

BEST VALUE REVIEWS: UPDATE

Report By: Head of Social Care (Adults)

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To note progress to date on the implementation of the following two Best Value reviews:
 - Social Care Services for people who have a physical disability, and
 - Carers' Information & Support Services.

Review of Social Care Services for People Who Have a Physical Disability

Background

2. The Stage 3 Report on the Best Value Review of services for people with a physical disability was presented to the Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee on December 13th 2004. The recommendations in the Review were accepted in principle and the Review moved into the implementation stage.
3. An Implementation Group was set up at the end of January 2005, and is meeting on a regular basis. Its terms of reference were to agree an Implementation Plan and subsequently to monitor progress. The principle of stakeholder involvement has been maintained in the constitution of the Implementation group, which has the benefit of continued involvement of two service users and a carer representative.

Progress to Date

4. The Best Value Review made detailed recommendations in the following areas: -
 - Assessment and Care Management
 - Adaptations and Equipment
 - Day Opportunities
 - Short Term Breaks
 - Advocacy/Complaints System
 - Transport
5. The team also made a number of additional recommendations on a wide range of other issues.

6. The work of implementation to date has concentrated in laying the structural foundations for later work, including in particular key management appointments. A key feature of this has been the appointment of the Prevention Service Manager (Older and Physically Disabled People), who will lead on the improvement plan.

Assessment and Care Management

7. A Disability Services Team Manager post is currently in the process of recruitment.
8. Initiatives to develop the recommendations for staff development on disability issues have started. "All About Ability" - a group of local disabled people who are trainers will provide the training.

Adaptations and Equipment

9. A feasibility study on a Disability Living Centre is being developed.
10. A working group is in process to clarify procedures for the use of direct payments for equipment.

Day Opportunities

11. The Day Opportunities Manager post is in the recruitment process.

Short term Breaks

12. The Carers partnership officer is now in post and will be taking forward recommendations on short-term breaks.
13. Carers "champions" for every social work team have been established. These officers will ensure that carers' needs for short-term breaks will form part of the initial assessment process.

Peer Advocacy

14. This needs to link with wider discussion on advocacy for all service users.

Transport

15. A carer representative has been nominated on the Accessibility Group.
16. There is agreement in principle to the involvement of service users in training both in house and contracted drivers.
17. Some reorganisation has already taken place and more service users at Canal Road Day Centre are now transported by in house transport.

Other recommendations

18. The **Voluntary Sector Review**, recently carried out, identified the need for clarity on how Herefordshire Council provides information to Disabled People. A further recommendation will be put to Cabinet shortly.

19. The Implementation Group has examined the Government guidance on “**Disabled People with Parenting Responsibilities**” and made recommendations on further developments.
20. Agreement in principle to the establishment of a **Partnership Board for Physical Disability**.
21. The Involving People Team are commencing work on establishing a **service users forum** for disabled people
22. A bid for **Supporting People** for a scheme for service users with Head Injuries has been submitted
23. The **Direct Payments Project Manager** is making progress on extending direct payments to a wider range of individuals and services. Two training sessions for staff took place in April
24. Care packages have been reviewed where application for **Independent Living Fund** may be appropriate
25. **The Best Value Review of the Private Sector Housing** has recommended the establishment of a database of adapted properties
26. An **Occupational Therapist** with responsibility for housing issues is to be appointed.
27. Information about progress has been distributed to stakeholders who took part in the original consultation by means of a Newsletter.

Review of Carers' Information & Support Services

Background

28. Following the Best Value Review of Carers' information and support services a Carers' Priorities/ Action Plan was devised to address weaknesses identified during the review, in particular:
 - Targeting carers' resources more effectively.
 - Involving carers in planning processes.
 - Assessing Carers needs.
 - Supporting the introduction of a Carers Charter.
 - Supporting the introduction of Carers Champions.
 - Reviewing the role and responsibilities of the Social Care and Strategic Housing Carers Officer post.
 - Support the recommendation of an additional post to take on the strategic planning of carers services.
 - Writing and implementing a service improvement plan for carers services.
29. A Partnership Officer for Carers has now been appointed (January 2005) who has reconvened the Carers Strategy Group (CSG), which met for the first time in April 2005. This group will take forward the recommendations of the Best Value review, in particular:

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Stephanie Canham,
Head of Social Care (Adults), on: Tel: 01432 260320

- Enabling organisations to work together with Carers to plan and develop services which provide the right help at the right time.
 - To provide the overarching strategic direction for service for carers throughout Herefordshire.
 - To have a champion role.
 - To ensure effective consultation takes place with all stakeholders on Carers issues.
30. **This will be achieved by:**
- Developing a Commissioning Strategy for Carers Support Services.
 - Developing criteria and a process which will determine how the Carers Grant will be spent against priorities identified through the commissioning strategy.
 - Ensuring the views of Carers are central to the commissioning strategy.
 - Making commissioning recommendations to the Health and Care Joint Commissioning Group.
31. The Carers Strategy Group consists of multi agency strategic and operational professionals from Health, Social Care and the Voluntary Sector as well as Carers.
32. The CSG are currently developing a revised action plan and have identified the following strategic objectives:
- Provide Carers with advice and information in the right format at the right time.
 - Services meet carers identified needs.
 - Carers can access a range of locally provided services which support their health and well-being.
 - To ensure that children whose parents/siblings have specific needs arising out of disability or health conditions are known to multi-agency professionals who's aim is that they enjoy the same life chances as all other children in the locality.
 - Carers are involved in all aspects of service planning.
33. The carers' strategy group meets bi monthly: the next meeting is to be held on 7th June, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT progress to date be noted, subject to any comments that the Committee wishes to make.

Background Papers

- None