

COUNCIL
21 MARCH 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

Capacity and Demand

2. The number of people on the ACT Waiting List has decreased significantly to 72 from the same period last year where the total number was 163. This has been achieved by increasing staffing capacity in the team, alongside the addition of some agency staff, to support in reducing the numbers. Numbers on the OT Waiting List continue to be higher (141) than the same period last year, work continues to return these figures to what they were during the second half of 2022-23, with appointments to additional OT and OT technician posts.
3. Hospital discharges continue to be higher than the previous two years. Between April and November 2023-24 there were 682 hospital discharges compared to 643 in 2022-23 and 495 in 2021-22. The teams have social workers based within the Darlington Memorial hospital which supports multi-disciplinary working and improves communication. The teams continue to manage this demand, with minimal delays in discharge.
4. We are seeing an increase in the complexity of people requiring support following a hospital stay impacting on the number of individuals being discharged into short break stays. As of 8 January 2024, RIACT (Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team) had 16 individuals currently in Short Break Stays (SBS), 10 of which were due to hospital discharges. The 16 who were in SBS as of 8 January 2024, in comparison to six during the same period last year and 10 during the same period in 2021-22. With this increase in the level of complexity, we have seen the number of SBS which have progressed to permanent residential / nursing care increase to 24 (year to date) during 2023-24, compared to 13 during the same period last year and 16 during 2021-22. We will continue to work with people and carers to support people to return home after a hospital stay but recognise that for some residential or nursing care is appropriate.
5. Just over half of all carers aged 65+ who have an active assessment or support plan live at home with the person(s) they care for. The biggest age group of carers caring for people who live at home with them is the 65–74-year-olds (46). Currently there are 20 carers aged 65+ who are caring for relatives with Learning Disability as their primary care need, with 10 of these aged between 75 and 88. We are working with these carers to ensure plans are in place to support the person they care for to transition into independent living.

6. The Safeguarding Team are part of a panel which involves the Police and Housing colleagues whose task is to try and prevent cases of 'cuckooing' occurring across the region. Cuckooing is the practice of taking over the home of a vulnerable person in order to establish a base for illegal drug dealing, typically as part of a county lines operation.

The Safeguarding Team is also part of the Rough Sleeping Panel, looking at the issues surrounding homelessness and rough sleeping.

These are areas we need to be aware of and understand if there are escalating concerns. We will update further in due course.

7. During October, 52.6% of contacts from new clients who requested an Assessment were dealt with at the front door. This means the Adult Contact team is performing well in advising and directing people to alternative support and/or preventing increased need. However, we are seeing that by the end of 2023 there were 1240 people accessing long term support, this is compared to 1050 at the same period during 2022 which demonstrates that complexity and demand for support is increasing.
8. The Adult Learning Disability team have seen an improvement in the completion of assessments compared to the same period last year. Compared to the same period last year the average number of days to complete an assessment has fallen from 40 to 38 days, whilst length of time to complete a review has fallen from 40 to 18 days. The team also are working closely with both children's and education teams to support young adults' preparation for adulthood. These assessments usually take longer and are more complex. Therefore, the improvement in completion times is a positive move ensuring we are responsive to requests for support.
9. We are seeing a positive impact of the changes to the Disabled Facility Grant guidance and the policy adopted by Council last year. During Quarter 3, 20 Disabled Facility Grants had been completed, of which half of the people require no further involvement from Adult Services and are therefore maintaining their independence.

Out of the 20 DFGs completed in Quarter 3 the following adaptations took place:

- Stairlift – 8
- Level access shower – 4
- Access – 4
- Level access shower and stairlift – 3
- Stairlift and access – 1

The average age of those service users receiving a DFG adaptation was 71, with the youngest being 47 and the oldest 89.

Staffing

10. Staff turnover has fallen to 6.3% compared to 17.8% during the same period last year.

Service User Feedback

11. We have recently had a return through the National Adult Social Care Outcome Framework where Darlington was ranked in the top 12 nationally for a number of indicators relating to service user quality of life. These areas will be scrutinised by the Care Quality Commission when they quality assure/inspect our services so it positive to note this performance.

Title Ranking

ASCOF 1A – Quality of life of people who use services	10th
ASCOF 3A – Proportion of people who use services who report having control over their daily lives	3rd
ASCOF 3D – Proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about services	9th
ASCOF 1C(1b) – Proportion of carers using social care who receive self-directed support	1 st (joint with a number of other LAs)
ASCOF 4a – Proportion of people who use services who feel safe	11th
ASCOF 5a – Proportion of people who use services who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	5th

12. Client feedback in both Occupational Therapy and RIACT show that the majority of individuals are satisfied with the services offered to them.
13. A full and comprehensive performance report for all ASCOF indicators for the full year will be available to members in due course and a sample of indicators was noted at the Scrutiny Committee in the February meeting.

Commissioning and Contracts

14. The team are currently refreshing the Adult Social Care Market Position Statement (MPS) and Commissioning Strategy. This document summarises supply and demand in a local authority area, and signals business opportunities within the care market. It indicates how Darlington fulfils its Care Act (2014) market shaping duties. This will be a key strategy going forward as it will outline how the Council will ensure that there will be sufficient care and support services to meet local need Darlington. The team is consulting with partners (including the NHS and voluntary sector), care and support providers, and operational services colleagues. The final draft of the document will be completed by the end of March.

Climate Change

15. Teams continue to work towards the action plan agreed with Senior Leadership Team. All teams have shown a commitment to reducing their carbon footprint through team discussions and personal practice, e.g., car sharing, reduction in use of paper, reducing waste and developing champion roles across the teams.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

16. An Adult Learning Lessons Review, following a fatal house fire is ongoing. Keith Wanley has been appointed as the Independent Author to lead the review. The purpose of the review is to understand how agencies worked together to identify key learning to promote across the partnership to improve practice. Keith is currently reviewing information provided by each partner agency involved which will support him in writing the review report. The final report will be published in due course.
17. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Group 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