

ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 2nd
February 2012 at 2.00 p.m. in the Civic Offices, Telford, Shropshire.

PRESENT: Councillors C. Turley (Chairman), F. Bould, J. Greenaway, C. Mason, J. Seymour; Co-optee Maurice Viney.

Also Present: Cllr. V. Fletcher; J. Gulliver, Scrutiny Co-optee; Karen Kalinowski, Head of Care & Support; Stephanie Jones, Scrutiny Group Specialist.

ASCSC-18 MINUTES

Regarding the action point noted in ASCSC-15 the Scrutiny Group Specialist had contacted the CQC to request contact details for the designated CQC contact but there had been no response. The Head of Care & Support suggested contacting Helena Denett or Andy Davey at the CQC to confirm the correct contact.

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee held on 23rd November 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

ASCSC-19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. J. Loveridge.

ACSSC-20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

ASCSC-21 SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN VULNERABLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

The Head of Care & Support presented the report of the Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Board making the following points:

- The Board is joint with Shropshire because the partners involved work on a pan-Shropshire basis and there is a common referral process across both areas. Chairing is shared between authorities with Telford & Wrekin chairing in 2010/11.
- 2010/11 had been a challenging year with the restructure process taking place within the organisation. Adult safeguarding had remained separate from children's safeguarding following the recommendations in the Munro report

which meant that the focus on adults would be retained. The recent government announcement that Adult Safeguarding Boards would operate on a statutory basis was welcomed to give greater protection to vulnerable adults.

- There had been a year on year upward trend in the number of referrals until 2010/11 which had seen a reduction by 4%. The reduction would have been greater but for the large institutional investigations which had had an impact on referrals. The reduction was not considered a matter for concern at this stage; the CQC inspection in 2010 had identified that too many people were being referred into the Adult Protection process and various guidelines and measures had been introduced which had led to more early exits and lower numbers. This was and will continue to be closely monitored.
- The partnership had developed well over the last few years and was one of only two in the West Midlands rated as “performing well” by the inspectors. National data collection had been introduced so that performance could be benchmarked against other authorities with similar demographics in the future.
- A number of key achievements for the year were highlighted:
 - The formal adoption of the Safeguarding Strategy with the emphasis on prevention. The Action Plan arising from the Strategy had been consolidated with the post-CQC inspection action plan.
 - The establishment of a Training Sub-group which had developed a training strategy, competency framework and assessment tools.
 - There was on-going awareness training with VSAB partners and reaching into other organisations including the prison service, fire service, church groups and lay visitors to homes.
 - The endorsement of practice tools (Medication, Pressure Area and Disciplinary process) to aid decision making and ensure a proportionate service response based on the level of risk presenting.
 - A review of the existing Multi-Agency Adult Protection Policy and Procedure (MAAPP) had started in-line with the introduction of the Pan London procedure, and the West Midlands Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) had agreed that a regional policy would be developed to ensure a consistent approach across the region.
 - There had been no Serious Case Reviews during the period of the report.
 - The reduction in the number of referrals in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin was not a matter for concern as this was consistent with the introduction of the practice tools described above
 - The Dignity Network had become a sub-group of the VASB and various activities had been co-ordinated by partners as part of the Dignity Campaign. A Dignity Audit was being planned with partners to ensure compliance with guidelines.
 - There had been five separate institutional abuse investigations in Telford & Wrekin over the year focussed mainly on larger residential units. A pro-active approach had been taken to working with the homes to put action

- plans in place to address the issues.
- Migration to shared electronic social care records had been completed with rigorous access and security measures in place.
 - The Designated Persons for Safeguarding Network had been put in place across the authority with staff trained to deal with reported concerns.
 - There was joint responsibility between the NHS and local authority for Deprivation of Liberties Safeguarding (DoLS), but this was passing over to the local authority with a small sum for additional training. The demand for DoLS assessments was steady but lower than it might be from hospitals and more training for acute staff was planned and the position would be monitored.
 - There was only one remaining “red” indicator on the amalgamated action plan (7.6/7.7) which was about breaking down barriers with groups and communities who have little contact with mainstream safeguarding support.

Members asked a number of questions and were given the following further information:

- The guidance and tools issued to practitioners on when an incident was serious enough to be reported to safeguarding would see more consistent standards introduced. The high level of referrals in the past had resulted from some incidents being reported when they were unintentional mistakes which could be addressed through case management and were not safeguarding issues.
- Inspections of care homes were carried out at least once a year where there was a contractual relationship with the authority and unannounced visits were done where there were reasons for concern. Where there was no contractual arrangement, the authority had no right of inspection and this was within the remit of the CQC and there were pro-active links with the CQC with regard to visits. There was a good relationship with Shropshire Partners in Care (SPIC) who would alert the authority to potential problems and there was a good relationship with the majority of homes. The LINK may also carry out inspections of care homes where the authority has no contractual relationship. Homes with more than 3 residents must be registered. Day care does not have to be registered, but the Council has an accredited standard which providers are required to meet before care is purchased from them.
- Problems with people living in their own homes could be picked up by carers, family, friends or social workers. There was a high level of reports from carers. The VASB was trying to raise awareness of abuse of the elderly with the public and there had been a campaign within the Council. An action for the Board was to look at how to reach hard-to-reach groups. SPIC hosted a dedicated post to work with all providers and wider organisations such as pharmacists and the WI to raise awareness and this work was on-going. Members suggested that an awareness raising session could be held with the Senior Citizens’ Forum, possibly to coincide with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) and in conjunction with Age

Concern. **It was agreed the Scrutiny Officer would contact the Senior Citizens' Forum to discuss this. Members further suggested that awareness raising could also be done with Town & Parish Councils.**

- People have a right to make their own decisions and refuse help. Unlike for children, there is no legislative framework to take people to a place of safety unless incapacity can legally be shown.
- The low level of referrals from GP s was a concern and the VSAB were looking at strategies to engage GP s including through the Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Board Action Plan would feature the issue of GP referrals. Members agreed that the engagement of GP s was vital as they were well positioned to pick up issues and suggested that ancillary staff, particularly receptionists, should be trained.
- There had been a low level of referrals from SSSHFT and a lot of work had gone into staff awareness training to enhance the response. **Members requested further information on the thematic review of children and adult safeguarding undertaken by the Trust.**
- West Mercia Police were on the Board and were very committed. National guidance documents had been circulated to forces and it was vital for the police to understand mental health and ALD issues to identify problems. Members asked whether training extended to CSOs as they have good local contacts. **This would be checked and reported back to the committee.**
- The reporting system was being cleaned up to make the source of referral information more accurate. Often, practitioners make referrals to the social workers who then record the incident on the system which can skew the data.
- The VASB had welcomed the government announcement that Adult Safeguarding Boards would operate on a statutory basis, and further guidance was awaited. No further funding would be available to accompany the statutory duties.
- Malicious referrals are very rare, and tend to happen in relation to financial abuse. These are investigated to uncover unfounded allegations.
- Links into ethnic groups with English as a second language were being explored and this was an outstanding action in the Action Plan for further work. Work was being done with the Cohesion team and links had been made with Connecting Communities through Board membership.
- A report on feedback from service users was being collated for the Board, although this had to be handled sensitively and in a non-intrusive way as people do not always want to reflect back on a traumatic incident.

- Records of people moving in or out of the borough could only be shared with the individual's permission. Information sharing protocols were in place between partners, but personal data covered by Data Protection could not be shared.
- Members were very pleased to hear about the work of the Dignity Network and felt strongly that this should be given emphasis. Jean Gulliver informed the committee that the LINK carries out unannounced ward visits at the hospital and issues, such as with food and drink, are reported and dealt with.
- Members noted that the figures on p. 18 did not show the number of staff trained as a % of the work force. **This would be reported back with a view to including this in future reports.**
- Investigations of the cases of institutional abuse were on-going. The take-over position of St. George's Park Care Centre was being closely monitored. No further admissions were being made until the new management were satisfied that the issues had been sorted out.

RESOLVED

- **That the 2011/12 VASB Report would be brought to the Committee in September.**
- **That the Scrutiny Officer would contact the Senior Citizen's Forum to discuss setting up an awareness raising event.**

ASCSC-22 IMPACT OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF CONTINUING HEALTH CARE FUNDING ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The Head of Care & Support informed members that there had been very positive discussions with the PCT about the budget for Continuing Health Care (CHC). The cluster was looking at increasing the level of CHC funding in Telford & Wrekin to the national level. The PCT had agreed to an independent review of the assessment criteria for CHC funding. A one-off payment for 2011/12 by the PCT to the authority to off-set the additional costs incurred by the withdrawal of CHC funding was being discussed. The Committee welcomed news of the positive discussions.

ASCSC-17 FORWARD PLAN

A date for the next meeting would be agreed by e-mail. The agenda would include an update on the Rehabilitation and Re-ablement Strategy, and the CQC would be invited to discuss inspections of care homes.

The Chairman advised members that the Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee would be considering budget issues relating to Supporting People at a future meeting and members of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee would be welcome to

attend. Details would be provided in the weekly bulletin of future scrutiny meetings. The Chairman reported that the Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee had looked at funding for the Meals on Wheels service as part of scrutinising the 2012/13 budget proposals, and had suggested that the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee include the review of options for the service in its work programme.

RESOLVED

That the review of the options for Meals on Wheels would be included in the work programme.

The meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: