Name of Meeting
Board
Date of Meeting
28 March 2024
Agenda item:
3.7

Digital Inclusion and Older People

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Approval/Scrutiny route:	Business Executive Team (20 March 2024)

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is for the Board to take assurance from our position against recommendations by the Older People's Commissioner for all Health Boards on Digital Inclusion

Recommendation:

APPROVE ☐	CONSIDER ☒	RECOMMEND ☐	ADOPT ☐	ASSURANCE ☒

Public Health Wales Board are asked to:

1) Take assurance from the steps we have already taken that put us in a good place against these recommendations;
2) Note the actions agreed by BET to further improve the position.

Link to Public Health Wales Strategic Plan

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives

Summary impact analysis	
Equality and Health Impact Assessment	No Equality and Health Impact Assessment has been undertaken. However, the purpose of the paper is to increase access to our services for older people and prevent digital being a barrier to access
Risk and Assurance	Not identified as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register or Board Assurance Framework.
Health and Care Standards	This report supports and/or takes into account the [Health and Care Standards for NHS Wales](#) Quality Themes
Financial implications	None
People implications	The process applies to all staff undertaking research.

Digital Inclusion for Older People.

Background

On 30 January 2024, the Older People's Commissioner released a report Access Denied: Older People's experiences of Digital Exclusion in Wales. The report had recommendations for Welsh Government, Health Boards, Local Authorities and others.

This paper summarises the recommendations for Health Boards and how Public Health Wales current status against these.

Recommendations for Health Boards

There were 5 recommendations in the report for Health Boards:

- Ensure that services that they provide or for which they are responsible are available to an equivalent standard for people who are not online or do not have a smartphone.

- Display phone numbers for public enquiries clearly on the home page of websites and make sure that websites comply with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.

- Ensure that a member of the Board at each Health Board leads on digital inclusion, that feedback is regularly sought (including by the use of relevant committees and internal structures), and that this issue is reported upon in annual reports and strategic equality plans.

- Use the Digital Service Standards for Wales (developed by the Centre for Digital Public Services) and involve older people, especially people not online, in the design of services, systems and relevant research from the beginning to co-produce better and more accessible services and policies.

- Restore access to hard copy leaflets and information across all sites where this has not already returned post-pandemic.

Overall, Public Health Wales is in a good position across these recommendations as we have:

- Already adopted the Digital Service Standards for Wales for new digital developments as part of the work of DDDA. This will ensure that digital services in the future meet this standard. However, digital tools currently being developed outside of the Digital Services Division may need to undertake work to meet this standard.
- As part of our digital strategy adopted the standard that services should be developed end-to-end to ensure they are accessible to all. Again though,

there is work to be done to consider this for digital tools being developed outside of Digital Services Division.

- No hard copy leaflets have been withdrawn during the pandemic. Screening have continued to make hard-copy available throughout. For other services, Public Health Wales acts as a producer for whom other service providers can order. These continue to be available in a full-range of media including hard-copy.
- Nick Elliott has the lead for digital inclusion at Board Level

On 20th March 2024 BET agreed to following recommendations to strengthen our position:

1) For digital tools in development outside of Digital Services, we undertake work to ensure that access can be provided through other channels where necessary. We also need to undertake a piece of work to ensure developments which don't involve the Digital Services Team can be fully assessed against the Welsh Digital Services Standard.
2) That the web transformation project owns the recommendation on contact numbers for access to services.
3) That the Director Of Data, Knowledge and Research will take the Executive lead for digital inclusion to support the discharging of this agenda.

Recommendations

Public Health Wales Board are asked to:

3) Take assurance from the steps we have already taken that put us in a good place against these recommendations;
4) Note the actions agreed by BET to further improve the position.