

COUNCIL
25 JANUARY 2024

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 new provider manager started in September 2023 and has applied for registration via CQC. We had an announced inspection on 4 December 2023 for the Domiciliary provision provider throughout our in-house services including; Reablement and one supported living scheme. Initial feedback was positive and the final report confirmed a Good rating overall.
3. Demand remains high including new referrals, supporting hospital discharges, and increased safeguarding referrals as well as requests for support for existing cases. We are continuing to operate waiting lists within our Adult Contact, Occupational Therapy, and sensory teams for new referrals.
4. We apply a Risk Triage tool following initial screening, advice, information and signposting to prioritise allocations. This means we assess the most urgent cases first and prioritise where possible.
5. The Responsive Intervention, Assessment and Care Team (RIACT) continue to successfully support hospital discharge pathways, including managing timely and safe discharges, referrals to the Reablement service and where required bed-based provision and two social workers continue to be based within the Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH). DMH have experienced a high level of pressure and demand resulting in Operational Pressures Escalation Levels (OPEL) being at their highest demand level of four for several weeks which in turn increases demand on Adults Social Care (ASC) and provisions. The team have continued to work tirelessly under these demands and positive feedback has been received in relation to timely discharge and low reports of delayed transfers of care from County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT).
6. Training has recently been delivered to the ASC teams to launch the Strengths based practice and Pillars of Practice framework. The sessions were well attended, and engagement was positive. Other training has included Continuing Health Care, and Mental Capacity Act. Care Act refresher training is arranged for the spring of 2024.
7. Ongoing activity to inform the self-assessment and readiness for the forthcoming Care Quality Commission assurance is underway with work plans supporting specific areas of development.

Commissioning and Contracts

8. Contract reviews have been undertaken across older people and adults services specifically in relation to Residential Care, Home Care/Supported Living and Day Opportunities with a view that new contracts will be issued in 2024 and early 2025.
9. Provider engagement sessions have been taking place across all of the above areas to inform the development of the new service specifications and fee formulae.

Climate Change

10. The Management team have undertaken sessions with the teams alongside the Climate change officer and developed a climate change action plan for the teams with actions to be monitored on a quarterly basis. Actions include reviewing contingency plans, supporting staff to reduce their carbon footprint, providing information to people on how they can adapt to climate changes and developing risk management plans to support people where climate change may impact service delivery.
11. The commissioning team will continue to support the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and the provider market to promote reduction in their carbon footprint through a review of contracts.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

12. The Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report has now been published. The report summarises and reflects on the work of the Partnership over the period 2022/23, drawing upon a range of data and information. The report is being presented to Adults Scrutiny Committee in February 2024 and is available on the Partnership website.
13. An Independent Author has been commissioned to lead a non-Statutory Learning Lessons Review (LLR) for the Partnership following a fatal house fire in Darlington. The scope and focus of the review are currently being determined, once the review is finalised the learning will be published.
14. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners have not met in this period and therefore, there are no further adult safeguarding updates to provide at this time.

Councillor Anne-Marie Curry
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adults