

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY - STAGE 3 REPORT

Report By: Head of Social Care (Adults)

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the Stage 3 report of the Best Value Review of Social Care Services for people who have a physical disability.

Financial Implications

2. The main improvements will be managed within existing resources, reflecting a Best Value model.
3. There is a longer-term recommendation for a Disabled Living Centre, which would be a complex partnership enterprise and requires a further feasibility study.

Background

4. The Best Value Review commenced in December 2003.
5. A Review Team representing a wide range of stakeholders, who have met on a regular basis, has conducted this Review. This included two Councillors: Ms G.A. Powell and W.J.S. Thomas. The highly valued contribution of service users and carers has been a significant factor in this process. The Team has benefited from the co chairing by an external consultant, and Barbara Millman, Chair of Hereford Centre of Independent Living, who is herself a service user.
6. The Review examined services for people with physical disabilities provided directly or indirectly by Social Care. Although not a crosscutting Review inevitably the Review Team recognised the overlap with other services such as Health and Housing.
7. The following themes taken from "Independence Matters", a national review of good practice, were used to inform the investigation process;
 - Systems and processes
 - Independence at home
 - Identity and belonging
 - Active citizenship
8. The Review followed the requirements of Best Value in undertaking full consultation of stakeholders and in comparing services in Herefordshire with other authorities.

9. Separate reports on Consultation, Benchmarking and the Stakeholder Event detailing the outcome of these investigations are available.

Option Appraisal

10. Following preliminary work, the Review Team undertook an option appraisal for potential service redesign in the following service areas: -
 - Assessment and Care Management
 - Day Opportunities
 - Adaptations and Equipment
 - Complaints and Advocacy
 - Short Term Breaks
 - Transport
11. A number of additional recommendations on a wide range of other issues were also considered

RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING OPTION APPRAISAL

- Establish multidisciplinary team for physical disabilities in partnership with the health service.
 - Establish a multi-agency Physical Disabilities Partnership Board.
 - Progress service development and supervision of specialist staff through the appointment of a Team Manager (physical and sensory disability)
 - Develop a strategy for day opportunities including Canal Road Day Centre.
 - Review the procedures for access to major adaptations to property via the Disable Facilities Grant process.
 - Extend Direct Payments to include the equipment service.
 - Development of peer advocacy.
 - Ensure carer's needs are included routinely in assessment practice.
 - Resources for short term breaks to be identified by the Carers Partnership officer.
 - Recommendations relating to Transport be taken into account by the cross cutting Transport Review.
12. The detailed review report is enclosed separately for Members of the Committee and is available to the public on request. Additional recommendations as set out in Section 5 of the detailed review report are reflected in Appendix A to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the recommendations of the Stage 3 Report of the Best Value Review of Physical Disability Services as set out in paragraph 9 and Appendix A of this report be approved in principle and recommended to the Strategic Monitoring Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Best Value Review (Physical Disability 18-64) Stage 1 Report to Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee April 2004.
- Review update – report to Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee - October 2004.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The research and consultation undertaken by the Review team had highlighted a wide range of issues where improvements could be made and also some examples of good practice. Consequently in addition to the aspects of service, which were considered for redesign in the Options Appraisal process there are a number of recommendations endorsed by the Team. These are listed below. The recommendations are categorised using the headings of "Independence Matters", consistent with the theme throughout the Best Value Review.

(Ref. 3)

5.1. Systems and Processes

- 1) The current production and distribution of information on services for people with physical disabilities should be reviewed and a system for keeping this information and distribution updated should be in place. In addition the contracts with organisations currently providing and disseminating information should be reviewed
- 2) FACS (Fair Access to Care Services) Eligibility Criteria indicators should be more closely defined to relate specifically to the needs of younger disabled people and cross link with the prevention strategy.

It is noted that the Action Plan for services for people who have a disability with parenting responsibility includes the recommendation that FACS guidance should be revised to include reference to disabled parents and their needs. The Review Team considers that the local descriptors for service used under FACS should be reviewed to ensure the needs of younger disabled people for independence and social inclusion are taken fully into account;

- 3) A specific in house training module on disability and sensory awareness should be developed, preferably linked to other training programmes and open to other agencies. This should be prepared in partnership with service users and carers, with appropriate recognition should be involved in its delivery. This should be part of the remit of the Adult Training and Workforce post.

This training should be at two levels: -

- a) Basic disability equality training based on the social model of disability should be part of the training of all staff who come into contact with the public.
 - b) Further training which also provides detailed practical information on services and understanding of specific impairments and long-term conditions for staff who have responsibility for assessment and provision of service.
- 4) In order to implement the recommendation on social work structure, short-term breaks, and the reablement agenda and to ensure the active partnership and

participation of disabled people, it is imperative that Health and Social Care consider the establishment of a Partnership board for disability services. This is in accordance with the action points for high quality services in Independence Matters; -

- Raise the profile of disabled people in the council's commissioning strategies and business planning;
- Develop good partnership arrangements with health and other agencies to provide efficient and effective services for disabled people based on Best Value principles.

5) The Review Team recognise that the Involving People Team, jointly funded by Social Care and the Primary Care Trust to develop user involvement, are proposing the development of an independent service user group is supported. In this context and taking into account the proposal for a Partnership Board the Review Team recommend that a forum of people with physical and sensory impairments is established, which would have a clear role in being consulted regarding the reshaping of services and would also link in with the independent service users group

5.2. Identity and Belonging

- Working with diversity in the social care context should be incorporated in the training module outlined in 5.1.3;
- The Best Value review team notes that a recent Action Plan for Good Practice recommendations for Herefordshire based on "It shouldn't be Down to Luck" Report has been produced outlining proposed improvements in the service for disabled people with parenting responsibilities. The Review Team recommends that service users should be involved in proposals for service development and in advising on taking this Action Plan forward. Development of this service should acknowledge that children are children first rather than "young carers". It should note that lack of access to the same opportunities and choices as other children causes stress in families and leads to social exclusion;
- A mapping exercise on the needs of disabled people from ethnic minority GROUPS should be undertaken;
- Key people in contact with ethnic minority groups should be identified and informed on services for disabled people;
- Head Injury Services are an example of good practice. However, in common with other services for disabled people, there is a serious lack of specialised neuro-physiotherapy, speech therapy, appropriate housing and respite care;
- The results of the current Transitions project for children's to adult services be pursued.
- Direct Payments should be expanded for 16-18 year-olds.

5.3. Active Citizenship

- 1) A multi-disciplinary interest group on work opportunities for physically disabled people should be convened, linked in to Welfare to Work, to ensure that a wider range of choices are available to physically disabled people;
- 2) Information on employment opportunities should be included in the proposed training module;
- 3) The implementation of the Disability Discrimination Scheme should include increasing opportunities for recruitment of disabled people to local authority posts.

5.4. Independence at Home

- 1) Contracts for long-term provision of home support should reflect the need for appropriate disability equality training and understanding of the social model of disability. This should also include sensory awareness.
- 2) There should be clear provision for the involvement of service users in monitoring contracts for care at home.
- 3) Direct payments and the Direct Payments Support Service are examples of good practice. Direct Payments should continue to be expanded. This expansion should include equipment, short breaks and carer's support and day opportunities where appropriate.
- 4) The interface of direct payments and Supporting People needs to be clarified. Direct Payments guidance from the Government stipulates that direct payments should be used to provide a flexible holistic service maximising choice for service users. Where service users are eligible for a service from Social Care the division of provision of services between social care provision of personal care and Supporting People provision of support causes difficulties as Supporting People has not been payable as a direct payment. However the usefulness of Supporting People, where direct payments are not an issue, in providing support for independent living is acknowledged. This issue has been recognised as a barrier to extension and effective use of direct payments by the Local Implementation Group for Direct Payments who are seeking to address it;
- 5) All care packages of over £150 per week for younger adults should be audited to ensure the Independent Living Fund is accessed where possible and the service user is in agreement;
- 6) A strategy for Housing for people with disabilities should be developed by a working group, which includes representatives from Social Care, Strategic Housing and disabled people. This should consider appropriate developments in partnership with Supporting People.
- 7) A database of adapted accommodation and housing needs should be completed.
- 8) In the course of the Review concerns were expressed regarding the present system of allocating housing accommodation. The revised allocations policy provides for

Further information on the subject of this report is available from

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people with a disability to have Gold Band status. The Review Team recommends that the priority system be examined to consider the needs of younger disabled people for independence.

- 9) A Housing Strategy would raise awareness of the extreme housing shortage and how it impacts at a very practical level on the ability to access housing. This is further compounded by the lack of suitably adapted property. The stock of adapted property needs to be linked with appropriate potential disabled tenants.
- 10) Housing information needs to be provided in accessible formats.