

## **Briefing Paper for Overview and Scrutiny Committees, January 2011**

Proposed Changes to Mental Health Services  
in Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT area:

Update on consultation on the proposal to close The Willows Day  
Services, Macclesfield

## **Proposed Changes to Mental Health Services in Central and Eastern Cheshire**

### **Update on consultation on the proposal to close The Willows Day Services, Macclesfield**

The OSC are asked to note the process and outcome of this consultation

#### **Executive summary**

This paper provides an update for members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the recent Level 2 consultation relating to the proposed closure of mental health day services at the Willows in Macclesfield

#### **Consultation process and outcomes**

The proposals for consultation were presented at the West Cheshire OSC, the East Cheshire OSC and the Joint OSC in September 2010 and, following discussion, level 2 consultation was implemented.

Service users had individual meetings and were advised of the proposed changes. The staff from The Willows, involving the service user's care co-coordinators (within the Community Mental Health Teams) discussed and reviewed the service user's care plan in light of potential changes. Staff continue to discuss how these potential changes may affect them and their concerns and issues.

All Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP) staff involved in the provision of the day service within the Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust (CECPCT) area were contacted by letter and invited to attend one of five briefing sessions regarding this and other proposed service changes. A briefing for Governors was also delivered.

The General Manager and Clinical Director met with service users and carers in open meetings at The Willows on the 22 and 27 October 2010. The questions that were generated enabled an opportunity to discuss how health versus social care is funded and the differing responsibilities of each service; feedback identified that this has been a helpful clarification.

Service users commented that those who had received the service for a period of time were losing the place where they feel secure and where people know them, some wondered whether they would find an alternative place, some people have been referred into the reablement team.

The feedback and comments received were very positive about The Willows. Service users were very disappointed that under the proposals The Willows would close. All of the service users felt that they benefited from the service which the centre provides, helping them to recover from mental illness.

Some of the comments which service users gave include:

- *"Future Pathways has been essential to my recovery. The care given has been the incentive to keep going to therapy week by week."*
- *"I feel that we are just a number and that you do not care."*
- *"My course has helped me to do be able to voluntary work. Support from the staff has also helped me to stay out of hospital."*
- *"I have found the craft sessions and the wrap course very beneficial and I was hoping to continue with other courses as it has helped me recover from my mental breakdown."*
- *"I feel strongly. To lose The Willows is the worst thing that can happen. We are all just being abandoned."*
- *"I have learnt skills that I have been able to use in the workplace during periods of stability."*
- *"I'm not well enough to use mainstream facilities."*
- *"I think that The Willows provides an environment which is relaxed and not a pressured one. The activities give people meaning and purpose and a place they can express themselves rather than be stifled."*

The service has also had comments from service users who have moved on to other services and would not have done so had these potential changes not been discussed. All service users have been provided with individual support to explore their future needs.

There was also consultation with service users on how staff would work with service users in facilitating access to existing services in mainstream locations. Staff are also currently working with partner organisations to communicate potential changes and to discuss the support they may need to ensure service users can access services.

Whilst service users were positive about the service and clearly concerned about the proposed changes this was considered alongside other factors including that The Willows does not provide a true health service, rather it is providing social care, which duplicates what is already being provided elsewhere.

The costs of the service are high relative to the number of service users who access the Willows bearing in mind that everyone who uses the Willows is also under the care of a Community Mental Health team (CMHT)

The provision of day services is not seen as a part of CWP core business and it is not available in other areas of the Trust. As outlined above all services currently provided in The Willows are available via other mainstream providers.

The feedback from the consultation was considered at CWP's board meeting in November 2010 and a decision was made to inform the PCT Board that they supported the proposal to close the Willows. The Board of CECPCT considered the outcome of the consultation also at its November board and took the decision to proceed with the closure.

### **Indicative timescales**

Now that level 2 consultation has taken place and approval received from the CWP and PCT Boards, it is expected that the service will close in mid January 2011. An implementation plan has been developed and is being implemented. The impact of the changes will be monitored and CMHT staff will continue to support service users to access relevant mainstream services.

### **Conclusion**

Provision of day services is not part of CWP's core business and it is not available in other areas of the Trust. As outlined above all services currently provided in The Willows are available via other mainstream providers. Community Mental Health Teams will continue to support service users to access appropriate mainstream services, and in doing help to support their recovery.