

**Adults Scrutiny Committee  
5th January 2021**

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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 to provide information as to how the service is currently working and plans for future re-procurement.

**Summary**

2. The contract for the provision of Community Equipment has been held by Medequip since 2015. During the contract term numerous developments have taken place to improve service deliver to residents. The contract is now coming to an end and plans are well underway to re procure the contact.

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that:-
  - (a) Members note the development of the service during the contract term.
  - (b) Members note the re procurement plans.

**James Stroyan - Acting Director of Children and Adults Services**

**Background Papers**

Report to Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee December 2017

Jeanette Crompton: Extension 5855

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications in this report.
Health and Wellbeing	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 and Climate Change	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. It can also delay/ prevent admission to residential care .
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

4. 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 Tees Valley (TV) and Durham Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). The lead commissioner for the contract is Durham and NECS manage the contract on behalf of the CCGs.
5. The contract term is 5 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years subject to satisfactory contract performance. The contract commenced on 1 July 2015 and is a block contract. The contract value is £13,750,798 over the initial 5 years term of the contract and Darlington Borough Council's contribution to the contract is £108,482 per annum.
6. During the period of the contract Commissioners have worked in partnership with the provider to develop the service and improve efficiency. This has been achieved by carrying out the following actions:
  - a) Carrying out a number of amnesties for the return of equipment which was no longer being used by residents living in care homes.
  - b) Review of the number of "Buffer Stores" which contained equipment in various locations across the area. Buffer stores are available to allow staff to access regularly ordered items quickly and conveniently, particularly in the case of hospital discharges. A number of ineffective, underutilised stores have been closed and the stock consolidated into more effective stores.
  - c) The introduction of a Clinical Advisor role, which is hosted by Durham County Council ensures that where high cost specialist equipment is required to monitor and provide specialist support to staff on the most cost-effective items to purchase.
  - d) The reinstatement of the Equipment Review Group ensures that the most cost-effective items are included in the stock catalogue to reduce the purchase of more expensive specials. The group also reviews new items which become available and assess whether they should be added to the stock catalogue.

### Service Provision and Outcomes

7. All of the above measures have resulted in improved service delivery and the current performance of the service is more than satisfactory. This is pleasing to note, particularly as the provision of equipment contributes towards enabling individuals to remain in their own homes for longer and delays or removes the need for residential care. It also supports more timely discharges from hospital settings which enable people to remain more independent. The latest performance information provided by Medequip as at the end of October was as follows:

Delivery of Equipment – requested for next working day	98%
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Delivery of Equipment – requested for same day/ within 4 hours	92%
Delivery of Equipment- requested within 3 working days	98%
Delivery of Equipment- requested within 7 working days	99%

Faulty/ Broken equipment- response within 4 hours	99%
Standard collection of items within 2 weeks of the request	99%
Collection of equipment following a bereavement within 1 week	100%

### **Current Position**

8. The service is currently being reviewed by the Commissioners and as part of this review, the views of service users, carers, care homes and requisitioners are being sought. These views will be taken into account when reviewing and revising the current service specification to ensure that the service continues to meet needs.
9. The timeline for the re procurement has been agreed with the retendering exercise scheduled to commence in June 2021. It is expected that the contract will be awarded in September 2021, to allow for the mobilisation of the new service and ensure that the new contract commences from in June 2022.

### **Covid 19 Response**

10. Throughout the both the first and second wave of Covid 19, Medequip have responded very positively to the challenges they faced to ensure that there was sufficient supply of items of equipment to meet the contractual obligations. The service has played an important role in supporting both the timely discharge of patients from hospital and enabling people to remain independent in their own homes, thus preventing/delaying the need for residential care.