



Report Title: West Sussex Winter Pressures Falls Prevention Programme

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Executive Summary

Falls and fractures are a major health issue faced by older people in West Sussex. Action on falls is one of the proposed transformational initiatives in the Ageing Well component of the [Draft West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). Falls prevention is also one of the three priority areas in the Surrey and East Sussex STP. West Sussex County Council has allocated £1m of central government winter pressures funding for WS Public Health to lead on the delivery of a winter pressures falls prevention programme within the year 2018/19. A key decision has been made to provide Sussex Community Foundation Trust with £787,411 to deliver a programme of work around improved assessment and triage. In addition this, West Sussex districts and boroughs and Public Health are going to deliver a range of activities around the improved provision of strength and balance physical activity.

1. BACKGROUND

Falls and fractures are a major health issue faced by older people in West Sussex. The human cost can include distress, pain, injury, loss of confidence, loss of independence and mortality. In West Sussex there were 4,495 emergency hospital admissions for falls related injuries in 2016/17. A common and serious injury resulting from a fall is hip fracture which significantly reduces independence and increases the risk of mortality. There were 1,240 admissions for hip fractures in 2016/17 resulting in an annual cost to West Sussex of more than £20,472,40.

In health service terms falls are both high volume and costly and are one of the main precipitating factors for admission to care and nursing homes. West Sussex has seen a significant increase in demand with lengthy waiting times reported for specialist falls services in West Sussex.

Hip fracture admission is a key indicator for the supporting independence in later life priority in the West Sussex Plan. Action on falls is one of the proposed

transformational initiatives in the Ageing Well component of the [Draft West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). Falls prevention is also one of the three priority areas in the Surrey and East Sussex STP.

On 2nd October 2018, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced £240 million funding for local authorities to spend on tackling winter pressures in the NHS.

Subsequent to that, it was confirmed, via a letter dated 17th October 2018, that West Sussex County Council's share would be £3.3 million; confirmation of the grant determination did not occur until 26th November 2018. This imposes a condition stipulating that these resources "may be used only for the purposes of supporting the local health and social care system to manage demand pressures on the NHS between November 2018 and March 2019". Subsequent to this £1m of the funding was allocated to resource a winter pressures falls programme, led by the Director of Public Health and Head of Service (Stages of Life). Key system partners have been engaged including Sussex Community Foundation Trust (SCFT), South East Coast Ambulance Trust (SECAmb), Coastal and West Sussex and Horsham and Mid-Sussex CCGs, WSCC Independent Living Services, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and the District and Borough Councils.

Expressions of interest (EOIs) were sought from partners able to rapidly scale up current activity to make a demonstrable impact on system pressures. WSCC Public Health is also delivering a number of falls prevention activities. On the 21st December 2019 A key decision was made to resource SCFT with £787,411 to deliver a comprehensive falls prevention programme.

2. PROPOSALS

The delivery of a programme of winter pressures falls prevention activities to reduce the incidence of falls and fractures, and demand for specialist falls prevention services. To include:

- a) SCFT to deliver a comprehensive programme of Winter Pressures falls prevention activities

SCFT has proposed the delivery of a programme of falls prevention work addressing identified priority areas including demand reduction for specialist services through early assessment, effective triage, increasing specialist capacity including around medicines management, the delivery of evidence based falls prevention interventions including home hazard assessment and modification. This will involve recruiting falls champions for all 14 of the local care coordination networks in West Sussex (Local Community Networks and Communities of Practice) to provide early assessment and additional staff for the community falls prevention service.

Programme activity will be monitored by an oversight group with membership from WSCC public health, CWS CCG and H+MS / Crawley CCG with SCFT providing regular reports on an agreed set of KPIs and monies being released on the basis of meeting agreed levels of activity.

- b) West Sussex Districts and Boroughs to deliver a winter pressures programme of activity improving system capacity around strength and balance falls prevention exercise.

Expressions of interest have been received from all seven West Sussex districts and boroughs around delivering additional strength and balance physical activity. This includes proposals for 13 extra courses, 6 additional instructors trained and 24 events.

To give a specific example Mid Sussex Wellbeing's Expressions of Interest includes:

- a) Roadshow: Run a Falls Prevention Roadshow throughout towns and villages in Mid Sussex, comprising 12 events (1 per week for 12 weeks throughout January, February and March), engaging with Age UK, housing associations, sheltered accommodation & community groups. Free to attend events offering tips on Strength & Balance exercises that can be done in the home, and advice on measures that can be taken to prevent a fall.
- b) New Classes: Extend the current Wellbalanced Falls Prevention programme by adding additional classes in new locations, where there is an identified demand. We have capacity for 4 new classes.
- c) Training: Fund the Postural Stability Instructor training for 3 people, who will then commit to working on the Wellbalanced Falls Prevention programme.
- d) West Sussex Public health to deliver a range of strength and balance activities.

The Public Health Directorate are also promoting population level approaches to falls prevention including a falls prevention z-card with information on the Super 6 strength and balance improving exercises and what to do following a fall, plus an accompanying MECC (Making Every Contact Count) training video for professionals working with older people. It is also promoting a 'Challenge 26' to ensure that people at risk of falls are supported by local services to carry out 26 weeks (6 months) of physical activity.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 1. The Public Health Directorate to continue to lead on the delivery of a system wide West Sussex Winter Pressures Strategic Falls Prevention Programme.
- 2. Learning from the programme to inform the development of a strategic West Sussex approach to falls prevention and Surrey and East Sussex STP work in this area.

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