

Cost of Living Crisis (Health & Social Care) Task Group  
Collective Actions

Member organisations

NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care  
(Manchester locality)

Manchester City Council Public Health  
Team

Manchester City Council Adults Social Care

Manchester Local Care Organisation

Primary Care

Manchester Foundation Trust

Greater Manchester Mental Health

Big Life

Key thematic priority areas:

1. Resident & community engagement
2. Upskilling & enabling staff to signpost to the wider offer of support
3. Timely access to support & health advice
4. Maintaining medical treatment at home
5. Supporting our employees
6. Coordinating data and intelligence on the health impact of the crisis

# 1. Resident & Community Engagement

## Key issues & risks to consider

- Using Cost of Living Crisis data, could the Group approach NHS landlords to request unused spaces are repurposed for initiatives providing support without associated room hire/rental costs?

## Citizens Advice on MFT Site

- **MFT** are in early discussions with Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM) to agree the best approach; this may include stalls at the hospital site.

## Advocating for residents

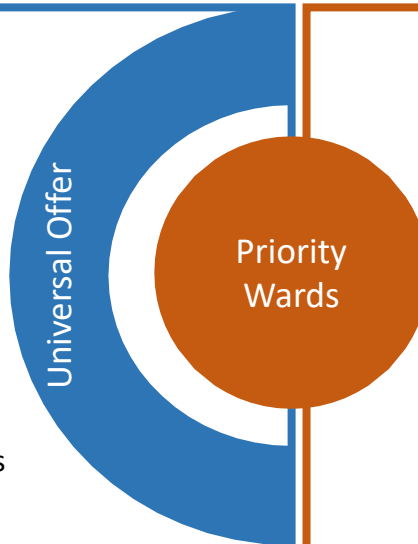
- **GMMH - Buzz** are regularly fact checking energy saving articles and signposting residents to alternative reliable sources of information around energy saving tips.

## Community Support Booklets

- **MLCO** working with **MCC** EasyRead booklet for Winter help: includes vaccination and other medical advice, all set within wider cost of living support. Booklet available citywide and can be accompanied by hyperlocal information. Booklets will be provided with a Z-card product, too, which fits in people's pockets and also has our key winter vaccine information on it.
- Ongoing discussions with how they will be distributed

## GP Practice Websites

- **Primary Care**: All GP Practice websites to be updated to include cost of living advice line information
- TVs in waiting rooms to display signposting information



## Enhanced neighbourhood presence

- **Big Life, MLCO and Primary Care** are working together to take the CAM outreach van to priority neighbourhoods. These will link into wider winter resilience engagement events and council roadshows.
- **Big Life** are exploring options to increase Be Well presence at food bank 'Food and Talk' sessions. This requires capacity to be released elsewhere.

## Community events

- **Teams Around the Neighbourhood** are planning winter warmer events which will include a cooked meal, a winter meal pack and signposting to local services.

## Considering routes to engagement:

- **Primary Care** to place additional focus on digital exclusion in light of the impacts of the crisis and consider alternative mechanisms for communication and access.

## Considering the role of NHS estates

- **Primary Care** will look to enhance the role of GP practices and health centres as 'trusted hubs', by working with landlords to open spaces to other services such as Housing Providers to offer additional support

## 2. Upskilling & enabling staff to signpost to wider offer

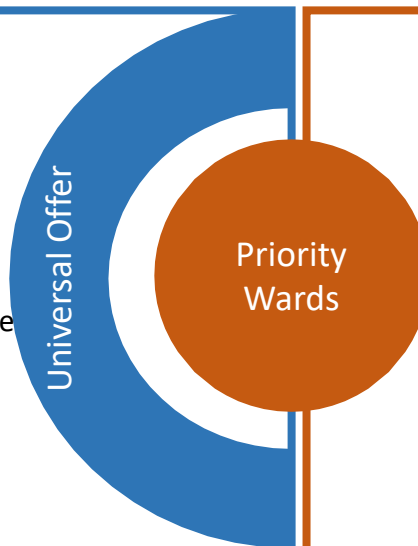
- As a system, we need to ensure staff are familiar with and can signpost patients to the primary health-financial schemes:
  - Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/help-with-health-costs/healthcare-travel-costs-scheme-htcs/>
  - NHS Low Income Scheme: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/help-with-health-costs/nhs-low-income-scheme-lis/>
  - Help with Dental Costs: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-dental-costs>
  - NHS Prescription Costs – free prescriptions: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/who-can-get-free-prescriptions/>
  - Prescription pre-payment certificates: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/save-money-with-a-prescription-prepayment-certificate-ppc/>
- In addition to the MCC Cost of Living Advice Line.

### Cost of Living Advice Line

- **Primary Care:** Ambition that every person working within primary care will receive the Cost Of Living Advice Line information to sign post residents correctly. This includes community pharmacy, optometry and dentistry as well as general practice.
- **ASC** staff are signposting to the Advice Line. **ASC** Communities of Practice have focused on this via Spotlight sessions including Citizens Advice Bureau attending and sharing information to support front line practitioners in signposting/support
- **MLCO** working with all community staff to ensure understanding of hyper-local booklets and relevant signposting. MLCO including CoL conversations at health contacts where possible.

### Maximising the existing offer

- Both **Primary Care** and **GMMH (Buzz)** maximising promotion of existing offer, including Healthy Start vouchers, 2-4 year-old free childcare provision, safe sleeping advice at GP baby checks and ensuring every child receives their free vitamins.
- Promote uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers - across **MLCO, MFT & MCC**
- **Primary Care** further signposting to smoking cessation services; Alcohol support services, safe sleeping and ICON advice
- **Primary Care** to signpost to local services to enable signposting to foodbanks, local VCSE offers, local 'Warm Room Schemes' (use of hyperlocal comms as it becomes available).



### Digital Inclusion

- **Big Life** coaches have been running pilot with Manchester City Council Digital Inclusion team and coaches in priority wards have been trained in delivering digital inclusion support. They also have direct access to tablets and data packs. This prevents an onward referral having to be made and can be used to support residents to engage with money saving or government help.

### 3. Timely access to support & health advice

#### Key issues & risks to consider

- **ASC** have anecdotal evidence that some citizens are turning down/cancelling their ASC care package due to the charges because of wider cost of living considerations. Data being gathered to further understand this issue

#### Prioritising contact

- **Primary Care**, via GPs, are exploring ways to identify and enhance support offered to those who request an extension of fit for work note beyond two weeks; one proposal is for such residents to receive an automatic referral to Be Well and to the Advice Line by the practice, in addition to the fit note extension.
- **MLCO** supporting Primary Care partners and PCNs to ensure all relevant and up to date referral knowledge is in place for services such as Care Navigators, Acute Home Visiting Service, First Contact Practitioner Service etc.
- **Primary care** – *advice* to practices to build in a cost of living enquiry to long term condition and mental health reviews.

#### Taxi Offer:

- **Locality team** to explore use of vaccine taxi fund to extend this as a limited offer to residents needing help with transport to health appointments (fund to be accessed via cost of living advice line; criteria to be determined)



#### Prioritising contact

- **Big Life** are exploring capacity within the priority wards to operate short wait times (target of initial contact within 72 hours)

#### Targeted support to enable access

- **GMMH - Buzz** continues to fund bus tickets for residents in certain wards to access a subsidised weekly shop

#### 'Poverty Proofing' a hospital visit

- **MFT** exploring ways to 'poverty proof' a visit, taking inspiration from similar work in schools. This may tackle and mitigate against digital exclusion, the costs of transport and offer of food vouchers while on site.

#### Investigating rates of children not being brought to appointments

- **MFT** are working with the Health Protection Hub to explore a pilot which would seek to call parents of children who have not been taken to hospital appointments, investigating reasons – and whether they are related to CoL issues.

#### Safe discharge

- **Locality team** to work to build in safe and well checks as part of MLCO control room work

#### Augment winter funding for primary care delivery in priority wards

- If winter monies become available for **Primary Care**, scaled augmented funding for general practices with >40% patients within Cohorts A and B, to fund cost of living enquiry at long term condition and mental health reviews, longer appointments for holistic care and assurance that cost of living information has been cascaded to every staff member within the practice

## 4. Maintaining medical treatment at home

### Key issues & risks to consider

- **Locality team** has proposed organisations can come together and use their respective charitable functions to enable patients to access a medical fund providing basic support to maintain treatments and care at home.

### Community pharmacy

- **Primary care** to optimise use of CPCS, Minor Ailment Scheme, healthy heart and free contraceptive services
- Primary Care to maximise use of free prescriptions and pre-payment cards, and offer a longer supply of medication where people do need to pay for scripts
- Primary Care - GPs to work with community pharmacists to flag patients not collecting their scripts

### Medical devices

- links with **Primary Care, MFT** and **MCC** – additional energy top up payment is needed. This includes assisted tech

### Medical fund

- **Locality team** are exploring development via charitable means to secure a medical fund for people unable to afford aspects of their medical care



*Placeholder - Further details TBC*

## 5. Supporting our employees

### Key issues & risks to consider

- **Primary care** – independent providers, not many living wage employers, high proportion of low paid staff, risk of increased sickness absence/staff turnover.

### Primary Care:

- Promotion of advice for low paid employees on support with bills etc, benefit entitlements.
- Promote options for practices to develop employee schemes e.g. Salary Sacrifice Scheme -Can include things like childcare vouchers, cycle to work scheme.
- Option for employers to offer 'one off' supermarket vouchers to low paid staff (up to circa £150) – does not affect in work benefits or tax but cannot be repeated annually
- To promote NHS health and well being and employee assistance offers

### Big Life

- Big Life working on plans for employee support around cost of living crisis. Not confirmed as yet.

### MFT

- Have a range of staff offers in place through employee health and wellbeing incl financial and legal advice, NHS discounts, and support for travel (interest free loans, discounts). Reviewing further options.

### GMMH

- Trust is a Real Living Wage Employer
- Trust can offer employee schemes e.g. Salary Sacrifice Scheme – which includes things like childcare vouchers, cycle to work scheme

### MLCO

- Amplifying partners messages via staff bulletin including helping hands. CAM session held as communities of practice spotlight session shared with all staff



*Placeholder - Further details TBC*

## 6. Use of data and intelligence to understand and respond to the health impacts of the crisis

### Key issues & risks to consider

- Analysis of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis often takes an economic focus. As a Task Group, we need to ensure an equal priority is placed on analysing the impact of the crisis on the health of our population and local health and care services.
- Need to effectively coordinate pieces of ad-hoc or ongoing analysis (inc. Dashboards) being undertaken by local partners to arrive at a joined-up view of the health and care impacts of the cost of living crisis and the effectiveness of the work that is taking places to address and mitigate these impacts.

- Help to coordinate and inform the work of data and intelligence partners in Manchester in respect of understanding and responding to the health impacts of the cost of living crisis (ONGOING)
- Engage with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care to understand the work that is going on to develop cost of living dashboards and the indicators being used to monitor the impact of the cost living crisis on population health and health and care services. (ONGOING)
- Co-ordinate approaches to analysis of priority areas, communities and impacts of cost of living crisis across locality partners (MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 3 NOVEMBER)
- **Big Life** have proposed including deprivation band (or priority neighbourhood) specific data within their main scorecard in order to capture on a monthly basis the work that is being completed.



- Re-analysis of data on patients registered with a GP practice to identify which GP practices serve patients living in the priority wards (COMPLETE)
- Application of methodology used to identify priority wards to GP registered populations in order to identify priority GP practices based on the estimated proportion of patients likely to be most affected financially by cost of living crisis due to having a very low or discretionary income. (COMPLETE)
- Arrangements being made with Experian to enable the supply of Mosaic data to MLCO to facilitate analysis of the impact of the cost of living crisis on users of community health services (UNDERWAY)
- Work with MFT to explore extending methodology used to identify priority wards to the analysis of data in respect of patients seen by hospitals in the city (UNDERWAY)