

## **Argyll and Bute Council- report on Adult Care in Bute and Cowal**

**Julie Hempleman Area manager for Operations**

**We are continuing to make positive changes in adult care. This is reflected in the Pyramid Figures which will be available at the Area meeting in February. These changes are due to a number of factors which I will explain more fully. I think you will agree however that these figures demonstrate our commitment to Argyll and Bute's vision which is to**

**“Work with communities and improve quality of life and opportunity”**

**Also we are mindful of the values set out in the Social work service plan are to:**

**Put the needs of the service user at the centre.**

**Protect the most Vulnerable from harm.**

**Respect and uphold the rights of service user.**

**Listen to what people say about the service we deliver.**

**Build partnerships with our communities and other agencies.**

**Respect the contribution of staff and carers.**

**Ensure services are fair equitable and based on clear priorities.**

**Constantly strive to improve the way we meet people's needs.**

**Ensure everything we do represents best value for the citizens of Argyll and Bute.**

### **Putting service user's at the centre**

**Social workers in Cowal and Bute are mindful of listening to the needs of the service user and ensure that our assessments reflect this. The new assessment called the Personal Outcome Plan or POPS ensures that from the start the service user states what they wish the outcome of the assessment to be. It ensures that we are able to ascertain their needs in terms of ability**

to live independently. The extent of their physical health and mobility and also if they have concerns as to their mental health or dependency on alcohol or drugs. It also indicates if they are worried about their ability to cope financially or with elements of their personal care. The committee will see from Pyramid that referrals to the service are quickly assessed with unallocated work both in Cowal and Bute remaining low. This ensures that public confidence in us remains high and that they are re-assured we will respond quickly to their concerns.

In both Cowal and Bute we have increased our staffing levels to reflect the increasing number of referrals to our team. We have recently appointed a social worker who will cover Bute and Cowal. This has boosted the team's ability to complete assessments on time and ensure that we can respond effectively in terms of crisis intervention. In terms of our staff compliment we have 2.5 Social workers in Cowal and a community care assistant. Bute now has a half time social worker and two community care assistants.

#### **Protect the most vulnerable from harm**

Adult protection has remained a high priority in Bute and Cowal. Although there has been a slight increase in the number of referrals we have continued to ensure we use the appropriate criteria and where there is an adult protection concern we respond appropriately. We have an adult protection officer covering Bute and Cowal and recently all staff were involved in an evaluation day so that we could review our progress alongside our partners such as police and health. Joint working has helped us share common goals and refine our working practice.

#### **Respect and uphold rights of the service user**

We have continued to use the advocacy service to help uphold the rights of the service user. This has been particularly successful in helping the older service user to express their views in meetings where their future care needs are being discussed.

### **Listen to what the service user has to say and the service we deliver**

As Area manager I have been keen to listen to the views of the service user. Last year I took part in two mapping events organised by the Justice Of the Peace group in Cowal. The events which were directed by Jim Mather MSP gave the local community a chance to discuss their concerns with local managers from health and social work. This mapping event involved community groups such as the Cowal public partnership forum as well as individuals concerned with local issues.

### **Build partnerships in communities and with other agencies**

In the last year we have encouraged community involvement particularly when planning new service delivery. One of the most significant developments has been the ongoing development of the Bute and Cowal Plan which in conjunction with health looks at how we can jointly use resources to provide patients with a seamless service both in hospital and on discharge. This in response to the National Policy by Scottish Government to reduce continuing care beds and develop community based alternatives. In particular a joint admission, transfer and discharge policy has been agreed involving NHS Highland, Highland council and Argyll and Bute council using the principles of the community care pathway. This will ensure that patients are able to receive services in the community once they are ready for discharge. In addition the appointment of the new delayed discharge co-ordinator in Cowal will ensure that these numbers of people in hospital remain low. Again the pyramid figures demonstrate that we have achieved a zero in terms of delays in both Bute and Cowal for 8 months and this is reflected in the hard work of the staff in ensuring that patients receive an appropriate service in the community if required.

### **Ensure services are fair and equitable and based on clear priorities**

In terms of the services we provide we have worked hard to explain how the services we offer are reflected in our prioritisation framework. We also ensure that our assessment process looks at all aspects of need and that the tools we use ensure that service users receive an equal level of care according to that need. We continue to monitor the service we provide by

ensuring it is reviewed regardless whether the service is provided by the council or a private provider.

### **Respect the contribution of staff and carers**

We are continuing to offer carers assessments in Bute and Cowal and help signpost carers who can support them in caring for a family member. We help carers forge links with voluntary agencies such as crossroads and the befrienders who offer the carer valuable respite from their caring role. We are also able to provide periods of respite for the service user and the development of the new respite bureau will offer more choice for those requiring short breaks.

In addition we recognise that staff also need their views heard and to be allowed an opportunity to discuss developments within the service. With this in mind Bute and Cowal community care teams joined together for a team building day in December which allowed staff the opportunity to identify their strengths but also where they might improve both individually and as a group. In addition staff are also able to discuss their role in monthly practice forums offered by the learning network and in monthly team meetings.

### **Constantly strive to improve the way we meet people's needs**

The most recent example of how we are beginning to change the way we meet a service users needs is to recognise that many service users particularly the elderly would prefer to stay at home rather than receive institutional care. The development of an overnight team in Cowal and Bute will allow more people to remain at home. This service in conjunction with the use of Tele Health Care will also ensure people are safe and can be monitored at regular intervals, particularly those with early onset dementia.

### **Ensure everything we do represents best value for the citizens of Argyll and Bute**

Finally in the current climate we must ensure that the services we provide within the council or through a private provider offer best value to the

**service user. In Cowal and Bute we have achieved this by ensuring we use the resources we have well but also ensure that services are not duplicated or remain in place if the service user no longer requires them. Our system of review allows us to reduce care packages where necessary allowing others who fall within our prioritisation service to receive the care they need.**