

COUNCIL: 24 JUNE 2021

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & WELL-BEING STATEMENT

AGENDA ITEM:

Independent Living Services – First Point of Contact (Hospitals)

After seeing the benefits of the extended service provided by the Council's Pink Army in supporting winter pressures, this service has been extended for Quarter 1 of 2021/22 to assist colleagues in Health maintain patient flows within the hospital and ensuring patients are fully prepared and supported for community living upon discharge. So far in this financial year, the Pink Army have supported 462 patients to be discharged from hospital safely.

Independent Living Services – First Point of Contact (Community)

The First Point of Contact team continues to work effectively from home and demand on the service continues to remain high. This is due to increased confidence in Cardiff's citizens to re-engage with community services as restrictions ease. So far this year, the team has dealt with 6,934 calls. 84% of assessments were able to be dealt with at first point of contact without onward referral to social care, providing information, advice, and assistance on 1,702 outcomes.

Day Opportunities Service

In April 2021, the Day Opportunities Service within Independent Living Services (ILS) held their virtual Spring Festival over a period of three days. Activities included an online security workshop, a cook-along and low impact exercise as well as various sessions providing information and advice about community and other online activities, plus a surprise goody bag for all participants. Based on positive feedback from activities at the festival, last month, two new online groups were set up with the support of ILS' Community Co-ordinator and the Council's Community Hubs. These are an online gardening group and a virtual walking group, helping to keep Cardiff's older population healthy and engaged.

The Day Opportunities Service has been given the all-clear to recommence face-to-face community engagement and home visits. After a year of being unable to support citizens of Cardiff in physically accessing their communities due to Covid restrictions, the service is targeting a restart on 5 July 2021. The support for community groups to develop online platforms to keep Cardiff's older citizens engaged and connected online will still continue. The team will now take a blended approach through working digitally and providing safe face-to-face services. This will mean older citizens of Cardiff will have a greater range of ways to keep connected with their communities and peers, allowing access to local groups in ways that suit them.

Work to restart the Minehead Road Day Centre is now well underway. Health and Safety is of course paramount and clear protocols and guidelines are being developed to ensure our very vulnerable clients are kept safe. The centre is expected to open early next month with small groups of six to ensure social distancing. The service will be taking a cautious approach with regular reviews to ensure safety procedures are working well. Service users who are a priority to receive the service are currently being identified to ensure we reach those in greatest need. Staff at the centre are very keen to welcome their clients back to Minehead Road after such a difficult time.

Joint Equipment Store

The Joint Equipment Store continues to deliver its critical same/next working day service to be able to support hospital discharges, avoid hospital admissions and breakdowns of care. To date, 94 same/next working day deliveries have been made in 2021/22. The Joint Equipment Store is also beginning to see standard deliveries returning to pre-Covid levels. This is due to more citizens engaging with community services and patients returning to hospitals for planned appointments.

Occupational Therapy

With the easing of lockdown the Occupational Therapy team has seen a significant increase in the number of referrals they receive. So far this year, the team has received 903 new referrals. This is an average 29% increase compared to the monthly referrals in 2020/21. Again, this reflects the increase in citizens' confidence to re-engage with community services now that lockdown restrictions are easing. The Occupational Therapy team has also started to do more Covid-safe home visits but continue to provide virtual assessments at the citizen's request or where this is more appropriate.

Community Resource Team

In April and May 2021, the Community Resource Team (CRT) received 287 new referrals for home care support, either supporting discharge from hospital or to allow citizens to remain living in the community. 49% of clients supported by CRT to live independently no longer require ongoing care after receiving the service. A full modernisation programme is underway to support this important service and to ensure that it can best meet the well-being needs of the citizen. To support this, a new scheduling system is currently being sourced, which will include automated reporting on the reablement service delivery and provide a more friendly user interface for schedulers and carers.

Digital Inclusion

Independent Living Services (ILS) adapted their community engagement service during the Covid-19 pandemic to provide a digital inclusion service for those who were socially isolated. The service received a letter from an individual who has been supported throughout the last year and was identified as being at risk of loneliness as a result of the pandemic. Mrs E and her husband have been supported to attend multiple online groups, including sporting memories, quizzes and 'Spot the Ball'. Mrs E was also supported by our community connector to facilitate her own online Tai Chi group, which she is now providing face-to-face. Mrs E said, "The team have been there for people like me who have been lonely and ILS have given us the opportunity to meet people who have now become our online family, we all share our hopes and looking forward to the future, when we can all meet in person... I am sure I would have

been in a different state of mind without this unbelievable service long may it continue. There are no words that I can say but a big thank you to all the members of the team.”

Denim for Dementia

Dementia Action Week took place last month, which presented an opportunity to raise awareness of the challenges that people living with dementia experience. The Lord Mayor, who is supporting Alzheimer’s Society during his tenure, encouraged everyone to support the Denim for Dementia Campaign. For council staff working from home, they were able to still get involved by using a specially created denim backdrop for the digital meetings that took place during the week.

Pen Pals

A pen pal scheme was trialled during Dementia Action Week to connect older people living in residential care homes with children from local schools. The children from Millbank Primary School wrote letters to the residents of Ely Court care home telling them about their lives both in and outside of school. The residents were delighted with the letters. One of the residents said it had been the highlight of her birthday! The residents have been preparing letters to send back to the children and it is hoped these relationships will continue.

Online Dementia Friends Talk

Members of online social groups, supported by ILS to stay connected with friends and their community throughout the pandemic, learned about dementia during Dementia Action Week, and the services available in the city to help people with dementia to live well. ILS organised a special online Dementia Friends talk for people across the city who have received digital support from the service and attended some of the many virtual social and wellbeing sessions which have been organised over the past year to help boost wellbeing and combat social isolation. The session was used to raise awareness of dementia and how people can be supported and information was also provided on the Reading Well for Dementia Books on Prescription scheme that is available in all Hubs and Libraries in the city. The guests all enjoyed the session and commented how it enabled them to better understand the condition. Everyone who attended the session will now be supported by ILS to become a Dementia Friend and continue to raise awareness with friends and family.

Get There Together

Cardiff’s Hubs and Libraries have been collaborating with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board to get involved in the ‘Get There Together’ project. The project aims to produce videos to reduce concerns and reassure anyone who is anxious about revisiting public buildings particularly in relation to the stresses of Covid-19. Even a visit to a library to borrow books can create a lot of anxiety and stress due to the changes that have been made to familiar processes – including the wearing of PPE, layouts and processes to achieve the end goal of taking out a library book. A digital story is therefore in the process of being developed to reassure any apprehensive customers that they should feel safe to step back into the community and visit their local Hub or library. The video will be made available via Dewis Cymru, but links will also be shared on the Hubs and Libraries website pages and the Dementia Friendly Cardiff digital platform.

Age Friendly City Update

Work is ongoing on the development of a draft action plan – Cardiff Working towards an Age Friendly City – as preparation for the application to the World Health Organisation to join a global network for age-friendly cities and communities, which is being supported by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales. Membership presents an opportunity to inspire change, contribute to the connecting of cities to exchange information and knowledge and learn about innovative approaches to the development of cities as age-friendly environments. All Cardiff Public Services Board partners are working together to develop the action plan which will pull together age-friendly initiatives and Cardiff's commitments to older people.

Hoarders Steering Group

Following a number of highly complex cases of hoarding causing issues across council departments a Hoarders Steering Group has been developed by the Adults Safeguarding Team. This is a cross-directorate response to hoarding, where best practice and effective approaches are discussed and developed to promote a more cohesive and multi-disciplinary approach to supporting people who hoard. Whilst this group is still in its infancy, there has been a very positive response by all involved so far and great enthusiasm to continue to develop the relationships, best practise solutions and a joint working approach.

Social Care Training

The Social Care Training team has been thanked by the Practise Learning Co-ordinator for their contribution to the BSc Hons degree course at Cardiff Metropolitan University, not least for the very robust learning experience provided to third-year social work students, which has supported them in developing their skills and knowledge of practise. All students have reported that they have been offered a comprehensive learning experience within their teams and Practise Learning Opportunities learning environments. The feedback received from the University has also confirmed that the quality of the feedback in portfolios has been very high, which has enabled students to reach the required practise development. This continues to evidence the support that Cardiff Council provides to social work students through the University and the quality of the support that is on offer, despite the difficult and unusual circumstances of the last year.

Manual Handling Training

Despite the advice back in March 2020 being to 'work from home', and a move to delivering social care training virtually, there was an increased demand for face-to-face manual handling training as direct services teams and external care agencies took on a number of new staff who were drawn to become care workers as a result of the pandemic and the impact it had on the care sector. Throughout the pandemic, over 400 care workers have attended manual handling training provided by the Social Care Training Unit. Lesson plans were amended to ensure carers were provided with core manual handling skills in order to reduce the risk of injury to both the care givers and those receiving care without health and safety being compromised nor the quality of care being offered to the individual. A rota was arranged for staff within the training unit to attend on days when there was manual handling training. Delegates needed to be collected and temperatures checked, hard equipment (hoists etc.) and refreshment areas needed sanitising, soft equipment (e.g. sheets and slings) needed laundering.

Many internal and external social care workers attending the training were concerned as the national statistics for Covid-19 began to rise and they wanted to share their experiences of caring for somebody with Covid-19, or hearing about colleagues or loved ones who had Covid-19 some of whom had tragically passed away. The emotional support that care workers were able to provide to one another in the context of this training was just as important as the course material.

This was certainly a team approach which ensured that throughout the pandemic, care workers received appropriate training to ensure that they continued to be able to safely deliver personal care to individuals with dignity and respect.

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels service caters for people of all ages; however, the service isn't just about delivering food, it also provides social interaction and a caring welfare check. In 2020/21 there was a 24.10% increase in the total number of customers receiving Meals on Wheels compared to 2019/20. 57% of customers now receive meals seven days a week and a total of 72,045 meals were delivered for the whole year. 509 new referrals for the service were also received. Meals on Wheels are continually looking at improvements and we are looking to integrate the service with ILS later in the year in order to offer better solutions as part of a one-stop approach.

Telecare

Telecare gives customers the support, security and reassurance they need to enable them to live independently in their own homes. The Telecare team has numerous sensors to enable someone to live independently at home and help with a variety of conditions, including dementia, Parkinson's and epilepsy.

In 2020/21, 230,763 Telecare calls were received. 99.5% of calls were answered within 3 minutes and 98% of Mobile Warden call outs were responded to within 45 minutes. There were 3,614 falls reported, which equates to 31% of all service users. There was also a £703,154 cost avoidance for the Welsh Ambulance Service in 2020/21. One service user thanked the team for 'saving his life' following a fall that resulted in him requesting assistance to a severe wound.

Telecare are continuing to build strong relationships with health and social care professionals and will also be merging with ILS. They are liaising with more technology providers in order to be able to offer more multi-function equipment.

Councillor Susan Elsmore
Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health & Well-being
17 June 2021