

Consultation about future partnership working (Section 75 agreement) for 0-19 Public Health Services (Health Visiting, School Nurses and Family Nurse Partnership) between Gateshead Council and Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT).

Context

The 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service is currently delivered by Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT NHS) under a services contract with Gateshead Council. Gateshead Public Health team is looking to develop and establish a formal partnership arrangement (known as a Section 75 agreement) with the current service provider, Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust for the delivery of these services. It is proposed to start in July 2024. This survey is an opportunity to feedback on the proposed Section 75 agreement.

A Section 75 Agreement is a legal arrangement between a National Health Service (NHS) Trust and a local authority. The agreement is named after Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, which enables NHS Organisations and local authorities to collaborate and share responsibilities. It would create a formal partnership to provide specified health services to the local population.

A Section 75 aims to break down traditional barriers, increase flexibility and support innovation to improve the experience of people who use the service. It will give us opportunity to further develop the service together.

What would this mean?

HDFT are the current provider and under the Section 75 agreement the current work between Gateshead Council and HDFT would continue. This allows for the continuation of work and retention of valuable local knowledge. The Section 75 agreement will not change the current employer or terms and conditions for any staff.

HDFT and Gateshead Council will continue to work together to respond to changing needs of our communities. A Section 75 will enable us to work closely together on priority areas, improve service integration, and embed collaborative working. This is important for enhancing and further developing relationships between the local authority, HDFT, partners, communities and families.

The Section 75 arrangement will be reviewed regularly through the monitoring and evaluation of data on activity, outcomes and performance. A governance structure is required to oversee the overall management of the section 75 agreement. It is proposed that the newly formed Early Help System and Prevention Board, will oversee and manage the governance of the agreement.

Why?

Gateshead Council are recommending a Section 75 agreement following a careful consideration of commissioning arrangement options. The Council believes by delegating the 0-19 functions to HDFT this would lead to improved function delivery via advanced service integration with key Council services, embedded collaborative working and co-production and ownership of the new model for service delivery as part of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme and a joint strategic approach to governance and policy.

During the term of the current contract HDFT has established good working relationships with key delivery partners, including but not limited to the Council's Early Help Service. Developing and entering into a partnership agreement would further improve integration of the 0-19 service via collaborative working, co-production and partnership ownership of the new model for service delivery, as part of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme and a joint strategic approach to governance and policy.

Functions of the 0-19 service under the Section 75 would further align with wider early help services to reduce fragmentation and duplication with the aim of further improving outcomes for families in Gateshead. It is believed that a formalised strategic partnership with HDFT, one of the Council's trusted partners, offers better prospects for achieving the priorities and vision for Gateshead.

What next?

On 19th September 2023 Cabinet approved the recommended option to develop and enter into a Section 75 Partnership agreement with Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust for the delivery of the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service. It was also proposed that the Public Health team and HDFT undertake a public consultation engagement exercise for a period of 4 weeks regarding the establishment of a partnership arrangement.

We would like to include the views of partners and families to inform the development of the Section 75 agreement (to include the new 0-19 service delivery model, proposed outcomes and performance framework). A report will go to Cabinet in the Spring of 2024.

There is also frequently asked questions (FAQ) document available on the consultation portal.

Please complete the consultation survey online here:

www.gateshead.gov.uk/consultationsnew by the closing date to share your views.