

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

Report By: Director of Social Care & Strategic Housing

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider and approve the Stage 3 report and outcomes of the Best Value Review of Social Care Services for Physically Disabled People (18-64 years).

Financial Implications

2. The report makes a number of recommendations for service development and redesign. The financial implications vary with each option for further provision. Some preferred options are recognised to constitute long-term objectives in view of the need for investment and will need to be the subject of further feasibility work. However the preferred options for immediate development in important service areas are judged to be cost neutral.

Assessing Stage 3 Reports

3. In considering Stage 3 reports, responsibility rests with the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny Committee, supported by officers, to satisfy the Strategic Monitoring Committee that the requirements of the review process have been met. In doing so, the role of the Strategic Monitoring Committee is to ensure the robustness of the review process, rather than revisiting the detail of each review.

Background to the Review

4. The Best Value Review of services provided directly or indirectly by Social Care for younger physically disabled people began in December 2003. The scope of the review included the community care assessment and care management processes, day opportunities and support at home. The Review used the headings of Systems and Processes, Independence at Home, Active Citizenship and Identity and Belonging, to structure the process.
5. Although not a crosscutting review, the complexity of services for physically disabled people is such that there were inevitably overlaps with other services such as Health and Housing Services.
6. The completed Stage 3 Report is enclosed separately for Members of the Committee and is available to the public on request

7. The initial Review Team comprised 2 Councillors, four service users, a carer, two representatives from voluntary organisations, and representatives from Social Care, the Primary Care Trust, Hereford Hospital Trust, Herefordshire Housing, and Unison. The meetings were co- chaired by Caroline Byrt, an independent consultant and Barbara Millman, service user.
8. There was some change of membership in the course of the year which resulted in subsequent co-options including representatives from Strategic Housing services and Connexions
9. On 13th,December, 2004 the Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee considered the content of the Stage 3 report. The Committee agreed to recommend that the findings of the review should be endorsed subject to advising the Cabinet Member (Social Care and Strategic Housing) in considering the recommendations and preparing an Improvement Plan to have regard to the Committee's view:
 - (i) that recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 as set out in section 4 of the review report could be implemented within existing resources and should be progressed;
 - (ii) that the remaining recommendations in section 4 of the review report, recommendations 1, 6 & 7, should be the subject of further feasibility work to ensure that sufficient resources were available to implement them; and
 - (iii) that the additional recommendations in section 5 of the report be progressed as feasible within existing resources.
10. The Committee also agreed that the Strategic Monitoring Committee's attention be drawn to the need for those implementing the findings of the Transport Review to ensure that account is taken of concerns identified in the review of services for people with a disability regarding the provision of social care transport.
11. The recommendations from sections 4 and 5 of the detailed review report are set out in the appendix to this report.

Data collection

12. A wide variety of data was collected. Comprehensive information on this is available in full separately in the First Stage Report, Consultation Report, Benchmarking Report and Stakeholder Report This included a wide-ranging consultation through various methods. The effectiveness of the services was measured against performance benchmarks and compared with that of statistical neighbours. There were some difficulties in obtaining comprehensive information from comparator authorities, especially financial data. Consequently, there were issues about drawing conclusions on comparative cost effectiveness of services.

Challenge

13. The services were challenged about how and why they were provided. In some cases the services is a statutory obligation that must be maintained. In such cases the services were challenged about how they could be improved for the benefit of service users.
14. In particular, this process was conducted using the social model of disability to judge whether services promoted independence and a positive image of disabled people as active citizens, by empowering individual disabled people to make their own choices, and be fully involved in all aspects of life in the community.

Consultation

15. A comprehensive exercise was undertaken to gain the views of the stakeholders of the services. This included consulting service users, carers, staff in Health, Housing and Social Care, and the independent sector.¹⁴ A wide range of consultation methods was used. The Review Team particularly wanted a comprehensive involvement of service users in this process and achieved this by using the Governments annual User experience survey enhanced with additional questions, 6 structured discussion groups for service users of specific services and a further two groups open to disabled people not currently using services.
16. A questionnaire was sent to staff in Health, Social care and Voluntary organisations and interviews were conducted with selected managers in Health and Social Care
17. A Stakeholder event was attended by a wide range of service users, carers, councillors and staff from Social Care, Housing, Health and voluntary organisations

Comparison

18. A questionnaire was sent to 15 comparator councils who constituted statistical neighbours. The information requested was comprehensive. Six full replies were received which provided sufficient information, along with performance information, for comparison
19. In addition examples of good practice in Shropshire, Sandwell, Derbyshire and the Netherlands were considered.

Compete

20. The service areas which were considered for major redesign and redevelopment were Assessment and Care Management, Day opportunities, Adaptations and Equipment, Complaints and Advocacy, Short term Breaks and Transport.
21. In addition a number of recommendations for improvements to services which did not require redesign were made
22. A range of options was considered for each of these service areas. These included where appropriate, maintaining the current provision but making changes indicated in the Review process, outsourcing to external providers and entering into partnerships e.g. with Health Services. Full details of the options considered are contained in the final report under the appropriate headings

Risk assessment.

23. There is limited risk to the authority in pursuing agreed options. A foundation for good working relationships with service users and staff in implementing the recommendations has been established and there is a willingness within the services to make the necessary changes.

Process Issues

24. There were no issues that arose during the review that impeded the overall process. The model used of co-chairing and thorough involvement of service users proved to be very successful in maintaining active participation and engagement. The contribution of service users in providing information and contributing to the overall task and process was highly valued.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee endorse the recommendation of the Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee on the Stage 3 report of the Best Value Review of Physical Disabilities Services (18-64) and refer the findings to the Cabinet Member (Social Care and Strategic Housing) for consideration, subject to advising the Cabinet Member (Social Care and Strategic Housing) in considering the recommendations and preparing an Improvement Plan to have regard to the view:

- (i) that recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 as set out in section 4 of the review report could be implemented within existing resources and should be progressed;**
- (ii) that the remaining recommendations in section 4 of the review report, recommendations 1, 6 & 7 should be the subject of further feasibility work to ensure that sufficient resources were available to implement them; and**
- (iii) that the additional recommendations in section 5 of the report be progressed as feasible within existing resources.**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Best Value Review (Physical Disability Services 18-64) November 2004, Stage 3 Report.

APPENDIX

RECOMMENDATIONS AS SET OUT IN SECTION 4 OF THE DETAILED REVIEW REPORT

(it is considered that these can be implemented within existing resources except where otherwise indicated)

(a) Assessment and Care Management

The Review Team considered that far-reaching change would offer the most robust solution. However, recognising this would take time to achieve, offered an interim recommendation.

(Recommendation 1) The establishment of a specialist multi-disciplinary assessment and care management team for physical disability in partnership with the Health Service ***(recommended that this needs to be the subject of further feasibility work)***

(Recommendation 2) Service development through appointment of a Specialist team Manager (Physical Disability) as an interim measure to undertake a "champion" role and supervise current specialist services and staff.

(b) Day Opportunities

The Review Team considers that the day service would benefit from modernisation and development to offer a more flexible range of day opportunities. A range of options was considered including development of the present service without major changes, putting the service out to tender, developing partnerships or a social enterprise. The Review Team were clear that a proposal that ensured continued active involvement of service users in developments was essential and that closure of the centre or tendering of the day service to an external organisation would be solutions which would have low acceptability.

(Recommendation 3) Development of a strategy for day opportunities including Canal Road Day Centre. Which will ensure all future options for service redesign are explored and that day opportunities offer a greater scope for involvement in leisure, training, education, employment and other activities integrated into the community

(c) Adaptations and equipment

The Review Team heard evidence of delays in providing major adaptations and also that more individual choice of equipment would be welcomed.

(Recommendation 4) A Review of procedures for major adaptations of property through the Disabled Facility Grant process.

(Recommendation 5) The extension of direct payments to include equipment

(Recommendation 6) Development of a partnership with the Primary Care Trust, Housing Services, Voluntary sector and service users to plan for the provision of a Disabled Living Centre ***(recommended that this needs to be the subject of further feasibility work)***

(d) Complaints and Advocacy

Consultation illustrated weaknesses in knowledge and trust in the complaints system, and the lack of an advocacy service which clearly meets the needs of younger disabled people. The Review Team considered a range of options for development of an advocacy service including offering the proposal for tender or strengthening existing advocacy services. It was agreed that an effective service would maximise empowerment and involvement of disabled people.

(Recommendation 7) Development of a Peer Advocacy Service (*recommended that this needs to be the subject of further feasibility work*)

(e) Short Term Breaks

The Review Team heard evidence of major concerns about the availability, appropriateness and flexibility of arrangements for short term breaks for younger physically disabled people provided as support for carers.

The option of extension of direct payments was considered and agreed to be desirable and consistent with national policy.

(Recommendation 8) Short term breaks should be considered routinely as part of assessment practice

(Recommendation 9) Resources and systems for short term breaks be identified by the Carer's Partnership Officer.

(f) Transport

Many concerns were raised in consultation about the performance of transport contracted from private firms, and general problems with public transport to enable disabled people to have the freedom of mobility to join in ordinary life activities.

Although a cross cutting Best Value review of Transport Services has been finalised, the Review Team recommends that -

(Recommendation 10) Recommendations relating to Transport contained in the Best Value (Physical Disability 18-64) Review should be taken into account by the Transport Cross Service Review

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AS SET OUT IN SECTION 5 OF THE DETAILED REVIEW REPORT

(It is recommended that these be progressed as feasible within existing resources)

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.

(a) 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

(b) Identity and Belonging

- Working with diversity in the social care context should be incorporated in the training module outlined in recommendation a 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.

(c) 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.

(d) 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

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Stephanie Canham Head of Social Care (Adults), Extension: 0320

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 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.