

NUTRITION IN CARE HOMES TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

FINAL REPORT

Introduction

This is the final report of the Nutrition in Care Homes Task and Finish Review Group, which was established by the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee to ensure that the care homes currently contracting with the Council are ensuring that individuals who are using their services are supported in having appropriate and adequate nutrition and hydration.

Background Information

The work of the Nutrition in Care Homes Task and Finish Review Group is part of a wider piece of work being undertaken in relation to Safeguarding Adults and work will continue into specific areas in relation to safeguarding over the next 12 months.

The Nutrition in Care Homes Task and Finish Review was established by the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee to ensure that the care homes currently contracting with the Council are ensuring that individuals who are using their services are supported in having appropriate and adequate nutrition and hydration.

A draft Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**) for the work in relation to Nutrition was developed and all Members of the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee were invited to participate.

Membership of the Review Group

Although all Members of the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee were invited to participate in this review, the following Members undertook the visits and were in attendance at meetings:-

Councillor Hutchinson
Councillor B Jones
Councillor D Jones
Councillor Knowles
Councillor S. Richmond
Councillor Thistlethwaite

The Group was led by Councillor Thistlethwaite

Acknowledgements

The Task and Finish Review Group acknowledges the support and assistance provided in the course of their investigations and would like to place on record its thanks to the following :-

Ann Workman – Assistant Director – Adults Social Care, Darlington Borough Council
Yvonne Hall – Service Manager Contracts and Quality – Darlington Borough Council
Angela Coates – Senior Contracts Officer, Darlington Borough Council
Joanne Smith – Team Manager, Contracts, Darlington Borough Council
Gordon Peacock – Contracts Officer, Darlington Borough Council
Rachel Masters – Senior Specialist, Focus on Under-nutrition Dietician
Shirley Burton – Democratic Manager, Darlington Borough Council

The Group would also like to thank the staff, residents and families of those care homes they visited.

Method of Investigation

The Task and Finish Review Group met on five occasions between November 2012 and May 2013 and the notes containing the discussions held at those meetings are attached (**Appendix 2**).

At the initial meeting in November 2012, and prior to the commencement of the work, the Task and Finish Review Group had a very interesting and informative presentation from Rachel Masters, Senior Specialist, Focus on Under-nutrition Dietician, on the work which was currently being undertaken by the Council in partnership with County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust in relation to nutrition in care homes in Darlington. This innovative work had enabled County Durham and Darlington to lead the way nationally on identifying and treating under-nutrition from a regional perspective.

In addition to the meetings, Members undertook announced visits to the following care homes and completed a standard questionnaire (**Appendix 3**) by seeking views of staff, residents and their friends/families when possible :-

The Lawns	Councillors S. Richmond and Knowles
Darlington Manor	Councillor D. Jones
Moorlands	Councillors Thistlethwaite and Hutchinson
Ventress Hall	Councillors B. Jones and Knowles
Lakeside	Councillors Thistlethwaite and Hutchinson
North Park	Councillors S. Richmond and Knowles
St Georges Hall	Councillor D. Jones
St Williams	Councillors B. Jones and Knowles

Subsequent unannounced visits were also undertaken to the following care homes and Members were accompanied on these occasions by Officers from the Contracts Team within the Council :-

The Lawns	Councillors S. Richmond and Knowles
Darlington Manor	Councillor D. Jones
Moorlands	Councillor S Richmond
Lakeside	Councillors Thistlethwaite and Hutchinson
St Georges Hall	Councillor D. Jones
Willow Green	Councillor S. Richmond
Wilton House	Councillor Knowles

Documents Examined

Standards in relation to Nutrition – drafted in consultation with Focus on Under-nutrition and Dietetics, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust.
Darlington Borough Council – Residential Agreement for the Provision of Residential Care 2013-16 - Quality Standards

Findings

Following the initial announced visits, an analysis of the findings was compiled and is attached (**Appendix 4**). It is noted from the analysis that, overall, Members were generally satisfied with the findings, however, there were some general common themes emerging from the cross section of homes visited which covered the following areas :-

- lack of management presence during some of the announced visits;
- lack of access to kitchen;
- smell of urine;
- cleanliness of kitchen staff (not wearing appropriate clothing) – need to encourage Focus on Food and hygiene training;
- personal space;
- general decoration/tidiness; and
- some concern about fluid intake

Second visits

Following the second, unannounced visits, both Members and Officers were satisfied with their findings and felt that no further action was needed.

Outcome

From the discussions which took place at the various meetings and both the unannounced and announced visits which took place as part of the methods of investigation, the Task and Finish Review concluded that, having considered the information supplied and obtained, they were confident that in the care homes

visited, were ensuring that individuals using their services were supported in having appropriate and adequate nutrition and hydration.

Recommendation

That it be recommended to the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee that :-

(a) the thanks of this Task and Finish Review Group be conveyed to the Assistant Director – Adult Social Care and all the staff within the Contracts Team for the support and advice given during this investigation;

(b) the thanks of this Task and Finish Review Group be conveyed to Rachel Masters, Senior Specialist, Focus on Under-nutrition Dietician for her initial involvement and presentation which gave Members the background to enable them to undertake the investigation;

(c) this Task and Finish Review Group is re-assured that Focus on Under-nutrition is involved with the care homes currently contracting with this Council and is actively involved in monitoring and giving advice and training to their staff on nutrition and hydration; and

(d) this Task and Finish Review Group is confident that there is sufficient evidence to ensure that the Quality Standards in relation to nutrition and hydration within care homes are being met and that any issues which might occur in the future would be dealt with promptly and efficiently by Officers within the Contracts Team.

Nutrition in Care Homes Task and Finish Review Group