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**COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on the Community Equipment Service available to residents of Darlington and provide information as to how the service is currently working.
2. This report has been produced following a visit of Members of Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee to the Medequip depot on 21 June 2017, to enable them to gain an understanding of the service and how it operates.

**Summary**

3. The contract for the provision of community equipment to service users in their own homes was awarded to Medequip following a procurement exercise carried out in 2014 by North East Commissioning Services (NECS). The service is commissioned under a joint commissioning arrangement between Darlington Borough Council (DBC), Durham County Council (DCC), and Darlington, Durham Dales Easington and Sedgfield (DDES) and North Durham (ND) Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). The lead commissioner for the contract is DDES and NECS manage the contract on behalf of the CCGs.
4. The contract term is 5 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years subject to satisfactory contract performance. The contract value is £13,750,798 over the initial 5 year term of the contract. The contract commenced on 1 July 2015. Darlington Borough Council's contribution to this contract is £108,482 per annum.
5. From the commencement of the contract, the commissioners and the provider have worked closely to address a number of challenges, in respect of increasing demand for equipment within a block contract as well as challenges which were also experienced under the previous contract.
6. A Recovery Action Plan was put into place and monthly monitoring meetings established to monitor progress. Performance is reported to the Quarterly Partnership Board.
7. The monitoring and resolution of complaints is an integral part of the monthly performance monitoring, with Commissioners from each of the partner organisations having oversight of complaints within their area, ie Durham or Darlington, and Health or Social Care.

## Recommendation

8. It is recommended that :-

- (a) Members note the content of this report and the progress made to date to respond to the challenges which were inherited from the previous contract.
- (b) Members note the ongoing actions that are being undertaken to improve efficiency and performance of the contract.
- (c) Members note the current performance and the quality assurance mechanisms in place for this contract.

**Suzanne Joyner**  
**Director of Children and Adult Services**

## Background Papers

Briefing Paper to Director 3 March 2017

Jeanette Crompton: Extension 5855

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications in this report.
Health and Well Being	The provision of aids and items of equipment make a significant positive impact on the ability of individuals to both maintain and increase independence, which supports health and wellbeing.
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impact implications in this report.
Diversity	The provision of the Community Equipment service affects all groups of people in Darlington.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected.
Groups Affected	Older and disabled people.
Budget and Policy Framework	This decision does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The provision of aids and items of equipment contributes to the 'One Darlington' Healthy Darlington theme.
Efficiency	The provision of aids and items of equipment supports people to continue to remain independent in their own homes for longer.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children and Car Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

9. During 2017, performance of the service has been monitored, with the following table illustrating current performance against key indicators :

Performance Indicator	Performance as at September 2017
Percentage of equipment delivered Next Working Day	97%
Percentage of equipment delivered within 4 hours / same working day	86%
Percentage of equipment delivered within 3 working days	98%
Percentage of equipment delivered within 7 working days	99%
Percentage of reports for faulty or broken equipment responded to within 4 hours	90%
Standard collection of equipment no longer required within 2 weeks of request	99%
Collection of equipment following bereavement – within 1 week of request	99%

10. Timescales for delivery of items are determined by the prescriber, based upon the level of need, with the fastest response times attracting a higher tariff. Clearly where the provision of equipment is urgent, particularly to support hospital discharge or to prevent an admission to hospital or residential care then the faster response times are required. Where the provision is not urgent, deliveries are planned within the various delivery routes across County Durham and Darlington to maximize efficiency.

11. Customer complaints are dealt with by the provider and are reported monthly to Commissioners. These are detailed in the table below, along with the type of complaint.

Type of Complaint	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Breakdown in Communications							1	1		2
Late delivery										
Late collection										
Faulty/unsafe equipment						1				1
Incorrect equipment- Medequip							1			1
Incorrect equipment - prescriber										
No instructions										
Equipment dirty									1	1
Medequip staff- insufficient product knowledge										
Unsatisfactory installation										
Medequip staff attitude								2		2

Technician/van scruffy/untidy										
Medquip – item temporarily out of stock										
Equipment failed when in use										
Clinical performance										
Environmentally related										
Serious incident										
Other								3		3
Total										10

NB. These complaints are across the whole contract area of Darlington and Co Durham

12. The key actions of the year 1 Recovery Plan and the subsequent refresh in year 2 are detailed below:

Action	Year 1 Progress	Year 2 Progress
<b>Year 1 Actions</b> Carrying out an amnesty for the return of equipment no longer being used from care homes	Amnesty carried out and significant amount of equipment retrieved, recycled and returned into stock	Further amnesty to be carried out
Review of buffer stores with a view to consolidating numbers of stores	Some buffer stores closed but to be kept under review	Ongoing monitoring of buffer stores to ensure that only effective buffer stores are maintained
Reinstatement of the Catalogue/ Equipment Review Group to add in other items to reduce purchase of more expensive “specials”	Reinstated in 2016	
Removal of temporary team- set up as part of the mobilisation process.	Completed	No further actions required
Identifying and targeting those high spending prescribers	Ongoing analysis of performance reports each month to identify whether spend is necessary/ appropriate with further communications to prescribers as required.	Ongoing analysis of performance reports each month to identify whether spend is necessary/ appropriate with further communications to prescribers as required.
Introduction of a Clinical Advisor role funded by the CCG's to approve all requests for special orders	This post was funded by the CCG's as the LA's felt that their Team Managers/ Principals were able to provide sufficient scrutiny of special orders.	Review of Clinical Adviser role has been carried out and proposal for a revised role to be considered by commissioners.
Review the PIN matrix- review authorisation and purchasing levels for staff	Completed	No further actions required

Further training for prescribers on TCES (ordering system) to ensure that they are ordering appropriately	Completed	No further actions required
<b>Year 2 Actions</b> Review of speed of delivery options to reduce faster more expensive delivery options		This was completed in January 2017 and has reduced the numbers of faster delivery options requested
Equipment Review Group to identify frequently requested "specials" to be added to the stock items to reduce purchase of more expensive "specials"		This is complete and will be submitted to the Partnership Board for approval.
Maximize the recycling of items or equipment that are returned when no longer required		Recycling rates are reported each month. Publicity campaigns have been carried out with flyers being distributed widely. Care Home Amnesty, carried out to target collection of unused equipment from care homes.

13. In response to the financial pressures on the contract, the 3 CCG's agreed to provide additional non-recurrent funding. The financial position has been monitored closely and the pressures have continued to reduce each quarter during Year 2, as the impact of the recovery actions have become established. It is anticipated that within year 3 the financial pressures will have been fully addressed.
14. Effective recycling of equipment ensures that expenditure on new items is managed effectively. Currently recycling levels are at 80% of all items that are collected from individuals when they are no longer required.
15. Recycling of non-prescribed stock items (specials), being prescribed to meet very specific needs is particularly valuable as these are often expensive. In order to make the most effective use of these items, Medequip re-cycle these items, and include photographs and specifications of them in the on-line catalogue used by prescribers, so that wherever possible their suitability can be considered before a new item, of a similar specification, is ordered.