

COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on the Community Equipment Service available to residents of Darlington and provide information as to how the service is currently working.
2. Members of Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee visited the Medequip depot on 21 June 2017, to enable them to gain an understanding of the service and how it operates. Members requested a regular report on the Community Equipment Service which provides residents with vital support to help them live independently in their own homes and local communities.

Summary

3. The Care Act (2014) places a statutory obligation on the Council in respect of adults over the age of 18 who are assessed as requiring community equipment or minor adaptations. In addition, there are duties placed on the Council to support and meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities in the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, the Children's Acts (1989 & 2004). Members will be aware that this duty further extends to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities through Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in the Children and Families Act (2014).
4. The provision of community equipment is a key element of the Council's strategy to increase independence through a focus on prevention, rehabilitation and care in people's own homes. Community equipment allows frail elderly and physically disabled adults and children to live independently in their own homes and also to facilitate effective and timely discharge from hospital care. Community equipment ranges from simple, standard daily living aids to more complex equipment such as hoists, slings and shower chairs. The service is delivered through a loan scheme where people are provided with equipment following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or a Community Nurse. Case studies of the real difference that the Occupational Therapy Service makes to the lives of people in Darlington are included in the main report.
5. The contract for the Community Equipment Service was awarded to Medequip with effect from 1 April 2015. The re-procurement exercise was led by the CCGs and supported by NECS (North East Commissioning Support). The service was jointly commissioned by 5 partner organisations: Darlington Borough Council, Durham County Council, North Durham CCG, Darlington CCG, Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield CCG and North Durham CCG. The contract has a period of 5 years

(2019/20) with the option to extend for 2 x 1 year (i.e. to 21/22). The Contract value over the 5 year term is set at £13,750, 798. Medequip orders, distributes and recycles loaned equipment to health and social care clients.

6. Prior to 01.04.2015, the Community Equipment Service was provided by the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT) through the Home Equipment Loans Service (HELs). This service was also commissioned by the 5 partner organisations set out above. CDDFT elected not to bid for the Community Equipment contract in the procurement exercise that was conducted in October 2014 and consequently led to the award of the contract to Medequip.
7. The monitoring and resolution of complaints is an integral part of the monthly performance monitoring, with Commissioners from each of the partner organisations having oversight of complaints within their area. Enquiries have been made with the Council's Complaints Department and also directly with Medequip to ascertain the number of complaints and type of complaints that have been made. No complaints have been reported in respect of the Darlington element of the Community Equipment Service since 1 April 2018.
8. The 5 partner organisations, NECS and Medequip continue to work collectively to manage the increasing demand for equipment within a block contract. The performance and activity data is attached as an appendix to this report across the Durham and Darlington block arrangement. Members should note that it has not been possible to report activity levels and performance as they relate specifically to Darlington. This work to identify Darlington specific performance data will be a key development in 2019/20 and an essential pre-requisite to help the Council determine whether to exercise its option to extend the contract beyond 2020.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that :-

Members note the current performance of the Medequip contract and the continuing vital support that the Community Equipment Service provides.

Suzanne Joyner
Director of Children and Adult Services

Sukhdev Dosanjh: Extension 5651

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications in this report.
Health and Well Being	The provision of aids and items of equipment make a significant positive impact on the ability of individuals to both maintain and increase independence, which supports health and wellbeing.
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impact implications in this report.
Diversity	The provision of the Community Equipment service affects all groups of people in Darlington.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected.
Groups Affected	Older and disabled people.
Budget and Policy Framework	This decision does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The provision of aids and items of equipment contributes to the 'One Darlington' Healthy Darlington theme.
Efficiency	The provision of aids and items of equipment supports people to continue to remain independent in their own homes for longer.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Key issues

10. During 2017, performance of the service has been monitored, with the following table illustrating current performance against key indicators in the Durham and Darlington area :

Performance Indicator	Performance as at September 2018	Performance as at September 2017
Percentage of equipment delivered Next Working Day	97%	97%
Percentage of equipment delivered within 4 hours / same working day	92%	86%
Percentage of equipment delivered within 3 working days	95%	98%
Percentage of equipment delivered within 7 working days	97%	99%
Percentage of reports for faulty or broken equipment responded to within 4 hours	88%	90%
Standard collection of equipment no longer required within 2 weeks of request	97%	99%
Collection of equipment following bereavement – within 1 week of request	97%	99%

11. Members should note that timescales for delivery of items are determined by the level of need, with the fastest response times attracting a higher tariff. Clearly where the provision of equipment is urgent, particularly to support hospital discharge or to prevent an admission to hospital or residential care then the faster response times are required. Where the provision is not urgent, deliveries are planned within the various delivery routes across County Durham and Darlington to maximise efficiency.

12. The anonymised case studies set out below show how the Council continues to support people to live independently in their own homes.

- A service user, a proud family man lived with his children at home. He was struggling physically with the effect of his long term conditions. He was assessed by the Occupational Therapy (OTS) Service as requiring showering equipment, a kitchen trolley and a urinal bottle to enable him to be as independent as possible and to conserve his energy. He was really impressed and grateful that the Medequip representative fitted the equipment and showed him how to use it. He said the man was compassionate, friendly and helpful. He felt he had gone above and beyond to make him feel comfortable and safe with the showering equipment. The equipment provided met his needs and he was able to shower independently for the first time in months. The client was very happy and pleased with the service provided.

- An Occupational Therapy assessment was requested by a District Nurse for a service user who had been diagnosed with cancer with a terminal prognosis. One of the needs identified was bathing difficulty. The service user could no longer get in and out of the bath safely and therefore increasing the risk of harm. Maintaining their personal hygiene was very important to the family and they wished for their mother to be independent for as long as their health allowed. A Bath Lift was provided enabling the service user to safely access the bath again and retaining their independence.
- A service user who suffers from MS was recovering from a fall in which she fractured her pelvis and arm. The service user's mobility remained very challenging. The service user could not access the bath and stated she was physically sore and expressed a deep wish to access the bath. After fully demonstrating a bath lift, one was supplied with a slide and turn transfer disc. The service user could now access the bath for the first time in years. This had huge impact and the client's emotional and physical wellbeing and the service user's mental health and mobility.