

UKHCA Lancashire Forum
Notes from the Annual General Meeting
held at Priory Restaurant, Scorton
Tuesday 16 October 2007

Notes Of Last Meeting
These were accepted

Matters Arising

Martin McHugh and Diane Smillie did not receive the notes of the previous meeting - if anybody does not receive notes from a meeting within 4 weeks of the meeting please contact Carol Smith.

Financial Report

Carol Smith presented a statement of the Forum's financial position which showed expenses of £91.19 leaving a balance of £278.36 in the kitty. The subject Membership fees for the new current year and presentation of invoices for same was deferred until the next meeting.

LWDP

The application for a UKHCA member to be appointed to the Board of Governors has been submitted and they are due to meet in the near future. More news at our next meeting.

Web Based Commissioning

As most areas apart from Wyre and Fylde were using the web, a discussion about the pros and cons took place. It was agreed that this was a good step forward and a fairer way of commissioning, affording immediate access to a SAF, and the technology was user friendly. The most important point being that Social Services could produce reports about each care provider's history of commissioning or rejecting care packages. These reports can be used by local Contracts officers when monitoring the care provider. No report was available for care providers to see packages of care not offered to themselves but offered to others in their zone, or the reasons why a care provider was not given a package of care that they had accepted.

Feedback from LCC Working Group

Martin and Ian explained how in previous meetings they have been handicapped in being able to report on issues they were dealing with because LCC had stated that the minutes of Working Group meetings were confidential. This is soon to change as Mike Webster has agreed to publish minutes of meetings on the LCC website. We were also informed that the issues being dealt with were agreed with Social Services Contracts and a problem occurred as locality commissioners were slow to pick up what Contracts had agreed. This could be worse in some areas than others. Laing & Buisson are continuing with their Fair Price For Care exercise. The results are expected soon.

The reablement scheme for adult services is progressing well and the DSO have commissioned these services and have given assurance that they have the volume of carers with the necessary skills to cope. The handover from Reablement to mainstream care has been between 4 to six weeks. The first four weeks being a free service to the clients, as is Crisis and Rehabilitation.

The Working Group have asked a member of the Reablement scheme to attend local meetings. The Reablement team, in this four weeks, should be able to assess the service user's needs and handover an active care plan and information regarding person centred outcome, plus MARS chart if relevant.

There should also be a 'signing over' document after a period of up to a week from the DSO working alongside the commissioned social care provider.

Ian Newby apologised for not being able to discuss LCC's plans to introduce this scheme as the Working Group were not privy to this due to it not being up for discussion according to LCC's legal department.

Work was still being done on medicine management and Social Services were suggesting that service users of level 3 should be funded by continuing care (PCT) and that following a CSCI report 'Time To Care' each care provider had the right to be given enough time by the commissioner to provide adequate care. The increase in holiday entitlement was discussed. This increase was predicted to represent 2% of total wage costs. The Department of Health have had their budget increased whereas Social Services have not.

The introduction of Person Centred Approach, a scheme currently being piloted by Care UK in Fylde & Wyre, was still being evaluated and is predicted to be slow to spread throughout the commissioning process, mainly due to the criteria for applicants for social care changing to high dependency and there is no money for personal interaction. However, if it did evolve further it would mean more flexible commissioning and a pose a problem for Contracts to monitor services electronically by methods such as telephone logging.

LCC are becoming more knowledgeable about problems and inconsistency of reports from telephone logging. However, it is a treasury requirement to use electronic monitoring to evaluate that public money is spent wisely.

Travel time (i.e. 50 minutes contact time for an hours service) is under debate as to who should fund it. All companies are zoned to areas which could result in an argument for getting rid of paid travel time.

Electronic payments - although this has seen an average turnaround of 14 days, we are still under contract to a 30 day turnaround. However, work is being done to pay all invoices within 30 days up to the value of the service agreement and if there is an outstanding invoiced amount over and above the agreed amount, this will be settled at a later date once the query has been resolved.

Andrew Wilson, vice chair of UKHCA, instigated VAT exemption for social care many years ago. It is now suggested that the industry should be zero rated.

The next Social Care Partnership (Working Group) meeting will be on 18 November 2007.

Staff turnover in the social care industry has been reported at 11%.

A concern was raised about the calibre of staff attracted by the hourly wage rate. Direct payments were making a mockery of CSCI and LCC preferred provider targets, mostly due to social care workers employed directly by a service user not being subject to CRB disclosures and other criteria.

This situation is unlikely to change until such time as the media reports a 'disaster' caused by these inconsistencies.

Martin discussed that work was being done on increasing the hourly rate where commissioning of a service involves the use of a carer's own vehicle.

Feedback From Skills For Care

Julie confirmed that she was resigning from her post as the Skills For Care UKHCA Lancashire Forum representative. It was asked around the table if anybody wanted to apply. Alaister MacDonald offered his training manager as a suggestion but needed to check with her first. More news at the next meeting.

Julie confirmed that much work had been done on completeing the Skills For Care Knowledge Sets, which could be used for social care workers. Up-to-date news can be confirmed by the weekly news letters that we all receive from Skills For Care. Julie confirmed that some Skills For Care funding is put in the LWDP pot.

NVQ III

Carol Smith raised the concern about innapropriate use of NVQ level III which was easily accesible from training providers, easy to access funding, not a CSCI requirement for social care workers. However, social care workers and some care providers offered level III as a personal professional development, even if the social care worker's job role did not include a supervisory role. This is concerning as it has an impact on staff retention and the qualification was

becoming not work based, but on simulations which contravened the standards of City & Guilds' NVQs. The funding used for It was agreed that Carol would write a letter to City & Guilds (copied to LWDP) on behalf of the Forum stating these concerns.

CSCI

CSCI, who inspect Social Services as well as care providers, should be informed of any disputes regarding cuts in care or lack of adequate time to provide appropriate care. It is also a good idea to copy in any issues relating to problems in organising appropriate care, including waiting for OTs, waiting for equipment, inadequate hospital discharge procedures etc.

Election Of Officers

The following people were elected as:

Working Group Representatives - Ian Newby & Julie Evans Secretary - Carol Smith
Acting Chair - Carol Smith Mike Webster and Sarah Luton have been notified of these changes.

Hepatitis B

It is a requirement for social care workers to have the Hepatitis B vaccination. It was felt around the table that this was the responsibility of individual care workers to organise this. Carol pointed out that at one time this was not a problem as the service was free from the GP. It could now be a problem as GPs are now allowed to charge for the vaccinations, the current charge being £70.00!

Surgery Time

It was agreed that the Forum would meet every other month on the first Tuesday of that month. Please book the following meeting dates in your diaries:

11 December 2007

12 February 2008

8 April 2008

10 June 2008

12 August 2008

14 October 2008 (AGM)

9 December 2008

All meetings to be held at the Sandwell Room, Priory Restaurant, Scorton, Preston, commencing at 13.00.

Meeting Closed - Next meeting Tuesday 11 December 2007.