

ADULT SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Report By: Sue Alexander, Head of Business Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To report progress with the adult social care improvement plan.

Financial Implications

2. As contained in the report.

Background

3. The Council and its partners face major challenges in providing a consistently high standard of adult social care both immediately and over the long term. Many of our services are at a lower level than comparable authorities, with particularly low provision of intensive support for people at home. Big increases in demand are being experienced. These increases are set to continue in the years ahead, not least as a result of an ageing population.
4. In the December 2005 ratings assessment, Adult Social Care services were judged by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) as serving some people well with uncertain prospects for improvement.
5. Since then, the Council, with the support and agreement of the Commission of Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and the Department of Health (DH) has taken a number of proactive steps to improve its service delivery and capacity within Adults Services:

Progress

6. The Council held a workshop, facilitated by a former CSCI Director, for service managers and a PCT representative in March 2006 where a number of improvement areas were identified.
7. The activity from the workshop resulted in an improvement proposal for adults services, which outlined themes where specific improvements were required. This proposal was approved by CSCI and the Department of Health in April 2006. The proposal sets out the pillars of improvement; describes how they are being tackled; and identifies the aspects in respect of which external support is requested.
8. Some elements of the proposal, such as the systematic assessment of future needs and the patterns and levels of services needed to meet them, are already well in hand and being managed within the Council.

9. In other areas work, has not yet commenced and these are the activities which will be managed as a project, with external support. Sue Alexander, Head of Business Services, has been appointed as the internal project manager, to oversee and manage the successful delivery of this work.
10. An external project manager, Emily Davis from PricewaterhouseCoopers, has been provided by the Department of Health to provide additional capacity and support.

Scope of the External Support

11. There are five workstreams that will form the basis of the external support:

11.1 Performance data

External support is required to undertake the independent analysis of existing practices and to recommend improvements. Information sharing and dialogue with suitable comparator authorities is also envisaged.

11.2 Workforce strategy for adult social care

A joint workforce strategy is required that will support and enable the development of future services. The external support will establish a framework and process for working with partner agencies across Herefordshire to develop a multi-agency approach to workforce development.

11.3 Market management activities with local service providers

Central to the achievement of the Council's vision for future services is the need for more open and on-going communications with local service providers. The Council wishes to see providers more actively involved in discussions and work to develop future service models. Building on the areas of good practice that already exist, external support will be required to help develop and establish models for engaging with current providers and to work with them to develop and modernise service provision.

11.4 Fair Access to Care (FAC)

The Council is keen to learn from other local authorities about how they apply and manage their FACS thresholds. External assistance will undertake the benchmarking and comparisons with other local authorities. The work will produce the analysis and make recommendations for consideration.

11.5 Charging Policy

External support will provide an independent review of current practices and make recommendations for improvement.

Summary

12. The external support for the improvement plan will be managed by a Project Board, which met for the first time on 22nd May, 2006 to agree the scope of the work. The Board is chaired by the CSCI Business Relationship Manager and includes representatives from the Council, Department of Health and the Primary Care Trust.
13. The internal aspects of improvement planning will be managed within the Directorate by the Adult Social Care management.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report on Adult Social Care Improvement planning be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None