

## **NUTRITION IN CARE HOMES TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

**15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2012**

**PRESENT** – Councillor Thistlethwaite (in the Chair); Councillors B. Jones, Kelley, Knowles and S. Richmond.

**Nutrition in Care Homes** – The Group met to receive information 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.

Members were advised of the current agreement the Council had with 22 care homes in Darlington for the provision of residential care for older people which was due to expire at the end of March 2013 and to the decision of Cabinet, at its meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2012, to implement a new Agreement from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2013 for the period 2013-16, with an option of two further twelve month extension periods. It was reported that the Quality Standards had been revised within the new Agreement to ensure that quality care was being provided within the homes and that Nutrition was one of the areas covered within those standards. Care homes would be graded against those standards and fee levels payable would be linked to the outcomes.

A copy of the standards in relation to Nutrition was circulated at the meeting and it was reported that this had been drafted in consultation with Focus on Under-nutrition, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust.

Rachel Masters, Team Lead Dietician, attended the meeting and gave Members an overview of the work of Focus on Under-nutrition, whose innovative work had enabled County Durham and Darlington to lead the way nationally on identifying and treating under-nutrition from a regional perspective, the services it offered, particularly in relation to care homes and the resources it had developed to support health care professions identify and treat under nutrition.

Discussion ensued on the new standards and the sources of evidence which linked to that standard which included compliance with Focus on Under-nutrition; the powers available to the Council to visit, announced or unannounced, homes with its Agreements; penalties for non-compliance; special dietary needs for some residents; menu planning and the supply and quality of produce used within Care Homes.

**IT WAS AGREED** – That Members of this Task and Finish Review Group, undertake visits, with the permission of the care homes, to a selection of homes with Agreements with this Council, to seek the views of residents, relatives/friends and staff on nutrition within the care home and report the outcomes back to a future meeting of this Group.



## NUTRITION IN CARE HOMES TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

7<sup>th</sup> February, 2013

**PRESENT** – Councillor Thistlethwaite (in the Chair); Councillors Hutchinson, B. Jones, D Jones, Knowles and S. Richmond.

**Nutrition in Care Homes** – The Group met to consider the findings (analysis previously circulated) following the visits undertaken by them to a number of care homes with agreements with this Council, to seek the views of residents', family and friends and staff in relation to nutrition and hydration within the home.

Each of the Members who had undertaken a visit gave a brief outline of their findings to supplement the comments contained within the submitted analysis and discussion ensued on a number of areas/findings. It was accepted by the Group that the responses received were mixed and varied across the homes visited; that it had been difficult in some cases, because of the varying profiles of some of the residents, to engage with them and seek a true reflection of their thoughts; and that further information from family and friends might need to be obtained as there were limited visitors at the times of each of the visits.

Overall, Members expressed general satisfaction 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.

Discussion ensued on the next steps for this Group; whether unannounced visits would be beneficial, whether Officers could accompany Members on any further visits to compare findings; and the possibility of questionnaires being sent direct to residents' family/friends to enable a full and comprehensive analysis to be undertaken.

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That the Officers be requested to undertake unannounced visits to the care homes visited and that, if possible, the Members be invited to attend with them.

(b) That the advice of the Officers be sought on whether contact details of a selection of residents' family/friends could be made available to enable a short

questionnaire seeking their views to be sent direct to them for completion.

(c) That a further meeting of this Group be arranged once the outcomes of (a) and (b) above are known.

## NUTRITION IN CARE HOMES TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

27<sup>th</sup> February, 2013

**PRESENT** – Councillor Thistlethwaite (in the Chair); Councillors B. Jones, Knowles and S. Richmond.

**Nutrition in Care Homes** – The Group met to advise Officers of their findings following the visits undertaken to a number of care homes with agreements with this Council and to discuss undertaking further unannounced visits, to be accompanied by Contracts Officers within the Council.

Each of the Members who had undertaken a visit re-iterated their findings to supplement the comments contained within the previously submitted analysis and discussion ensued on a number of areas/findings, which had also been previously discussed and which were detailed in the notes of the meeting held on 7 February, 2013.

Discussion ensued on the request by Members to undertake further unannounced visits, the Quality Standards which covered nutrition and hydration in care homes; the current position in relation to the number of homes who had, to date, signed the new Agreement with this Council; and a suggestion that Willow Green and Wilton House be added to the proposed unannounced visits.

In undertaking the visits, Members also highlighted other areas which they had observed outside of the nutrition and hydration work and discussion ensued on medication review within care homes and polypharmacy and it was suggested that it might be appropriate for these areas to be looked at by the Safeguarding Adults Task and Finish Review Group.

The Officers also referred to a piece of work which was currently being undertaken by Doctor Matt Sawyer in relation to GP practices and care homes and the various options which were being considered, which included :-

- retaining the current practice of individual patient choice for their GP;
- the possibility of three/four GP practices covering all the care homes within Darlington; or
- the possibility of one GP practice covering all the care homes within Darlington.

It was suggested that it might be useful for Dr Sawyer to be invited to a meeting to outline the work being undertaken and the findings to date.

Members were also advised of a Residential Forum which was held every two months and which was an information sharing forum to which all the Care Home Managers were invited and discussion ensued on the topics which were discussed at these meetings and whether an invitation could be extended to the Chair and Vice-

Chair of the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee.

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That further unannounced visits be undertaken to the following care homes and that Officers be requested to accompany Members :-

The Lawns;  
Darlington Manor;  
Moorlands;  
Lakeside  
St Georges;  
Willow Green; and  
Wilton House.

(b) That Doctor Matt Sawyer be invited to attend a future meeting of the Safeguarding Adults Task and Finish Review Group to advise Members of the work he is currently undertaking in relation to care homes and GP practices.

(c) That the Officers be requested to make the necessary arrangements for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee to be invited to meetings of the Residential Forum

## **NUTRITION IN CARE HOMES TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

**1<sup>st</sup> May, 2013**

**PRESENT** – Councillor Thistlethwaite (in the Chair); Councillors D. Jones and S. Richmond.

**Nutrition in Care Homes** – The Group met to consider the feedback from the second unannounced visits which had taken place to a number of care homes within the Borough who were currently contracting with the Council.

Discussion ensued on some of the issues which had been highlighted previously and it was reported that of those care homes which had been included on the second visits, there were no major issues arising and some of the areas of concern appeared to have been resolved.

Discussion ensued on a number of specific areas from each of the homes visited and the Officers updated Members on the current position in relation to Lakeside.

It was reported that, as Members were satisfied with their findings, a final report on the work of this Task and Finish Review Group would now be compiled and circulated to Members for approval prior to submission to the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee.

**IT WAS AGREED** – (a) That 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) That 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) That 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.

(d) That 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.