

REPORT TO: Health & Wellbeing Board
DATE: 13 November 2013
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Enterprise
PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT: CQC Children Looked After and Safeguarding Reviews
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform the Board of the programme of Children Looked After and Safeguarding Reviews being undertaken by the CQC.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the contents of the report.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Following deferment of the planned multi-agency inspections of child protection arrangements, the CQC announced its intentions to undertake reviews of how health services keep children safe and promote the health and wellbeing of looked after children. The CQC implemented its programme of Children Looked After and Safeguarding Reviews on 30th September 2013, which will run until April 2015.

3.2 The reviews will evaluate the quality and impact of local health arrangements for safeguarding children and improving healthcare for looked after children and care leavers. As with Ofsted's single inspection framework, there will be a focus upon the experiences of looked after children and children and families who receive safeguarding services.

The lines of enquiry have been identified as:

- The experiences and views of children and their families.
- The quality and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in health.
- The quality of health services and outcomes for children who are looked after.
- Health leadership and assurance of local safeguarding and looked after children arrangements.

- 3.3 The inspections will take place in areas where the CQC believes there is the greatest risk within health services, and where they identify that there are deficiencies in the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and services for looked after children in the NHS. Reviews will cover all aspects of the provision of healthcare and the function of NHS England.
- 3.4 There will be two working days' notice of the review prior to a five day site visit by CQC children's services inspectors. As with Ofsted's single inspection framework, the CQC reviews will include case tracking of individual children to explore the effectiveness of health services. The review will take place within a local authority area, with a report published for each local area. There will also be a national report to bring together findings from across the country.
- 3.5 Further detail can be accessed via the CQC website;
<http://www.cqc.org.uk/node/755951>

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 NHS Trusts have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Further guidance is contained within *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*. Therefore NHS Trusts should already be compliant in terms of their safeguarding duties.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There will be resource implications in terms of officer time within the NHS provider and commissioner organisations to support CQC reviews. Should any NHS organisation need to make improvements following a review, there would be further resource implications. Dependent upon the outcome of a CQC review, this could trigger an Ofsted inspection of the local authority area.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The Health & Wellbeing Board, LSCB and Children's Trust have a formal protocol in place that sets out the accountability arrangements between the three. The LSCB should be formally consulted on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to ensure that safeguarding is embedded throughout.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

NHS organisations should have suitable arrangements in place for training, supervision and safer recruitment to support a skilled, competent and confident workforce working with children & young people, families and adults who may be parents/carers.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**
The safeguarding of children is fundamental to their health and well-being. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment should ensure it takes into account safeguarding children priorities.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**
The effectiveness of Safeguarding Children arrangements is fundamental to making Halton a safe place of residence for children and young people.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**
None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The main risk is that NHS organisations are not sufficiently prepared for a CQC review. Halton CCG is working with NHS providers to ensure systems are in place. In addition there is a risk that a CQC review could trigger an Ofsted inspection under the single inspection framework in the local area. Any NHS organisation involved in a CQC review will be required to report the outcome to the LSCB and other strategic partnerships as appropriate.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues