

Siobhian Brown MSP
Convener
C-19 Recovery Committee

Date: 23.02.2023
Enquiries to: Evelyn Macleod
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Sent by email to:
covid19.committee@parliament.scot

Dear Siobhian,

RE: Inquiry into Long Covid

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

The 2022/23 funding of £19,998 has gone towards the work our Project Coordinator has done in bringing a working group together and development of the pathways.

The short life working group explored care model options and agreed an Integrated Care Co-ordinator led service appears the best and most cost effective option locally. The group has agreed to the provision of 1-2 MDT clinics a month (dependent on need) where any patient requiring more comprehensive MDT assessment can be seen by appropriate MDT members – this would be within the medical clinic (with input from AHPs) and could be physical or virtual dependent on need. It has also been agreed to hold ‘virtual’ MDT case reviews/case conferences regularly.

Thus far we have secured the services of the Pain Association who offer a local support group and online support group and also offer 1:1 service locally and online to cover all of the Western Isles. Although geared towards pain management, all of these self management strategies will benefit Long COVID patients as well, due to the large crossover of symptoms and issues. The Pain Association are happy to pilot the feed in of Long COVID patients via our current pain management pathway and are happy to pilot the addition of such patients without any extra costs. They also offer an online & face to face self-management programme covering:

- Pacing skills (planning activities in relation to available energy)

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Chair: Gillian McCannon
Chief Executive: Gordon Jamieson



Western Isles NHS Board is the common name of Western Isles Health Board

“The best at what we do”

NHS Western Isles will work actively with patients, the public and our partners to improve our community's health and wellbeing, to tackle inequalities, and to deliver high quality, reliable clinical services.

- Anxiety, Stress management and relaxation
- The effect of negative thinking and how to be more positive
- Improving sleep
- Dealing with flare-ups of pain (episodes of intense pain / symptoms)
- Managing changes in life and to health
- Communicating effectively with the people around you.

We have also secured the services of Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland, who have offered us services without any cost as they fall within CHSS's service remit and they have been given Scottish Government funding for Long COVID services. These include:

- a nurse-staffed Long COVID advice and symptom management line (with text and email contact)
- easy read health guides, including some geared towards the young/teenage children of people suffering symptoms of Long COVID
- 'What matters to me' care planning to individualise support services to each patient
- emotional and practical support – befriending, assisting with shopping, practical help etc
- long COVID online support group and Facebook page with potential for local face to face group
- a hospital to home service, supporting anyone who has been in hospital with COVID-19 as well as those who did not need hospitalised, where they can assist them at any point, after diagnosis with practical and emotional support, assistance with recovery goals etc, kindness callers (to address isolation/loneliness).

Long Term Conditions Hebrides have linked in to the Long COVID service and can offer virtual mindfulness sessions and virtual yoga sessions as well as peer to peer support.

We have secured the use of five electric bikes from Rural Connections (Cycle UK) for anyone affected by fatigue; they can also tutor patients on the use of these and can provide guided individual/group cycles.

There is a broad range of digital and web-based apps and resources available for self-management and symptom management. The Scottish Government are currently looking at a number of apps to provide a patient held record, clinical monitoring and audit tool as well as an information source for patients. At present the COVID-19 Yorkshire

Rehabilitation Scale (C-19 YRS) app is one of the favoured options. We have secured an agreement for C-19 YRS app for £2000 + VAT (instead of £8649 + VAT), should this be the Scottish Government's preferred 'Once for Scotland' choice).

We also intend to set up a clinician facing intranet resource page and a public facing internet resource page with information about Long COVID, and access to web-links and apps for self-management, supported self-management, peer support and third sector agency.

2 • any barriers to service development and provision;

Long COVID is an emerging and as yet, poorly understood condition, with no existing national referral pathway or defined treatment modality. At present, due to recruitment issues - Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Mental Health services locally are unable to provide dedicated staff to provide a standalone long covid service.

- any examples of good practice; and
Partnership working with other agencies as described above.
- details of future plans for long COVID service provision in the short and medium term.
Further implementation as detailed above.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Jamieson
Chief Executive Officer
NHSWI