

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. The strategy outlines a care pathway (page 10).

(a) If you are a service user and/or carer, please tell us what difference you believe the implementation of the pathway will make to the services you experience.

N/A

(b) How can we best ensure that services and support meet your needs?

N/A

(c) If you are a care provider, what changes will you need to make to implement the pathway?

I am responding to this from the perspective of our team as a policy and planning team, not as our service providers.

There is a need for better data collection on diagnoses (as well as monitoring of those with sensory impairment in all services) to ensure services can audit, monitor and plan future service with the needs of those who have a sensory impairment in mind. Health board may be in a good position to lead on this process.

Within our equality outcomes we have included an outcome to address the needs of those with sensory impairment across all our services. This however will focus on the needs of Deaf people and blind people as distinct groups – Deaf BSL uses, deafened people and those who are dual sensory impaired as distinct from blind and visually impaired people. We have asked our service to identify areas of exemplary practice and use this to inform our service areas to ensure all our services are exemplary.

In relation to primary care there are read codes in relation to deafness and deafblindness but this may require an enhanced service like the DES which related to ethnicity to ensure collection.

We have a very robust Accessible Information Policy but the needs of those with sensory impairment are not being fully met. As part of the pathway it would be useful to have a national awareness campaign as to the needs of those with sensory impairment with regard to information. This would help create the appropriate societal culture to support the needs of those with sensory impairment being met. It would also move towards creating good relations between those who have a sensory impairment and those who do not.

I think the combining of Deafness and blindness under sensory impairment makes sense from a medical model point of view but not necessarily taking on board a social model of disability. The patient pathways need to be different to take account of the differing experience of two groups of patients.

This also needs to be reflected in the action taken to ensure those who are sensory

impaired access mainstream health services generally.

(d) How will you make these changes?

We have included sensory impaired people as a group in one of our equality outcomes targets.

2. The strategy identifies key factors that need to be in place to ensure the pathway is successful (Page 11 para 6.7).

(a) Which of the key factors are most important for a successful pathway?

I think the key factors listed are all crucial to ensure the success of these potential changes. I am not sure if by One Stop shop it is meant that for all sensory impairment – which I think makes sense from a medical point of view but not necessarily from the patients perspective.

(b) Which are the most challenging to put in place?

Sensory impairment being included in generic assessments will prove difficult until there is supporting paperwork to collect the appropriate data. Also basic screening by non specialist staff may need changes to the current GP contract. See above re primary care read codes.

It would be helpful if there was national guidance on good practice, which includes critical care points e.g. early onset of dual sensory impairment.

(c) Do you think that any key factors have been missed?

There may need to be changes to the infrastructure to enable these changes to be delivered – this takes time, such as managing data.

A cultural shift is required to see sensory impairment as integral to the person experience across all our services. This will need to be driven nationally to ensure local action.

Also post diagnosis support, including co-ordination between statutory and third sector agencies seems to be missing.

3. The strategy identifies areas for action that should be addressed going forward (Page 13-16)

(a) Which of the areas for action will be the most challenging to implement?

Recommendation 1 will be difficult to undertake with regard to the second part of identifying spend that relates to ‘those elements of other service provision that impact on people with a sensory impairment.’ This would be very difficult to unpack across a health service, e.g. the use of mental health services by those who are Deaf as we do not monitor this as part of our data collection.

Recommendation 2 if this is integral to the strategy then a HEAT or other performance target should be set to manage this nationally.

Recommendation 3 This will highlight unmet need for which there will need to be new resources.

Recommendation 5 – see above

Recommendation 6 - see above – we have undertaken to address the potential discrimination of those with sensory impairment across our services.

(b) Which of the areas for action will make the biggest difference and why?

Rec 4 – local partnership working will ensure that the patient pathway meets the needs of patients in terms of the functions of those involved in providing care for those with sensory impairment.

(c) Are there any other areas for action that you would like to see included within the strategy?

It may be integral to the approach – but regular and meaningful involvement of patients with sensory impairment in the development of the strategy and the ensuing revised patient pathway with service providers.

4. Please comment on the current provision of sensory impairment services as either a service provider or service user. If you have any experience of sensory impairment services, please let us know what you think of them: this should include any experience of one-stop shops.

From focus group with those with sensory impairment the following issues were highlighted:

Focus groups with visually impaired people have highlighted three areas of concern:

- staff attitudes towards people who are visually impaired;
- staff awareness in relation to the needs of people who are visually impaired;
- lack of patient information in accessible formats.

5. What difference will the implementation of the strategy make to your life?

N/A

6. Does this strategy properly reflect the current climate and developments in policy and practice for children and young people particularly in relation to the Getting it Right for Every Child approach and the Doran Review?

There could be higher profile in the strategy given to the particular needs of children and young people across services.

7. Do you have anything you wish to add to the Sensory Impairment Strategy or any other general comments that have not been covered by the questions?

There needs to be more evidence of the differencing needs and pathways for those with different sensory impairments – deafness, visual impairment, deafblind etc