

## **BEST VALUE REVIEW – HOME SUPPORT – UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

**Report By: Head of Social Care (Adults)**

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

1. To outline the progress to date of the Best Value Review (BVR) of Home Support, and the development of the (Short Term Assessment Reablement and Review Service) STARRS

### **Financial Implications**

2. None associated with this report.

### **Background**

3. The BVR of Home Support was completed in 2000. Progress on the improvement plan was impeded by a lack of management capacity to take this forward. Difficulties were experienced in recruiting a project manager. In November 2002, a project consultant was appointed, followed in February 2003 by a project manager. The team was expanded in July 2003 with the appointment of an undergraduate student.

#### The BVR team made three recommendations:

- a. To address the insufficiency of current home support activity delivered as part of a planned reablement service.
- b. To address the greater cost of in-house Home Care, being more expensive than that provided by the independent sector home support.
- c. To address the difficulty of equitable access to home support across the County.

#### The improvement plan includes:

- A review of the contracting arrangements with the independent sector.
- A change of purpose of the in-house traditional home care service from simply care to reablement.
- The transfer of long term maintenance home support to the independent sector.

## Progress

### STARRS Pilot

4. To understand the practical implications of implementing the recommendations, a locality was identified as a pilot site. Moving a number of in-house staff into a dedicated team to provide a reablement service developed the STARRS service.
5. The aim of STARRS service is to:
  - Promote independence through “supporting rather than doing”.
  - Enable service users (predominantly older people) to continue living in their own home and communities.
  - Prevent inappropriate admissions to hospital/residential or nursing care homes.
  - Prevent loss of independence by timely return to home from hospital.
6. STARRS is limited to a 6-week period of intervention, during which continuous reviews and adjustments are made to the care plan, depending on the progress being made with the individual’s personal objectives. The service is free for up to six weeks.
7. The STARRS pilot was launched in Leominster in June 2003. Leominster is typical of town and rural complexities in service delivery in Herefordshire. The evaluation of the pilot identified the following:
  - The size of the reablement service required;
  - The numbers of staff required supporting the service;
  - The training requirements of staff and supporting agencies;
  - The need for therapy input;
  - The challenge of the commissioning arrangements with the independent sectors;
  - The positive impact on discharge arrangements from Community Hospitals;
  - The need to link with intermediate care provided by District Nurses.
8. A significant number of those who received the STARRS service met their personal objectives and regained sufficient independence to require no further support. Others, who at the end of the six-week period had an ongoing requirement for home support, were provided for by an independent agency.
9. Through the in-depth assessment and ongoing reviews, it has been possible to demonstrate that the intervention resulted in a much smaller ‘ongoing’ package of support.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Suzanne Hughes (Service Manager)  
on 01568-616397

10. Shortage of care staff in the independent sector has caused difficulty for the pilot; recruitment is also a problem for the in-house service.
11. Contracts based on a specific number of care hours will be developed to help the independent sector develop. This method of contracting will provide a more stable environment for independent agencies and help them to increase their ability to recruit and train staff.
12. An area of Leominster will go out to tender this month for 110 care hours. It is estimated that five WTE care staff would be required.
13. Care packages currently held with the in-house service will move into this volume contract. Service Users in that area will receive a review and any changes in their care arrangements will be explained and discussed with them. This will have the effect of freeing up capacity in the in-house team, allowing for the reablement cases to be taken on. An option for staff that wish to continue providing long term maintenance home care to be seconded to the independent sector is being explored.

### **Further Implementation**

14. Lessons learned from the Leominster pilot will be used in the implementation process in the Ross-on-Wye area, early in 2004.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the progress with the best value review be noted.**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Best Value Review Stage 3 Report – Social Care & Housing Monitoring & Review Committee - 22 November 2000.
- Best Value Review Stage 3 Report - Strategic Monitoring Committee - 9 January 2001.
- Social Care & Strategic Housing Project Plan – Social Care And Housing Scrutiny Committee – 13 March 2003.