

COUNCIL
28 SEPTEMBER 2023

OVERVIEW OF ADULTS PORTFOLIO

Purpose of the Report

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Adults Portfolio.

Operational Services

2. The number of people waiting for a care and support needs assessment has significantly reduced to approx. 70 people. All those on the waiting list are managed through a risk prioritisation strategy and offered advice and signposting as routine.
3. The number of calls received during Quarter 1 was 2108 with 96% being answered. The percentage of answered calls is the same as last year; however, it is important to recognise that during the first quarter of 2023-24 there have been 293 more calls than the same period last year.
4. Staffing levels are increasing with improved levels of retention. The percentage of staff turnover in Quarter 1 is the lowest that it has been during the same period for the past 2 years. During Quarter 1 there has been a 13% turnover rate compared to 21.6% in 2021-22 and 14.2% last year.
5. Active engagement continues with voluntary sector to support with triaging of the referrals efficiently.
6. Hospital discharges continue to be higher than the previous 2 years. At the end of Quarter during 2023-24 there were 248 hospital discharges compared to 213 in 2022-23 and 171 in 2021-22.
7. The RIACT and Reablement Teams work in partnership with CDDFT, providing a highly responsive resulted in no delayed discharges attributed to social care. However, the increased flow of people being referred to Adult Social Care is being further pressured by the fact that the average size of care packages required has increased, i.e., more complex cases requiring care on leaving hospital. This places a pressure on home care delivery which contributes to an increase in short breaks provision.
8. Within the Occupational Therapy services there has been an increase in referrals and 168 people awaiting an assessment or adaptations to premises. We have implemented a risk tool to manage the waiting lists more effectively and efficiently.
9. Due to changes to the DFG funding, it has been agreed to recruit for additional 2 FTE OT's and 1 fixed term FTE and 1 fixed term FTE OT Technician with the aim to reduce waiting list and support prevention activity.

Commissioning and Contracts

10. At the end of July 2023, it was confirmed that the Council met the grant conditions for the following funds, after successfully submitting Market Availability and Capacity Plan to the Government:
 - (a) **Adult Social Care (ASC) Discharge Fund (Phase 2)** - The purpose of the ASC Discharge Fund is to build additional community-based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays. Darlington Borough Council were allocated £629,230 with the ICBs contribution being £404,677. This funding will be used to: increase capacity within our Home Care and Rapid Response Service; to fund additional intermediate care beds; and additional Social Worker capacity.
 - (b) **Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund** - The purpose of the Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund is to increase fee rates paid to providers to support market sustainability, to improve workforce capacity and retention and to reduce waiting times. Darlington Borough Council was allocated £1,173,577 and this fund has been used in line with grant conditions to: support a number of schemes which will increase capacity within the ASC workforce; support provider sustainability; and ensuring travel time for homecare staff is paid as part of their contracted arrangements. In July 2023, an additional £600m MSIF fund was released nationally with £762,199.00 being allocated to Darlington which will be paid in September 2023. Discussions are currently underway to agree how this additional funding will be used in line with grant conditions.
11. Collaborative work is now underway with key partners including providers, service users and carer groups to review and improve how the services set out below will be delivered as part of the new contractual arrangements. Three substantial Adult Social Care contracts are due for renewal in April 2024, notably the:
 - (a) Agreement for the provision of Residential Care (Older Persons (OP) Portfolio).
 - (b) Contract for the provision of Residential Care for Disabled Adults (Working Age Adults (WAA) Portfolio).
 - (c) Contract for the provision of Homecare and Support (OP,WAA and Children's).
12. Members of the Carers' Strategy Steering Group are currently developing the Darlington's Carers' Strategy for 2023-28. This Strategy focused on 'Darlington's Commitment to Carers' and sets out how all partners will work together to raise awareness, identify and support carers in Darlington. The four key priority areas will be: recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society; services and systems that work for carers; employment and financial wellbeing; and supporting young carers.
13. The annual quality standards assessment is currently underway with the 19 older persons care homes. The results will be verified at Directorate Senior Leadership Team meeting on 06/09/23.
14. A provider engagement event took place on 05/06/23 with providers across Learning Disability and Mental Health services. This looked at a number of themes with a focus on improving service delivery and ensuring providers are working in a strengths-based

approach. Provider feedback was positive and has led to the creation of an ongoing monthly provider forum.

Climate Change

15. People Services are engaging as a directorate with Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer to support the Council's updated climate change response plan. Updates will be provided in terms of how Adult Social Care and the wider People Directorate are supporting the new priorities.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

16. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners met in June and were provided with an overview of the scope and focus of a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) the Partnership is undertaking for Family H, findings will be published in due course. Sub Group chairs provided an overview of the key priorities and tasks for each of the groups via an overview report. Partners approved the Strategic Plan for 2023-2026 and the revised Terms of Reference, setting out the purpose and vision and priorities of the Partnership.
17. The Multi-agency Safeguarding Partnership Group met in July. The group were provided an overview of the Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) and Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) processes along with details of the nature of concerns and themes identified. There have been five adult reviews (none meeting the criteria for SAR). The nature of the reviews relate to neglect/acts of omission, self-neglect and mental health. A number of common and specific themes were identified which are being addressed by the Partnership and relate to information sharing, professional challenge, Covid-19 impact on people and services and addressing self-neglect. The group were also provided an overview of the new regulations and Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance framework for local authority Adult Services currently being implemented.

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