

Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee

4 October 2018

Present: Councillor N Craven (Chair)
Councillors L Bell, T Brady, K Clark, M Green, J Kirwin, J
O'Shea, A Percy and L Spillard

ASCHW20/10/18 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs A Austin, S Brockbank, K Lee and J Cassidy.

ASCHW21/10/18 Substitute Members

Pursuant to the Council's constitution the appointment of the following substitute Member was reported:

Cllr J O'Shea for Cllr K Lee.

ASCHW22/10/18 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr J Kirwin declared a Registerable Personal Interest in relation to Item 7 as an employee of the Alzheimer's Society.

ASCHW23/10/18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

ASCHW24/10/18 Falls Prevention Strategy

Dr Alexandra Kent, Clinical Director, NHS North Tyneside CCG, attended the meeting to present the report and answer questions from Members.

The Sub-committee noted that that falls and related injuries are a significant problem for older people, and that evidence suggests that the number of falls can be reduced by up to 30% through development of a multi-agency falls pathway focussing on early identification and prevention, and multi-factorial assessment and intervention for people at high risk of falling.

It was noted that the falls strategy sets out how North Tyneside will reduce falls in older people and address known gaps in local services. A range of organisations are involved in the strategy and so far positive feedback has been received, although progress has yet to feed through to the figures. The pilot has been extended for a further 18 months in order to monitor progress.

There was some discussion about advice for older people around practical issues. It was highlighted that the Patients Forum had been involved in the design of a bookmark with advice around falls. In addition the Fire Service are involved in providing advice and checking services to older people to ensure their homes are safe and hazards are minimised.

The Sub-committee noted that the falls strategy takes an integrated approach, looking at falls from all aspects. A range of professionals are involved in the falls clinic, with healthcare assistants, physiotherapists and consultants available to undertake checks such as a patients gait and medications to identify any issues that could lead to further falls.

Members asked about the reason why falls are more prevalent in North Tyneside. It was noted that there are a range of population issues in North Tyneside that contributed to higher rates, including higher rates of smoking, strokes, obesity, complex chronic conditions and lower activity rates, and this contributes to an increased rate of falls. It was noted that the strategy includes a range of actions to encourage physical activity.

There was some discussion about fear of falling and how this can lead to isolation as older people can be frightened to leave their home. It was highlighted that this is a big issues and is being addressed throughout the process. In particular, age concern are providing a 12 week strength and balance course which is being promoted to a wide range of people and also has a social aspect to it.

There was some discussion about the role of the Council and how actions by the Council could help. It was noted that environmental aspects such as uneven pavements, pot holes and lighting contribute to falls and this is an area that the Council can contribute to.

Members highlighted that there was more scope to introduce exercise classes in more care homes. It was noted that this should be happening; care homes have their own assessment process but this was something that public health are looking to promote. It was noted that exercise is built into the contracts by the Council for care home and information on this is collected for quality monitoring. It was also noted that the voluntary sector are very involved in running exercise classes in care homes.

The Chair thanked Dr Kent for the information.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

ASCHW25/10/18 Loan Equipment Service

Michael Cavagin, Manager, Adaptations and Loan Equipment attended the meeting to present the report. It was noted that the Loan Equipment Service had brought a range of samples of equipment to the meeting and these had been on display for members to view prior to the meeting.

It was noted that the Loan Equipment Service provides equipment for North Tyneside residents requiring these due to age, illness or disability and the service can make a significant change to the quality of people's lives.

It was noted that the service includes:

- Community nursing equipment
- Equipment for daily living
- Equipment for sensory impairment
- Provision of equipment for hospital discharge/palliative care
- Short term wheelchairs
- Maintenance and servicing of equipment
- Collection of equipment, decontamination and recycling; and
- Assessment and Demonstration suite

It was highlighted that the service has received very good feedback from customers.

In relation to Appendix 1 – Activity Report, members asked about the value of items returned and why this was a reduced amount. It was noted that attempts are made to collect all items. Some items do become obsolete and need to be replaced. A lot of equipment is recycled. There was some discussion about the benefits of an equipment 'armistice' to encourage equipment to be returned. It was noted that the service does encourage people to return items.

It was noted that 90% of equipment is delivered within 7 days of assessment by the referrer. There was some discussion about the availability of specialist equipment. It was noted that if specialist equipment is required it can usually be supplied, although in some cases it may take longer due to procurement processes.

Members expressed positive views about the service and the availability of equipment to support residents to leave hospital.

There was some discussion about the frameworks in place for the procurement of equipment. It was noted that advisory groups are in place to evaluate equipment choices and these have the involvement of occupational therapists. It was noted that some residents choose to purchase their own equipment and they can be sign-posted to relevant catalogues via gateway and care call.

One member asked about quality monitoring of the occupational therapy service in the light of a problem that had been brought to her attention as a ward councillor, and whether the Council makes sure that residents have the right equipment. It was noted that customers are usually given a trial period to ensure the equipment meets their needs.

There was some discussion about loans for palliative care. It was noted that the service is very responsive to palliative care need and has a range of equipment including hoists for these circumstances.

Members asked whether the increase in sheltered housing has led to a reduction in need for adaptations. It was noted that there has been some impact through North Tyneside Living, but there is still a lot of demand for walk in showers.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and the display of equipment.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

ASCHW26/10/18 Dementia Services Update

The Sub-committee considered the report which provided an update on the current provision of support for people with dementia and their carers.

It was noted that the diagnosis rate in North Tyneside is higher than the national target and there are currently estimated to be around 3000 people in North Tyneside who have dementia and this is expected to increase. There needs to be plans and services in place to meet these needs.

It was noted that there is currently no Dementia Pathway or a comprehensive post-diagnosis support service available in North Tyneside. However, a number of support arrangements have developed across services and these were outlined in the report.

There was some discussion about the Admiral Nurse Service provided in partnership with Dementia UK and Age UKNT which is supported with three year funding from the Ballinger Trust until 2020. It was noted that this was a critical service in supporting people and consideration needs to be given to the continuation of that service once the grant funding ends.

The sub-committee noted that the Mental Wellbeing in Later Life Strategy 2018-2023 has been developed to improve mental health and dementia services and support for older people and carers.

There was some discussion about Dementia Friends Training and whether all front line staff would have this training. It was noted that a lot of cashier service staff had received the training, as well as external agencies. It was suggested that this training could be made part of the Council's induction training.

The Sub-committee considered the information on governance and reporting arrangements around mental health and well-being, with the establishments of three boards for a. children and young people, b. adult mental health, and c. older people, with all three boards reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board. It was noted that consideration will be needed as to how scrutiny can best link in to this work and it was suggested that the sub-committee may want to consider and comment on the Action Plan once this is developed by the Mental Wellbeing in Later Life Board.

Resolved:

- That the Sub-committee be involved in future scrutiny of the Action Plan for Mental Wellbeing in Later Life;

- That the report be noted.

ASCHW27/10/18 Support for Older People

The Sub-committee considered a report which set out an overview of the Council's aim to sustain older people in their own homes and how successful this has been, including information on the impact of the new Extra Care Homes.

The sub-committee noted the reconfiguration of social work teams into localities and the allocation of social workers to improve the service to older people and with the aim of keeping people as independent as possible for as long as possible.

The Sub-committee noted that a range of services had been developed to support independence, including advice and information provided online via My Care and SIGN North Tyneside. There can be some simple solutions that help people to stay in their own home for longer.

There was some discussions about voluntary sector services and how the voluntary sector can enhance the provision available. It was recognised that there is a need to maintain a certain level of funding for third sector organisations in the borough.

There was some discussion about home care providers and the shortage of staff and turn over levels in some areas, particularly the North West of the Borough. It was noted that social work staff have also had a high turnover, partly due to the introduction of the new model of working, and a number of experienced staff have left the service. However, a number of new staff have been recruited, including newly qualified social workers, and these tend to be more enthusiastic about the new model; but it will take some time to embed new staff and develop experience.

A member asked about whether the Council had considered employing care staff directly through a trading company, rather than commissioning services through independent providers. The sub-committee was advised that this had been considered but it had been found that it was not viable for the Council to compete in the current market. There was some discussion about pay of care workers and whether the Council can specify pay levels and travel time payments through the procurement process. It was noted that this was difficult as there are a range of different models so it is difficult to compare between providers. Although higher payments had been agreed much of this will have been absorbed by increases in the national living wage and pension costs. It was noted that consideration was being given to working smarter by grouping clients in order to reduce travel time.

Members asked if more information could be brought back to a future meeting in relation to the consideration given to the employment of care workers rather than commissioning providers.

Resolved:

- That a report be provided a future meeting in relation to the employment of care workers;
- That the report be noted.

ASCHW28/10/18 STP – Update from the Joint Scrutiny Committee

Councillor L Spillard provided an update from the last STP Joint Health Scrutiny Committee which she attended on 24 September 2018.

Councillor Spillard circulated copies of graphs on EU staff levels in the region. It was highlighted that these showed an increase in EU staff in the North East and Cumbria which probably did not reflect the national picture. It was considered that this may be a result of employees coming to the UK before the cut-off date. The information also showed a considerable decline in workers from outside the EU and this may be a result of a reduction of access to visas for post study work. There were indications of high risk in some areas with staff shortages in areas such as cardiovascular surgeons.

The Chair thanked Cllr Spillard for the update.