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Our ref: KM/ PW/ CM

25 April 2019

Margaret Kilner
Chief Officer
Healthwatch Sheffield
The Circle
33 Rockingham Lane
Sheffield
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Dear Margaret

Re: Experiences of transgender and non-binary people accessing health and care services in Sheffield

Thank you for your letter dated 20th March, 2019 and the report you attached, which detailed findings of your investigation into the health and care experiences of members of Sheffield's trans and non-binary communities.

I read it with interest and upon liaising with members of my team provide the following response, as requested, to the recommendations relevant to STH:

Proactively manage waiting times

The initial consultation is undertaken at Gender Identity Clinics which are not held within Sheffield Teaching Hospitals (STH). All referrals into STH are for secondary treatment and would follow the agreed referral acceptance and triage process.

At STH we currently have Mr Chris Caddy leading a team of staff who are very good at managing access plans. The first appointment for assessment for surgery following referral from a Gender Identity Clinic is offered within six weeks and surgery takes place within 2 months.

Periodically if we get a spike in referrals these are then managed as quickly as possible.

Co-ordinate cultural change in health and care settings

We now have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board (EDI) established, which will provide the strategic leadership required to ensure cultural change within STH is progressed. We also recognise that with 17,000 members of staff across various sites, some of the views and issues we would not wish to see in wider society itself can present themselves within the organisation. Whilst these may sometimes come to light after 'the event' we are committed to ensuring that we address these quickly and proportionately.

We have some equality training available to our staff, some of which is mandatory, and we are currently looking to carry out a training needs analysis which will determine any gaps we may have and we can address these.

All of work is underpinned by our PROUD values and these are embedded across the organisation so that staff are not only aware of expected behaviour but also understand how these align to their roles.

Do ask, do tell

As mentioned earlier we have a robust team at STH and this aspect of the service is well embedded in the culture. From outpatient services through to the Plastics dressing clinic, under the leadership of Mr Chris Caddy staff are fully aware of what questions they need to ask and how they are expected to respond.

In Ward F2, at the Hallamshire Hospital we also have provision of single cubicles so that patients are treated with privacy and dignity.

Sheffield Sexual Health Services also have information on their website, on the contact centre telephone line and in waiting rooms so that members of the transgendered community are able to share information in a discreet way, should they wish to do so.

Embed shared decision making and co-design

Mr Caddy and his team of medical and nursing staff attended the workshops hosted by Healthwatch to co-design the provision of services and continued liaison with relevant stakeholders will be ongoing.

Whilst we are fully committed to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda we do recognise that there will always be room for improvement, both in terms of our systems and also the awareness of our staff. Certainly the work taking place through our EDI Board and the appointment of an Interim Head of EDI will help us to build upon the agenda further. Whilst we will be recruiting substantially to this role in the near future, in the interim we are developing an EDI strategy, a performance framework (which will enable us to chart progress and identify risks or issues more quickly) and a refreshed Equality Impact Analysis process. I believe all of these actions will impact on the culture of STH positively.

I would like to take this opportunity of recognising and thanking Mark Smith for attending our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Board today where we had a productive discussion about this and other Healthwatch Sheffield reports.

We also look forward to building upon our relationship and working more closely with colleagues at Healthwatch, in particular as we refresh our EDS framework and our Equality Objectives.

Yours sincerely



Kirsten Major
Chief Executive

c.c. Paula Ward, Organisational Development Director
Mina Jesa, Interim Head of Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion