Dear

Freedom of Information Request – DGS 128

Thank you for your recent request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received by NHS Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on 11 October 2018. The information you have requested is below.

1. Of those with facial nerve palsy who have not made a full or nearly full recovery at 12 weeks following onset, can you provide an estimate of the percentage of such patients who are referred for rehabilitation of persistent facial pain/discomfort and dysfunction?

NHS Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group does not hold this level of information.

2. If a patient with facial nerve palsy is routinely referred to secondary care for rehabilitation therapy, which hospital(s) and department(s) do you refer to?

A patient with a facial nerve palsy will be referred to any secondary care hospital of their choice for investigation of their condition. The treatment for that condition is then determined by the specialist and choice is then offered at that point for the relevant treatment which may or may not be rehabilitation therapy.

3. If routinely referring a patient with facial nerve palsy for therapy, do you refer to a specialist facial therapist or to a local general physiotherapy team?

Patients with a facial nerve palsy are referred in the first instance for investigation of the cause of the palsy.

a. Do you have specific centres that you refer to? If so please indicate which ones.

No

b. What is the average cost of a course of physical rehabilitation therapy?
This is built into routine pathway tariffs.

4. Does the decision making panel for individual funding requests differentiate between referral to a specialist facial therapist (i.e. with a postgraduate qualification) and a general physiotherapist or speech and language therapist?

Please see below

5. Is specialist physiotherapy or facial therapy freely available to patients with facial nerve palsy or is it funded on an individual basis?

a. If not routinely funded, what is the reason?

Please see below

6. How many individual funding requests have you received to access specialist physiotherapy or facial therapy in the last 12 months?

a. How many were agreed?

b. How many were declined?

c. If declined, on what basis were they declined?

Please see below

6. Is Trophic Electrical Stimulation (TES) freely available to patients with facial nerve palsy or is it funded on an individual basis?

a. If routinely available, where do you refer patients to for TES?

b. What evidence do you use to support routine funding of TES?

c. If routinely available, what is the average cost of a course of TES?

Please see below

For questions 4-6 the following answer is given: From September 2017 to August 2018 no Individual Funding Requests have been received for nonsurgical treatments for Facial Nerve Palsy for Kent and Medway patients.

We hope that this has dealt with your request for information however, should you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to request that we conduct an internal review of your request. If you would like us to conduct such a review please contact us within two months of this letter using the contact details below:

E-mail: swccg.northkent.foi@nhs.net

Post: FOI, NHS Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group, 2nd Floor, Gravesham Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1AU.

Your request for an internal review will then be processed in accordance with our Freedom of Information Policy, a copy of which can be found on our website:
If you are still dissatisfied following the internal review, you have the right under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner provides full and detailed guidance on the Freedom of Information Act, and on when and how to complain.

Please find below the link to their website page and their helpline number.
https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/
Helpline number: 0303 123 1113

In line with the Information Commissioner’s directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. An anonymised version of our response will therefore be posted on our website.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.