

NHS Borders

Chair & Chief Executive's Office

Chair & Chief Executive's
Office
NHS Borders
Headquarters
Borders General Hospital
Melrose
Roxburghshire TD6 9BD



Siobhian Brown MSP
Convener
COVID-19 Recovery Committee
Via Email to :

Date 23 January 2023
Your Ref
Our Ref RR/LS/Longcovidresponse230123

Covid19.Committee@Parliament.Scot

Enquiries to Lesley Shillinglaw, PA to Chief
Executive
Extension 28220

Dear Ms Brown

Further to your letter dated 17 January 2023, requesting information regarding NHS Borders long COVID services please note below responses:

Details on the current services available including information on how the Scottish Government funding has been used?

- NHS Borders has no dedicated long COVID service. At present those presenting with long COVID symptoms are referred to the most appropriate Primary or Secondary care service, ranging from cardiology to physiotherapy to psychology. Support for staff experiencing long COVID symptoms is also delivered through Occupational Health and Wellbeing services. Following a gap analysis and stakeholder engagement NHS Borders committed to utilise Scottish Government funding to support the appointment of an Advanced Practice Occupational Therapist who will develop and co-ordinate long COVID pathways across Primary and Secondary Care. This development has been built into NHS Borders Annual Delivery Plan for 2023.

Any barriers to service development and provision?

- The relatively small numbers of patients presenting with the vast array of symptoms of long COVID mean it is unviable for NHS Borders to deliver a dedicated long COVID service, thus utilising existing services and referral pathways has been the preferred direction of travel. Whole system pressures have also prevented clinicians and service leads from dedicating time to this particular service development over the winter of 2022/23.

Any examples of good practice?

- Individual clinicians are delivering high quality care in this regard with a specific example linking together clinical psychology services, wellbeing service and respiratory physiotherapy services to provide an MDT approach to the management of long COVID symptoms

Ct'd.....



Details of future plans for long COVID service provision in the short and medium term?

- The Advanced Practice Occupational Therapist referenced above will come into post in February 2023. This role over the course of 12 months will seek to establish clear pathways for patients and clinicians regarding the management of symptoms. The development of a once for Scotland self-management digital solution will also be critical in supporting local developments in NHS Borders.

In conclusion, NHS Borders continue to be committed to meeting the needs of those living with long COVID and will continue to be engaged in both local and national planning regarding the on-going provision of services.

Yours sincerely



Ralph Roberts
Chief Executive