

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item No.

DATE: 11 April 2019

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Adult Social Care Brokerage Team Investment

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr R Martin – Adult Social Care

Report Purpose

This report has been developed in response to a Scrutiny Committee request, to understand the impact of the financial investments made into developing a dedicated Adult Social Care Brokerage Team.

Context

Historically, Adult Social Care delivered its purchasing of care in essentially two ways. These were:

1. Practitioners would purchase care directly from providers of care across the market, on a need to basis (following a needs assessment and support plan completion).
2. Adult Social Care Business Support Team would order domiciliary care across the older people commissioned framework and raise purchase orders via a legacy subsidiary system.

This varied practice of purchasing care across the internal and external market has meant in the absence of robust structure and process, it has been impossible to have oversight of the care being purchased at any one time from a service user; budgetary control and provider payments; market management or activity perspective, as no uniformed system was in place to record the micro commissioning of care. Further unintended consequences of this approach meant it was challenging to adhere to the requirements of the Care Act in discharging our duties in relation to service users contributing to their care costs; the deployment of direct payments as a way of enabling service users to manage their care and understanding the market from a market oversight perspective.

Investment

During 2017 a business case was developed this comprised of a number of initiatives, including the development of an all commissioned Adult Social Brokerage Team, thus enabling the following objectives to be achieved:

- Enabling Adult Social Care to be more responsive to our users.
- Introduction of greater controls in relation to managing our budgets.
- Provision of full oversight in the micro commissioning of care in a structured and planned way.
- Enabling the business to harness intelligence about our care markets.

- Reduce the time spent by our practitioners on what are essentially back office functions.
- Improve systems and processes including the reduction of the number of subsidiary systems in place which were not serving Adult Social Care and its users well.
- Development of a skilled staff group in the brokering of care, this in turn would support improvement of market relationships and reduce transactional levels for the Council and the provider market.

Progress

Positive progress has been made in achieving the above objectives and the current position is:

- A dedicated Adult Social Care Brokerage Team is now in place.
- The Brokerage Team utilise a single system to deliver the brokering of care (this is our Electronic Social Care Record). The Directorate can now align the needs and financial assessment of users, with the approval and purchasing of care, the delivery of care, the financial contributions towards the cost of care at a service user level and the payment of providers.
- All legacy backlogs in the purchasing of care have been addressed.
- Cessation of the production of manual invoices across the residential and nursing market, instead a schedule payment model has been introduced, which means these care providers no longer need to produce invoices and receive timely payment for the care delivered in line with financial controls.
- The Brokerage Team now broker a more extensive range of care provision and have formed positive relationships with our internal and external stakeholders.

Next Steps


The next stages of Brokerage Team development are on the completion of Residential and Nursing and Complex Supported Living Tenders, the Team will lead the brokering of this care. This will mean the Team are then brokering all commissioned care across Adult Social Care.

Recommendations

- Scrutiny endorse the progress made to date and recognise the benefits of a concentrated investment in developing a dedicated Brokerage Team.
- Consider the benefits in further extending this approach in the micro commissioning of care.

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