

**Meeting:** Health and Wellbeing Board **Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Wards affected:** All

**Report Title:** Developing Women's Health Hubs

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** As soon as board decision agreed

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Councillor Hayley Tranter, Cabinet lead for Public Health and Adult Social Care [Hayley.tranter@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.tranter@torbay.gov.uk)

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 This report is intended to bring awareness to the Health and Wellbeing Board members of a local issue and to invite support for this area of development in response to the needs of local Torbay residents.
- 1.2 The proposal in this report is to invite the Health and Wellbeing board to support and endorse the establishment of the group 'Improving Women's Health'. This group was established in early 2023 and has the purpose of developing, promoting, and locally implementing the Women's Health Strategy and associated funding. It is intended that this is done in line with the national strategy, across Torbay, Devon and Plymouth considering local needs and population demographics.
- 1.3 The Health and Wellbeing Board are invited to be aware of the reasons for the creation of the group, how it plans take a strategic approach to improving women's health and spend the allocated funding.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 The 'Improving Women's Health' group is multi-disciplinary and inter-organisational and was established in early 2023. Led by NHS Devon ICB and including Public Health leadership from Torbay, Plymouth and Devon, the membership is made up of key stakeholders working within the local health sector, including representatives from service

users groups, Primary and Secondary care providers and local authority Public Health commissioners. The group and its members will aspire to bring together professionals, user voices and services to provide women's health hubs in the community and implement the allocated funding.

- 2.2 Women's Health Hubs have been announced by the Department of Health, forming a key component of the national Women's Health strategy. One-off non-recurrent funding (£595,000) to NHS Devon ICB was announced in July 2023. Key local priorities identified are regarding Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC), menopause care and digital solutions. This sum is for the entire ICB footprint.
- 2.3 In Torbay, delivery of Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) has been in decline and was exacerbated over the Covid pandemic. Unlike other areas nationally, this trend has continued, resulting in women being unable to, or experiencing long delays in accessing LARC in general practice.
- 2.4 Across Devon, including Torbay, there is no NHS specialist menopause care for women. There is a gap in clarity over commissioning responsibilities. Any specialist care requires private appointments, with the nearest in Cornwall or Dorset, resulting in long delays, out of area travel or no access at all.
- 2.5 It is an aspiration that the Improving Women's Health group will address and improve outcomes relating to LARC and menopause as key Torbay priorities.

This group and its work will address inequalities in health for women by:

- Raising awareness around women's health.
- Focussing clearly on the outcome of improving women's health for the benefit of individual women, families, and the wider Devon population.
- Improving access to healthcare for women across the life course, and consistency of this across Devon.
- Collaboratively commissioning women's health services across Devon in primary and in secondary care.
- Reducing inequalities in health outcomes for girls and women, including gender-based inequalities both for sex-specific conditions and in women's general health.

### 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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The Health and Wellbeing board are invited to:

1. Consider how local organisations and structures can help to improve women's health through their individual policies and by working together to strengthen and develop current services (including consideration of co-commissioning for example). Update can be given to this board after three months (December 2023).
2. Support the work of the Improving Women's' Health group. This group will be convened by NHS Devon ICB with engagement from key stakeholders, including Torbay Local Authority Public Health. This group will seek to implement the national Women's Health Strategy and

ambitions for a local Women's Health Hub. Update can be given to this board after three months (December 2023).

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1:

## **Background Documents**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/womens-health-hubs>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/25-million-for-womens-health-hub-expansion>

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/policies/health/srhna/>

## **Supporting Information**

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