot.nhs.uk/](http://www.shiftingthebalance.scot.nhs.uk/) or contact [Sylvia.wyatt@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Sylvia.wyatt@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)