

ADULT CARE AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 22 MAY 2023

THE COUNCIL'S REPLACEMENT CARE OFFER

Summary

1. The Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel (the Panel) will receive an update on Replacement Care (previously known as respite care) which is part of the Work Programme.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care and the Strategic Director of People have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on developments relating to the Council's offer for replacement care and to respond to any questions the Panel may have.

Background

3. Replacement care is the support provided to an individual due to a family carer having a break from their usual caring role. It was previously known as "respite" from caring or "short breaks" for carers. The change in terminology is in line with the Care Act 2014.
4. Replacement care supports family carers to fulfil their caring commitments without putting themselves under unnecessary pressure or stress, and usually involves overnight care for one or more nights. These can be planned breaks or short notice in emergency situations.
5. Under the Care Act, local authorities must have regard to the wellbeing principle, as it may be the case that the carer needs a break from caring responsibilities to look after their own physical/mental health and emotional wellbeing, social and economic wellbeing and to spend time with other members of the family and personal relationships. Analysis evidences the financial value of family carer support to the public purse, with family carer packages of care for Learning Disabilities for example typically costing about 50% of the average cost of support in other settings (Residential Care, Supported Living etc.)
6. Planned replacement care is identified in an individual's needs assessment and support plan for people who are eligible for Council-funded services under the Care Act. The support plan sets out the number of nights of replacement care required for that individual per year, which can then be taken at times which are best suited to the individual and their carer/s, in arrangement with the care provider. For example, an individual may choose to have replacement care one weekend per month, or alternatively a longer break/holiday could be planned, or a combination of these.

7. Emergency replacement care is also offered, where for example a family carer may need to go into hospital at short notice, or in some cases where needs of an individual have escalated to a point where family carer support is no longer sustainable in the long-term and where replacement care is offered pending longer-term plans being put in place.
8. To meet Care Act-eligible needs, the Council has two main types of replacement care offer which are an offer for Older People and an offer for adults with Learning Disabilities. The future direction of both these is set out in the later sections of this report.
9. There is also a limited requirement for replacement care for other service user groups, specifically Mental Health and Physical Disabilities, which is met by the use of existing provision (for example the Council's in-house provision) or spot-purchased if required.

Older People Replacement Care Offer

10. Historically, there were 5 ways that the community could access replacement care funded by the Council:
 - Block Beds provision for low and medium level residential needs including dementia with a specification agreed with operational colleagues to ensure full utilisation
 - Domiciliary care which is purchased in addition to the domiciliary care package already commissioned and is separately chargeable
 - Spot purchased beds for specific location requests
 - Spot purchased beds covering emergencies, unplanned short notice care
 - Spot purchased beds when a block bed not available.
11. A block contract for 9 bed spaces was in place with a Provider across 8 homes within Worcestershire for people to access replacement care in residential homes for older people. Replacement nursing care is currently organised by the brokerage team on a spot purchase basis.
12. A review of the block contract was undertaken prior to its natural end date to determine commissioning solutions and recommendations and a report was presented to the People Directorate Leadership Team (PDLT) on 22 November 2022. The block contract was found to be under-utilised and the Council was therefore paying for unused bed spaces all year around. In addition, the block was not meeting all the demand at peak times (popular times of the year when people want to access respite). This resulted in a block that was underutilised most of the year, however at peak times not able to meet the demand or offer choice or was found to not be able to accept people who had a higher level of care needs. This resulted in the brokerage team sourcing spot purchase replacement care from providers not within the block arrangement and therefore effectively double-funding the service.
13. A decision was made via the People Directorate Leadership Team (PDLT) to approve to commission Replacement Care Bed Services procured via a Framework/Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) arrangement as this would remove the under-utilisation costs of a block and enable best value and flexibility

to meet demand, give choice and meet needs. The Framework has set rates for placements that Providers agree to as part of being on the Framework. It has included the ability to accept emergency placements and those with higher level needs.

14. Providers were invited to tender for a place on the Replacement Care Bed Service Framework and the evaluation has been completed. In line with procurement requirements the framework award is in progress. The Framework has the flexibility to be opened for additional providers to become part of it as required based on review of the current framework activity to ensure long term sustainability and ability to meet demand and needs.
15. The Replacement Care Bed Service Framework will be re-opened again shortly to encourage more providers who are able to meet higher level needs to become part of the Framework.
16. A further Framework for long term older people residential and nursing provision will be developed during 2023 and as part of this, replacement nursing care bed services will be considered and potentially included as one of the lots for Providers to tender for.

Learning Disability Replacement Care Offer

17. To meet the replacement care needs of adults with Learning Disabilities, the majority of provision is commissioned on a block/fixed price basis, either from in-house (Council) providers or from external providers.
18. The Council currently commissions Learning Disability replacement care for adults with a Learning Disability in the following settings:
 - In-house provision at Worth Crescent in Stourport (10 beds) and Pershore Short Breaks unit (4 beds), provided by the Council's Adult Social Care Provider Services
 - Osborne Court in Malvern (5 beds) and Church View in Bromsgrove (9 beds) via a contract with Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
 - Lock Close in Redditch (5 beds) via a contract with the external provider HF Trust Ltd
19. There are approximately 190 adults with Learning Disabilities currently in receipt of planned replacement care funded by the Council, attending one of the five services listed above. The number of nights attended per year varies based on need and ranges from 16 to 140 nights per year, but the average number of nights is 46.
20. In addition, a small number of people attend different provisions, either through a "spot purchase" contract, through a direct payment, or through the Council's Shared Lives scheme (Shared Lives carers are professional carers who support adults with support needs in the carer's own family home). Most Shared Lives replacement care referrals are for people who themselves live in Shared Lives, supporting the resilience of the Shared Lives carers as well as supporting the individual to remain as independent as possible living in the community.

21. A commissioning review is currently in progress for the whole of the Council's Learning Disability replacement care offer, and is currently at the "Evaluate" stage, which involves an analysis of current and future needs. This analysis will be used to inform future service design and recommissioning options as described below.

Council-provided Services (Worth Crescent and Pershore Short Breaks)

22. The Council provides two in-house bedded services for adults with Learning Disabilities as well as a small number of Mental Health clients. There is a 10 bedded service in Wyre Forest (Worth Crescent) and a 4 bedded unit in Pershore. These services provide a service for people who stay regularly to enable them to continue to live in the community. They also provide short stay emergency placements for assessment, rehabilitation, and service of last resort to enable an individual to consider next steps.
23. The Council's in-house Replacement Care offer has previously been the subject of reviews as part of wider work on Council-provided services. In July 2019, Cabinet endorsed the direction of travel and strategy for internally provided social care services, including agreement that the Council should only provide services directly where gaps in the market were identified. This strategic direction is being taken into account as part of the current commissioning review, although it should be noted that the market for Learning Disabilities replacement care is relatively limited and in-house services are currently a core part of the offer, providing services to around 85 individuals.

Externally Provided Services (Osborne Court, Church View, Lock Close)

24. Osborne Court, Malvern and Church View, Bromsgrove are both provided by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, as part of the overarching block contract between the Council and the Trust. The beds are used by individuals who are eligible for adult social care with higher level needs, including individuals who have behaviours which may challenge services, and some beds are also used by NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board, for individuals who are eligible for Continuing Health Care. Approximately 70 individuals in total use the services currently. Work is ongoing with health partners to ensure that the services are used as effectively as possible and are targeted for those individuals with the highest level of need.
25. Lock Close, Redditch is a 5-bedded unit which is leased by the Council from Bournville Village Trust, with the care being provided by the charity HFT as part of a commissioned contract. The current contract is due to end on 31 March 2024 and commissioners are considering recommissioning options as part of the current review. The service continues to maintain high occupancy levels and is used by approximately 40 people.

Commissioning Review of Learning Disability Replacement Care

26. Recent commissioning needs analysis work has highlighted a number of areas for development which can be summarised as follows:

- a. For general needs provision, analysis has demonstrated that the current net number of beds contracted and provided in-house is sufficient to meet both current need and future need, taking into account individuals entering adulthood who will need services and those leaving services. However, there may be a review needed of the way current provision is organised, particularly as there is evidence of lower occupancy levels in some units (see below).
 - b. Occupancy levels currently vary across the block-contracted units. The target occupancy for block-contracted replacement care is 90% in order to maximise value for money. Where this is not being achieved in in-house and health services, commissioners are working with providers to review the reasons for this and how occupancy can be improved to increase the efficiency of existing services.
 - c. There is currently a shortage of provision for people with complex needs and particularly individuals whose behaviour may challenge services. Options are currently being explored to address this gap, including whether in-house services could adapt to meet these needs, and the feasibility of proactive market development followed by an external commissioning exercise, which could either be on a spot-purchase or block basis.
 - d. There is also some evidence that, although additional beds are not required overall, there is a need for a greater proportion of accessible beds, which can be accessed by individuals with physical support needs. This is particularly the case at Worth Crescent, where only 2 of the 10 beds are ground-floor/ wheelchair-accessible.
 - e. The current block provision meets both planned and emergency replacement care needs. There is some evidence that the use of beds for emergencies is restricting the availability of beds for planned replacement care, leading in some cases to short-notice cancellations. This situation has also been exacerbated by recent staff shortages in some provisions, partly due to ongoing COVID-19 impacts, although these are being addressed and rectified by the relevant operational managers. Commissioners therefore intend to review options for emergency provision, and whether needs could be met in a different way (e.g. with dedicated beds).
27. Commissioners are working with colleagues in Operational Social Work Teams, Adult Social Care Provider Services and external partners to redevelop and recommission services to address the areas noted above. The focus will be on ensuring that current and future needs for Learning Disability Replacement Care are met in the most cost effective and appropriate way, in order to sustain family carer support arrangements and provide best outcomes for adults with Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire.

Equality and Diversity Implications

28. All re-commissioning exercises are subject to the completion of appropriate Impact Assessments, including Equality Impact Assessments wherever there may be equality and diversity implications.

Purpose of the Meeting

29. The Panel is asked to:

- consider and comment on the information provided on the Council's Replacement Care offer; and
- determine whether any further information or scrutiny on this topic is required.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

[Agenda and Minutes for Cabinet on 11th July 2019](#)

[Agenda for Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 11 July 2019](#)

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.