

COUNCIL – MEETING CANCELLED 13 MAY 2021

OVERVIEW OF ADULTS PORTFOLIO

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform and update Members on progress within Adult Services since the last meeting of Council. The following are the main areas of work under the Portfolio for Adult Services.

Operational Services

2. In-house Day Opportunities

We have continued to offer day opportunity experience to adults with a Learning Disability throughout the recent lockdown period. Place based activities have been open since September 2020 with staff adapting extremely well to safe systems of working, including the introduction of support bubbles to ensure attendees are able to remain safe and healthy. Some attendees have not been able to return due to their status of being extremely clinically vulnerable. However, provider staff and colleagues, such as Public Health who have been meeting on a regular basis throughout are working towards scaling up the offer to return to pre-pandemic levels as soon as possible.

3. Direct Payment

The Direct Payments procedure and pathway has been reviewed and revised. It continues to enable staff to guide individuals and their families through the process and ensure it is fully considered as an appropriate choice for self-directed support. Darlington continues to be a regional leader in Direct Payment use. A training programme for staff has been developed, which includes presentations for all teams as well as a Podcast, which practitioners can refer to in their daily work. The training programme was developed with Workforce Development and other stakeholders including, Operational Services, Commissioning, the Direct Payment Support Service and DAD.

4. Carers

Operational services are continuing to work closely with carers, to ensure their needs are recognised and addressed. Age UK reopened Bradbury House on 12 April 2021 and arranged appointments for people to visit to look around and sample their meals at home menu. This is an ongoing invitation. Social workers have been contacting individuals and their carers to inform them that THE Service has reopened. Working age adults' services for carers at Mind and DAD Independent Living Hub are still operational. Social workers have been maintaining contact with Carers to ensure support is in place. They have also shared information and National Guidance, when published on Carers' eligibility for the Covid vaccine and have signposted carers to the Carers Services in Darlington.

Commissioning and Contracts

5. There is an improving local Covid position which reflects the positive national trend. As we move into recovery, monitoring calls with providers have now moved to weekly basis with additional calls being made more frequently if a care home experiences an outbreak. Additional support also continues to be provided into care homes from the CCG Infection Control Team as appropriate. Infection rates are now decreasing which again reflects the reduction in community transmission rates, the impact of the testing programme and the infection control support that the Council has provided. There is currently one care home that has been classified as having an outbreak and this situation is being supported by Public Health colleagues. This represents a significant reduction from the five care homes that were experiencing outbreaks on the 28 February 2021.
6. As of 31 March 2021, 100 per cent of adult social care home residents have been vaccinated. In addition, 95 per cent of all priority areas 1 to 5 including social care eligible staff have received their first doses of the vaccine. This includes staff working in older people and working age adults residential and community-based services such as care homes, domiciliary care, Extra Care, private sheltered housing, and Direct Payment Personal Assistants. Over the next few weeks, the second dose vaccination programme is being implemented. The Commissioning and Contracts Service continue to work with Public Health and Primary Care Network colleagues to ensure that staff and residents receive the second dose of the vaccine in accordance with the national implementation programme. This second dosage programme is ongoing and on 5 May a reported 92% of older persons' care home residents have received a 2nd dose and 73% of staff in all priority areas have also received both doses.
7. Darlington's testing programme has been further strengthened with the introduction of the regular testing programme in Day Services. There is also an additional offer of Rapid Lateral Flow Tests to support visits in and out of Extra Care and Supported Living provision. This will allow access to more visitors and it is an important part of recovery phase during the staged easing of the current lockdown period.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

8. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners invited the Chairs of the sub groups to provide an overview of how the groups are working. The chairs highlighted the effectiveness of the critical operational meetings commenced in response to COVID and are proposing an operational group continues to meet moving forward. A proposal of roles of the groups and governance framework is to be drawn up for presentation at a future meeting.
9. Ryan Haig, Senior Safeguarding Leader for Department for Work and Pensions for Durham, Darlington and Tees Valley joined the Learning and Development sub group to introduce himself and the role he undertakes for DWP. The DWP has recently created a central team to focus on strategically supporting their most vulnerable customers. Partners around the table recognised the value in linking in with Ryan for information to inform Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Adult Strategy Meetings.

Climate Change

10. The service continues to promote the completion of the Climate Change Academy 10 module for all current staff and new-starters to encourage awareness.
11. The Council's electric car leasing scheme continues to be promoted and positively received by staff.

Councillor Rachel Mills
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adults