

Review of Home Care

Adult Services and Health Select Committee

Final Report

February 2015

Select Committee membership

Councillor Kevin Faulks (Chair)

Councillor Baker
Councillor Cunningham
Councillor Kennedy
Councillor McCall
Councillor Mrs Walmsley
Councillor N Wilburn
Councillor Mrs Womphrey
Parent Governor Co-opted Representative Deborah Miller

Acknowledgements

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George Irving, Service Manager, Adult Services
Rob Papworth, Lead Commissioner – Older Adults,
Angela Connor, Service Manager
Janet Ballinger, Finance Manager - Personalisation & Client Financial Services
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Stuart Dryden, Regional Manager, Community Integrated Care
Dr Guy Turnbull, Managing Director, Care and Share Associates
Andrew Lees and Emma Hodgson, Comfort Call
Steve Rose, Catalyst

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees

The providers that responded to the Committee's survey

And a special thank you to all those who assisted with and responded to the Committee's consultation including service users and carers.

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Original Brief

Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

Council Plan 2014-15 - Adult Services - Enhanced quality of life for people with care and support needs

What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?

To review the quality of local home care services (also known as domiciliary care services) across all client groups and including extra care schemes and specialist mental health and learning disability providers. The review is to make reference to the remaining in-house provision but to focus on the commissioned sector.

The review will assess the regulatory and commissioning framework for local home care providers. This will include relevant Care Quality Commission, Quality Standards Framework, and Safeguarding reports and appropriate case studies.

The Committee will also investigate different models of home care delivery (including care purchased with a personal budget and the role of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector - VCSE) links to key issues/programmes including the Better Care Fund and the Care Act and eligibility. The review will include suitable methods of consulting with clients.

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the outcomes of the Adult Services and Health Select Committee's review of home care.
- 1.2 The aim of the review was to examine the quality of local home care services across all client groups and including extra care schemes and specialist mental health and learning disability providers. The majority of home care provision within Stockton is commissioned from external providers.
- 1.3 Home care is a service provided by paid care workers to provide help in the home to a person who needs support for assessed unmet needs. The service would be arranged following a social care assessment, carried out by a social worker. This includes practical support to help with activities of daily living, such as:
 - help with getting up and going to bed, bathing, dressing, preparing meals and taking medication;
 - help with shopping;
 - helping the person engage in community activities.
- 1.4 Good home care is crucial to the health and wellbeing of those in receipt of care and also their families.
- 1.5 The review has highlighted how important home care services are, particularly for some of the most vulnerable people in the community.
- 1.6 Recent engagement work has shown positive feedback from those who are in receipt of care, although it must be acknowledged that securing feedback from home care users is a recognised challenge. A large number of issues (complaints and alerts) were raised at the beginning of the current home care contract period, but these have reduced over time to a more 'expected' level for the size of service under review.
- 1.7 There is always the need to work towards continuous improvement, and the Committee has also seen examples of where local services need to improve. With this in mind, the Committee is particularly keen to support work to monitor and improve the quality of local home care services.
- 1.8 The Committee believes that the terms and conditions for staff, and how they are valued, can have a direct impact on the quality of care provided. Therefore where possible the Council should work with providers to improve this, especially with regard to the extensive use of zero hour contracts.
- 1.9 The forthcoming tendering exercise provides an opportunity to take stock of the various options available to the Council to provide both stability and improve the range and scale of providers and models of care operating in the Borough.
- 1.10 The Committee recommends that:

1. the Council should review the NICE Quality Standards for Home Care and check against current local practice when published (expected mid-2015), ensure consideration is given to including them in the next specification, and report back on this work to ASH Committee as part of the monitoring process.
2. the Council should consider the fee level ahead of the 2015 commissioning process to ensure it supports a sustainable high quality service, within the available resources.
3. a) the Council should work with commissioned providers to ensure that wherever possible zero hour contracts are not used, taking into account best HR practice, to ensure due consideration is being given to the use of minimum guaranteed hours contracts for staff;

b) the Council consider providing a guaranteed minimum level of home care hours to providers, taking into account expected demand and activity levels, whilst ensuring service users are able to exercise their choice of provider.
4. participation in the Home Care Quality Standards Framework process to be made a contractual requirement for home care providers in the next contract
5. the outcomes from the Home Care Quality Standards Framework to be reported to ASH Committee on an annual basis, as part of the framework for monitoring the quality and safety of local care services
6. that the Council take forward discussions with the Regional Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and regional Care Quality Commission (CQC), in order to ensure that Local Authorities receive early notification of any issues of concern identified during CQC inspections of Adult Social Care providers, and ensure that consistent procedures are in place across the region.
7. the Council should examine procurement options so that not all of the commissioned home care service is procured at the same time. This would mitigate risks by increasing: stability in local service provision, the scope to support other models/pilot approaches, and the opportunity to develop a greater range of providers in the Borough.
8. a) the Council should continue to work with and engage the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector to further develop its services in this area of provision, including non-personal care support where appropriate, and this should include facilitating the development of mutual service providers in the Borough.
b) emerging good practice examples of VCSE sector provision be reported to the Committee as part of the six-monthly monitoring process
9. as part of the monitoring process, an update on all the issues identified in the report and recommendations be reported to Committee in six months.