

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & WELL-BEING STATEMENT

Increased Pressures on Services

The pandemic is continuing to pose unprecedented challenges to council services, in particular to Adult Social Care. The number of cases requiring social work assessment has risen significantly, as has the demand for home care. Over the summer, referrals for domiciliary care were 35.5% higher than in the same period in 2019/20.

There are significant issues in the domiciliary care sector with pressures on capacity and staffing. Currently, more than 90 residents are waiting for a package of care and supply is very slow. This is largely due to the challenges that providers are facing in recruiting and retaining staff. The Community Resource Team (CRT) homecare services are also facing the same challenges. Added to this, many staff are now suffering with Covid-19, further depleting available services. The shortage of carers is impacting on both the time taken to put care in place, and on timely hospital discharge.

The previous quarter in 2021/22 also saw a 24% increase in referrals to the Adult Safeguarding Team compared to previous years. Despite this increase, improved processes and procedures have allowed the team to continue to deal with 99% of enquiries within required timeframes.

Cardiff Cares Academy

To address the shortage in the social care workforce, the Into Work Service has teamed up with Adult Services to create a new Cardiff Cares Academy. This Academy will identify and train new carers, ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills needed to work in the sector, and who undergone the necessary vetting.

A new training package has been developed for this purpose and a volunteer scheme is being put in place, which will help new carers gain some vital experience. The aim is to create 'care-ready' applicants for available social care positions. A dedicated mentor and employer liaison officer will be employed shortly to take this work forward.

Occupational Therapists are helping to assess those who need assistance as part of a 'Trusted Assessor' pilot project, with the aim of using aids and adaptations to reduce the need for care. Whilst the project is in its early stages, thus far it is proving successful with alternatives to home care being identified in all cases assessed to date.

Letters have been sent to individual service users to let them know about the problems the care sector is currently experiencing and seeking their understanding during this

difficult period, explaining that a change of carer or alternative visit time may be necessary.

Covid-19 in Care Homes

There are an increasing number of care homes with Covid-19 outbreaks at present. The pattern of positive cases is also changing, moving away from staff-only outbreaks to more residents testing positive. This is thought to be due to a number of factors: including, carers socialising together outside work, and the increase of visitors to residents' own rooms. A significant number of care homes with outbreaks cater for those living with dementia who also require nursing care. This is posing severe limitations on the ability of these homes to take new clients, thus preventing timely discharge from hospital.

To address this, officers are holding fortnightly multi-agency meetings to review every care home in outbreak and share intelligence. Officers also hold regular telephone discussions with affected providers to talk through their Infection Protection and Control measures, with an offer of a multi-agency supportive management meeting. A multi-agency supportive management meeting also takes place if Shared Regulatory Services and/or Public Health Wales have identified any concerns regarding a lack of appropriate Infection Protection and Control measures. Consideration is given to applying the escalating concerns procedures, if it is felt that the outbreak is part of wider concerns regarding quality of care and support, and/or management and leadership in the care home.

The Covid-19 vaccination booster programme is being rolled out currently in care homes and should be completed over the next few weeks, with care home residents being vaccinated first before the wider roll-out of booster vaccinations.

New Cardiff and Vale College & Learning Disabilities Day Service Pilot

Learning Disabilities Day Service officers together with colleagues from the Vale of Glamorgan have been working with Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC) to develop a new part-time college course for school leavers with a learning disability and complex support needs. Until now, school leavers with such needs wishing to continue in further education accessed this provision outside Cardiff, often at a residential college. Whilst this works for some, a number of young people and their families wanted to stay local. The Day Service Team has therefore worked with CAVC to develop a new part-time pre-entry level 'Towards Independence' course, which offers an individualised learning pathway for students and is provided at CAVC's Dumballs Road site alongside other learners. The part-time nature of the course also allows students to learn at their own pace.

This year, four young people will be supported to attend CAVC by the Complex Needs Day Service. One young person has profound and multiple learning disabilities and uses eye gaze technology to communicate. Both he and his family were keen that he continued in education; however, until now, the only college with the facilities to support him was based in England requiring him to live away from home during term time. Both he and his family were not ready for such a move and so are really pleased that a new local offer has been developed that can meet his specific needs.

First Point of Contact

The hospital-based 'Pink Army', which aims to support patients in their journey from hospital to home, has received additional funding to extend their work and double the number of patients they support. So far this year, the hospital team has supported 1,188 patients with discharge, while the community team is helping 80% of people contacting the service to stay independent at home without onward referral to social care services.

Community Engagement

At the end of July 2021, Independent Living Services held its third Digital Festival over a period of three days. Council officers and partners involved in supporting older and vulnerable Cardiff residents to remain healthy and connected came together to offer activities including, low impact exercise, singing, creative writing, as well as information sessions on online security and falls prevention. The event also included a goody bag and free meals provided by Youth Foods. The feedback from those who attended the event was really positive.

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Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health & Well-being
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