
OLDER PEOPLES CARE AT HOME SERVICE UPDATE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Area Committee on the findings of the 1st quarterly evaluation of the Care at Home provision within the Bute and Cowal area. This is following the externalisation of services on 21st January, 2013.

This report has been broken down to show the progress and joint working that has been put into place to ensure that a high quality service is provided, as it is recognised that this service is provided to vulnerable individuals, predominately by lone workers, in the home environment.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The remit of the Procurement and Commissioning Team together with the Homecare Procurement Officers is to ensure best value, contract compliance, quality of services and customer satisfaction. This will support Community Services to commission quality Care at Home services via the formal procurement and commissioning procedures.

3. DETAIL

OUTCOME OF TENDER

Within the Bute and Cowal locality, almost 70% of the service has historically been provided by the independent sector. The three providers successful in the framework in Cowal are Care UK, Allied and Carr Gomm. A separate framework contract was awarded on Bute and the providers are Allied, Carr Gomm and Carewatch. 3.5 FTE Homecare Procurement Officers are now in post to ensure the robust review/monitoring of the services to ensure a high quality is maintained.

A condition of the tendering exercise was that all services within the framework would have an electronic call monitoring system to log visits to service users which would minimise missed/late visits and allow the Council to monitor continuity of care. These are now all in place, and operational. This will enhance the service monitoring visits carried out by the Homecare Procurement Officers due to the reports provided by these systems.

CARE AT HOME PROVISION

As at 30th June 2013 an approximate total of 1611 hours are being provided to 192 Older People within the Cowal area by external providers. A breakdown of the provision is detailed in the table below:

COWAL

Providers on Framework from tender exercise		Weekly hours commissioned
1 st preferred provider	Care UK	474
2 nd preferred provider	Allied	425
3 rd preferred provider	Carr Gomm	55
Existing Providers		
	Mears Care	398
	Cowal Carers	259
Total paid hours		1611

As at 30th June 2013 an approximate total of 2099 hours are being provided to 168 Older People within the Bute area by external providers. A breakdown of the provision is detailed in the table below:

BUTE

Providers on Framework from tender exercise		Weekly hours commissioned
1 st preferred provider	Allied	1149
2 nd preferred provider	Carr Gomm	50
3 rd preferred provider	Carewatch	92
Existing Providers		
	Care Plus	808
Total paid hours		2099

Initial problems were highlighted in Cowal due to difficulties for the preferred providers in recruiting staff. This issue is not new to this locality, due to the rural areas involved, however it has led to the Council initially going off contract to meet demand. Recruitment is an on-going problem we are facing across the Council area and the Procurement and Commissioning Team, Adult Services and the Independent Providers are working in partnership to identify alternative ways to attract people into the sector.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Argyll and Bute Council's Procurement and Commissioning team are responsible for the Contract and Supplier management of these services. This is complimented by the service monitoring and review process carried out by Homecare Procurement Officers. The Procurement and Commissioning Team carry out quarterly contract management meetings that determine the risk rating of each contract. All contracts are risk rated using a combination of Care Inspectorate grades, Service concerns and complaints.

A breakdown of the Care Inspectorate grades are detailed in the table below.

Provider	Care Inspection Grades		
	Quality of Care and Support	Quality of Staffing	Quality of Management and Leadership
Allied	6	6	5
Careplus	6	5	6
Care UK	5	5	4
Carr Gomm	6	5	6
Cowal Carers	5	5	5
Mears- Oban/Cowal	2	3	3

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

An ongoing training schedule has been implemented to the Homecare Procurement Officers and a robust monitoring programme has been put in place with both the Procurement and Commissioning Monitoring Officer and Homecare Procurement Officers having close contact with the external providers and service users.

A detailed list of contact with Service users and providers for the quarter is detailed below:

Contact	Total number carried out since 01/04/2013	Council Officer involved
Review of care needs with service users, family and provider	173	Homecare Procurement Officer and/or Care Manager
Quarterly Contract and Supplier Meetings with Providers in line with the Scottish Government Guidance on the Commissioning of Care and Support Services	9	Procurement and Commissioning Team / Social Work
Provider Forums - Reshaping care for Older People meetings.	2	Procurement and Commissioning Team/Social Work/NHS

SERVICE MONITORING VISITS

<u>Provider</u>	Number of Spot Checks/Monitoring Visits	Satisfied/Unsatisfied	Service User Comments
Provider A	7	Satisfied	Happy with level of care received
		Satisfied	
		Unsatisfied	Carer leaving early & service user not advised of changes
		Satisfied	
		Satisfied	Carers are flexible and approachable. Agency keeps me informed of any changes.
		Satisfied	
		Satisfied	
Provider B	2	Satisfied	
		Satisfied	
Provider C	1	Satisfied	
Provider D	1	Satisfied	
Provider E	2	Satisfied	
		Satisfied	

As you can see there has been extensive work carried out within the first quarter to support the providers and service users through this transition period. The feedback from the service users and families who have received service monitoring visits has been positive, with 92% of the people spoken too, very happy with the services they are receiving.

SERVICE CONCERNS

There is a clear service concern process in place and from 1st April – 30th June, there has been 6 service concerns received. All service concerns are investigated fully and the Homecare Procurement Officers work closely with the providers to improve any issues raised.

BUTE

<u>Provider</u>	Number of Concerns	Details of Concern	Upheld and appropriate action taken
Provider A	1	Concerns re missed, late and early visits.	Upheld

COWAL

<u>Provider</u>	Number of Concerns	Details of Concern	Upheld and appropriate action taken
Provider B	2	Concerns re missed, late and early visits.	Upheld
		Late/early visits	Partially Upheld
Provider C	2	Missed Visits	Upheld
		Administration of Medication	Partially upheld
Provider D	1	Personal Care needs not being met	Upheld

For information – The above concerns (6) have been received in this quarter. The total weekly service currently being delivered by the providers concerned is 3,700 hours per week.

COMPLAINTS

No complaints have been received for the quarter for Care at Home services delivered by these providers.

RECRUITMENT/RETENTION

There have been ongoing problems with attracting and retaining staff with the required skills, knowledge and experience within the care at home sector. This is true for both in-house and external providers. The procurement and Commissioning Team has been working with the independent providers to identify possible solutions. Part of this work involved collating high level detail on current pay levels. This activity was undertaken out with the formal contract and supplier management process with the cooperation of the providers. A number of the respondents requested that their individual information would not be released into the public domain. The results in terms of hourly rates paid compared favourably with industry standards. All providers who responded confirmed that they comply with national minimum wage standards. The providers at the lower end of the scale all confirmed they also paid travel time and mileage where appropriate, in addition to this.

4. CONCLUSION

It is clear from the information gathered, service users and families input, that in general the care at home is being provided in an appropriate manner. There have been some issues identified within this transitional period, as in any new contract and with the intensive support of the Procurement and Commissioning Team together with the Homecare Procurement Officers these have been addressed and the services are continuing to improve. Ongoing evaluation and monitoring will ensure good practice and customer satisfaction.

Concern still remains with regards to shortages of staff, resulting in providers being unable to take on packages at short notice. The private providers are actively looking at innovative ways of attracting staff especially within the rural areas. This is a nationally recognised problem across all aspects of the care sector.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1	Policy	Consistent with Best Value and National Policy on Re-Shaping Older People's Services
5.2	Financial	None
5.3	Personnel	None
5.4	Equalities Impact Assessment	None.
5.5	Legal	None

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