

**26 March 2009**

**Merger of Younger Adults and Learning Disability Services – Update briefing  
report**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Cllr Barbara McCracken – Social Care & Inclusion

**Summary of report:**

In February 2008 the Younger Adults & Disabled Services (YADS) were merged with the Integrated Learning Disability Service (LD) to form a new Division – Disability Services

The briefing report informs the Panel of progress to date in the merger as detailed in Attachment 1

**Background papers:**

None

**Reason for scrutiny:**

The merger of two high profile services presented a challenge to service delivery, use of resources and performance. The Panel required regular update reports on progress to discharge their governance role

**Resource and legal considerations:**

The merged service is responsible for a total of £42 million of Council and tPCT resources and employs over 500 staff. Within the merged service are two Section 75 Health Act Flexibility Partnership Agreements with the tPCT

**Citizen impact:**

The merged service delivers support to over 1500 Walsall citizens, supported by family and other carers. Many service users are vulnerable, have profound and high dependency support needs

**Environmental impact:**

None

**Performance management:**

The merged service contributes to an important range of Performance Indicators which are part of the Council and tPCT assessed performance

**Equality Implications:**

There are underlying significant issues in meeting the needs of disabled people. The merger outcomes will be to strategically address equality of access and support for Walsall citizens

**Consultation:**

Consultation is ongoing and developing as the merger progresses. There is frequent contact and progress updates through Partnership Boards to users, carers and voluntary group stakeholders

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## Report

### Progress from last report

Implementation of the new structure has supported significant progress on a range of strategic objectives and underpinning significant management issues including:

- **Occupational Therapy (OT)**

The OT service has continued to make significant performance improvements since April with recent improvements meeting required targets for Access to Service Indicators. Most recently the service has achieved 95% of first contact referrals within timescales and a 100% of Assessments within timescale. The allocation of 2 OT's to Strategic Housing Services has improved liaison arrangements for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)

- **Integrated Equipment Store and Service**

This joint service which is managed by health colleagues and the Pooled Budget managed by Disability Services is in a recovery period following a major overspending last Financial Year and management changes as a result. Currently the budget is under control and showing a small overspend of £35,617 at Month!! (February) and a range of management initiatives are beginning to address perceived service shortcomings.

- **Campus Closure Programme**

This major national initiative seeks to ensure closure of services designated as NHS Campuses, in Walsall this relates to 3 NHS units supporting 27 people with a severe/profound learning disability. A Project Plan is in place and monitoring of the Project Plan indicates that the target of closure by March 2010 is achievable with the first unit, Daisy Bank, closing on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

This initiative is regarded as a joint NHS and Council responsibility and is subject to scrutiny by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI the Council external regulators) and the Healthcare Commission (external regulators of Walsall tPCT)

- **Rehabilitation & Reablement**

There is a need to improve rehabilitation and reablement services in Walsall for disabled people. A report commissioned by Health and Social Care has been presented to Senior Officers for further discussions.

### New Work Streams for the Financial Year 2009/2010

- **Assertive Care Package Review**

This Project is to review the efficiency and value for money of external Care Packages commissioned by Disability Services

- **Short Breaks Review**

A Project to review and ensure that breaks are within the 48 night limit determined by Council Policy

- **Learning Disability National Delivery Plan**  
As a result of the White Paper 'Valuing People NOW' (January 2009) there is to be a National Delivery Plan for the implementation of the original Valuing People White Paper plus a range of new objectives. Many of the objectives are existing work streams
- **Rehabilitation Care Pathway**  
This remains an issue under discussion but likely to be a project to address Rehabilitation and Reablement issues in the town in partnership with health colleagues
- **Integrated Equipment Store (ICES)**  
The overspending trend had been addressed and there have been improvements in service, however there are issues to be addressed as part of a detailed Service Improvement Action Plan hosted by Walsall NHS Community Services

**Summary:**

The merged service has stabilised and developed as envisaged, some significant performance improvements have been achieved and there are a range of high priority work streams for the 2009/2010 Financial Year.