

**Healthwatch Leicestershire Quarterly Meeting with
Director of A&SC LCC**

Patient Perspective Question Submission

5 October 2015

Overview

The following questions have been submitted by Healthwatch Leicestershire members and have been collected under thematic headings to enable a broader perspective to be drawn beyond individual concerns.

Theme: Funding

Question 1	What financial support is provided to sustain social care activities that promote improved quality of life for local people with long-term chronic arthritis?
Background	CLASH 2012, a user-led charity has been providing health and well-being services are now facing the possibility of closure in the coming 12 months. Closure will mean all member services will finish and the work with Intern placements, as a De Montfort University Graduate Champions Host Organisation will cease.
Response	<p>The Adult Social Care strategy, 'Promoting Independence, Supporting Communities', places a renewed emphasis on developing sustainable communities whereby people who may or may not be eligible for adult social care funded support can receive support from within their local community without recourse to statutory social care funding. In order to ensure that the County Council can continue to meet the needs of everyone who is eligible for social care services in the future the Council is looking to work in partnership with other organisations to develop community based support outside of the statutory funded sector.</p> <p>The Adults and Communities Department treat all people with eligible social care needs equally regardless of any condition they may have. After an individual assessment of their social care needs a support plan is developed with the service user, the worker and where appropriate a carer. The Support Plan will detail the support that is required to achieve agreed outcomes and how this support will be delivered. If the service user chooses a Direct Payment they can go directly to any provider that can meet the need in the support plan and arrange the support.</p>

Theme: Support for the elderly

Question 2	<p>a) How is the current quality of services for the elderly expected to improve with financial and resource service reductions?</p> <p>b) How is LCC preparing the patient to become more aware of local community services and options for care as the health and social care system gears up for greater community care and care at home, not long stays in hospitals?</p>
Background	<p>Looking toward the increasing health and social care needs of the elderly and the fact that many services are planning to move back to the community. There needs to be an awareness of the kind of services there are available to the elderly; and to know what to expect, what not to expect, what people may have to fund themselves or even go without.</p>
Response	<p>Nationally, social care budgets have been reduced by 26% in real terms over the last four years. Half of this has been through spending reductions and half through managing demand differently. To continue to do this means new ways of working.</p> <p>Adult social care in Leicestershire needs to change and we are currently consulting on our Draft 4 year strategy.</p> <p>Our focus will be to promote, maintain and enhance people's independence so that they are healthier, stronger, more resilient and less reliant on formal social care services. To do this we need to ensure that everyone has access to information and advice which supports their wellbeing. Information will be available to enable people to assess their own needs, their eligibility for services and to understand the financial consequences of the decisions they are making. This will allow people to think ahead and plan for their future.</p> <p>We will ensure that there is a wide range of information on services which may support people outside of the statutory social care services. This will enable people and families to help themselves through a range of preventative local services which can help people to stay healthy and well. We will work with local communities and other providers of health and care services to develop local, community-based support that helps people stay independent and safe.</p> <p>Of course for some people, social care services are required for longer to enable them to live fulfilling lives. Where people need ongoing support we will share this responsibility with the individual, their families and their communities. We will try to meet people's needs in a personalised way which delivers the outcomes that people require.</p> <p>However, in delivering and commissioning services we want to achieve the best value and most cost-effective means of delivering high quality care. This is important, not just because local authorities are receiving less funding from government to provide care, but also because the vast majority of people using support services contribute</p>

	<p>to the cost, and many thousands of people in Leicestershire fund their own care entirely. Everyone should expect that the services they are buying or receiving represent the best possible value.</p> <p>http://www.leics.gov.uk/asc_strategy</p> <p>The Council is working with partners in the NHS to deliver better outcomes through the development of new services, jointly funded through the Better care Fund such as Crisis response services, Older peoples assessment service at Loughborough Hospital and ensuring people can return home from hospital as quickly as possible. In addition there is work being undertaken to develop new ways of providing planned care for people, responding to the needs of people with long term conditions and developing new services for older people on discharge from hospital through the Better care Together Programme which will be consulted upon from the end of November. We are working closely with District and Borough Councils to ensure that people have the equipment, aids and adaptations they need to ensure people can live independently and safely in their own homes. Our commitment is to ensure that people can be as independent as possible with care delivered as close to home as possible.</p>
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Question 3	Does LCC have a programme or is ASC partners in a programme to help elderly persons avoid having falls?
Response	<p>LCC and partners have a range of actions in place to support people to avoid falls. Data on partner actions in the form of a dashboard is produced monthly. Health and social care officers are in the process of reviewing our work on falls which will focus not only on support following a fall but also how to avoid falls.</p> <p>For example the Quality Improvement Team are currently running a pilot in three care homes across Leicestershire to assess the effectiveness of using assistive technology for people identified as being at risk of falling.</p> <p>The project aims to reduce the number of avoidable hospital admissions from care homes, reduce inappropriate 999 ambulance calls from care homes, empower care home staff to become competent in the management of falls (through comprehensive training) and reduce social care funding by eliminating the need for re-assessment following a fall.</p> <p>This prevention project is due to be evaluated soon and if the evidence suggests it has made a significant positive impact the pilot will be extended.</p>

Question 4	Have LCC produced a paper publication that shows where the elderly
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	can get help and to look after themselves independently at home?
Response	<p>Independent Age has produced 5 different Wise Guides for older people. One is titled “Extra Help At Home” and includes top tips and contacts for national services such as meals on wheels, aids and adaptations. LCC will signpost people to these guides accordingly to avoid duplicating advice and information. These can be requested from Independent Age free of charge Advice line 0800 319 6789 or downloaded from http://www.independentage.org/advice/factsheets/wise-guides/</p> <p>We are working with customer reference groups to identify gaps in printed materials.</p> <p>The departments approach to information is to include preventative messages in all of its publications, including signposting, promoting independence and self-help approaches.</p>

Question 5	How do LCC promote information relating to support for dementia sufferers and their carers?
Response	<p>Our main method for promoting such information is through a commissioned service delivered by the Alzheimer’s Society to support people with dementia and their carers throughout their dementia journey. This service works closely with local GP practices to identify people and their carers early on, to ensure they have access to appropriate and timely information and advice.</p> <p>Part of our front line staff’s role is to support people in identifying needs and initially looking at such support that might be available within the community.</p> <p>LCC’s website also has dedicated webpages for Dementia and mental health including ‘help with caring for someone with dementia’. Here we signpost to specialist services such as the Alzheimer’s Society. Contact details for the Alzheimer’s Society can also be found in our printed ‘Supporting carers in Leicestershire’ booklet.</p>

Theme: Home Care

Question 6	How does LCC ensure that Leicestershire residents have Homecare companies that are adhering to their contracts? (Spending the allotted amount of time with each of their clients as well as performing all of the tasks noted on their clients care plans)
Background	Experience of an ex-carer for parents and Uncle who visited with relatives post the daily visits of the homecare staff:

	<p>On several of these visits it was noted that there were inaccuracies and untruths recorded in the care plans. Advice given by social services staff was that audits of these activities were not undertaken. Persons in receipt of this care usually refrain from complaining for fear of reprisals so Homecare companies may be pocketing money under false pretences.</p>
Response	<p>The background of this question relates to an individual issue which is always difficult to respond to through this process.</p> <p>If someone is dissatisfied with their own, or their relatives care and support, it is recommended that in the first instance they speak to the senior member of staff. If they continue to be dissatisfied, they are advised to contact a manager within the organisation. Information about what to do, and who to contact, should be available from the provider. If the concern continues they can contact Adult Social Care.</p> <p>For further information about making a complaint please see the following link:</p> <p>www.leics.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/protecting-vulnerable-adults/complain-about-poor-standards-of-care</p> <p>Generically, providers of homecare services commissioned by the Council to provide support to people in their own homes under contracted arrangement are required to submit data electronically on the length of care calls. The provider is only paid for the contact time they spend at a person's own home.</p> <p>The Council has a team of compliance officers who will undertake monitoring visits to providers; this will include ensuring that care plans and other documentation are accurate and up to date. The process also includes contacting a number of people who receive the service and seeking feedback on the quality of the service and that services are delivered in line with the needs.</p> <p>In addition, service users have annual reviews where again officers from the Department will ascertain that services are being delivered in line with meeting people's needs and that records produced by the provider support this to be the case.</p> <p>Where there are concerns raised about such issues they will either be investigated by the compliance team or through the multiagency safeguarding policy and procedures should a person be at risk or have experienced harm.</p>

Question 7	How are the LCC dealing with the transition of the Independent Living Fund and disabled peoples funding?
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Response	<p>A programme of individual reviews has been undertaken to re-assess peoples level of need and ensure that support plans are in line with the County Council's policies on eligibility, personal contributions and cost effective care. New packages of support have been agreed with the service users affected. The Independent Living Fund was transferred to the County Council as a diminishing sum and the Council is awaiting confirmation t6hat the ILF transfer amount will be continued next year and in future years</p>

Theme: Learning disabilities / Day Care services

Question 8	<p>What are LCC doing to ensure that Day care services currently available for adults with profound and complex learning difficulties meet the needs of service users?</p>
Background	<p>Post 19yrs (after leaving school) there is very limited access, if any, to sensory environments or soft play environments and no access to warm water swimming, a major therapeutic benefit for many reasons.</p> <p>The Government has set aside money in "The Better Health Fund" for the benefit of the community, if Health Care and Social Care work together.</p>
Response	<p>In terms of services the Council provides itself, we ensure that we have suitable and adapted facilities to meet profound and complex needs, including specialist sensory environments, for example in Loughborough, and Melton. In order to focus on the individual, we have person centred plans and communication passports in place, and undertake regular reviews with carers and other stakeholders as appropriate. Where services are provided externally, as above the compliance team have procedures in place to ensure needs are met.</p> <p>The Council does not as a matter of course provide access to warm water swimming. Where this is considered to have a therapeutic benefit by medical practitioners we would expect this to be funded through the health services.</p>

Theme: Children/ Learning disabilities

Question 9	<p>What is the criterion for people with Asperger's and Autism with severe needs to be deemed fit for work?</p>
Background	<p>Why is there a special team of Social workers bought in to review people with Asperger's and Autism who have subsequently found people with severe needs fit for work because they have not been able open the door to carers for various reasons (including being frightened</p>

	of letting them in) ruling that they must be fit for work as they didn't need their carer! Without any investigation or inquiry into the causes except for asking the carers, and removing 9 hours of care.
Response	<p>LCC is not responsible for assessing whether anyone is fit for work or not. All reviews are carried out in line with the requirements of the Care Act 2014, including the eligibility criteria for access to social care support.</p> <p>The Autism Act (2010) and the 2015 statutory guidance outlines the requirements of Local Authorities and other partners to support and promote the independence of people with Aspergers and autism, including access to employment. Through the development of the new draft strategy, the department will be working with partners to support services users into volunteering, training and employment.</p>