

COUNCIL
23 MARCH 2023

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 some of the areas of work under the Portfolio for Adult Services.

Operational Services

2. Operational services continue to work in close partnership with health colleagues to ensure the flow of safe discharge from hospitals is managed well. There has been a significant rise in demand in relation to supporting safe discharges from hospital and supporting admission avoidance with some weeks seeing double the number of referrals of a similar period last year. We continue to mitigate this through dynamic risk management of cases to ensure people are supported to return home where possible or access to a short breaks stay, before a period of reablement.
3. Waiting lists for assessments and reviews remain a challenge for the service. However, the social care discharge fund has been used to increase capacity and joint approaches are being developed with the voluntary and community sector. For example, Darlington Carers and social prescribers, provided by the Primary Care Network, are working closely with the adult contact team.
4. There has been significant changes within the senior leadership team with a restructure to be implemented from 1st April. The aim of this restructure is to provide a single strategic and operational line of direction for all adult teams by moving away from the concept of two distinct pathways and instead promoting and developing one cohesive social care service for adults, enabling seamless decision making and transfer of cases within the teams.

Communications and Marketing

5. A profile of the Provider Services team will appear in March 2023 edition of One Darlington magazine. ASC teams were represented at the Darlington Jobs Fair on Thursday 9 February, which provided an opportunity to engage with potential newcomers to the industry.
6. Adults recruitment marketing campaign ongoing, with regular social media content advertising current vacancies. There has been a significant drop in vacancies and turnover within last 12 months with drop from 25% to 14%.

Commissioning and Contracts

7. The Phase 1 Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Schemes have been mobilised for 2 months since their approval on 16 December 2022. A total of £856,314 has been allocated to the Council and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB). These joint schemes are primarily facilitating safe, timely and effective discharge from acute hospital settings including mental health in-patient settings. The focus of the schemes, from a council perspective, has been the purchasing of additional short stay beds in the residential care market and investing in a recruitment and retention schemes within the domiciliary care sector to build capacity and manage the increasing number of discharges from the Darlington Memorial Hospital.
8. The Department of Health and Social Care has allocated a further £11m to North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board and Darlington's allocation for additional discharge support (Phase 2) is £336,483 to support the additional purchasing of care home beds with effect from 13 January 2023. These funds will again be to support the timely, safe and effective discharge from the hospital acute settings and will be required to re-claim funding based on activity from the NENC ICB.
9. Darlington Borough Council submitted and confirmed its Fair Cost of Care reports by the 1 February 2023 as required by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). This has ensured the Council's compliance with the Government's grant conditions as set out in the Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund. The Council will now proceed with submitting to the final Market Sustainability Plan (MSP) by the extended deadline of 27 March 2023. The Council will also be required to publish its Market Sustainability plan by 27 March 2023. The Council is also continuing to engage with local care providers in respect of their cost of care data submissions which will inform the final MSP.

Climate Change

10. The team have undergone some awareness training on the various options available to provide support and guidance to people. This includes the National Energy Action fuel poverty charity: <https://www.nea.org.uk/training/> and the Warm & Safe Homes advice line from NEA: <https://www.nea.org.uk/get-help/>

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

11. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners have not met in this period and therefore no update to provide at this time. The next meeting of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Group is scheduled to meet on Monday 13 March, the agenda will cover an overview of current activity from Partnership Subgroup Chairs and two thematic discussions on Working with Challenging Families and Communities/Organised Crime Groups and a discussion on Regulatory Inspections and Safeguarding Systems and how agencies can learn from each other.

Councillor Lorraine Tostevin
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adults