

Meeting: Adults Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub Committee
Date: 04.10.18
Title: Loan Equipment Service

Author: Alison Tombs and Michael Cavagin
Service: Adult Social Care HECS
Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an overview of North Tyneside Council's the Loan Equipment Service, as requested by the Chair of Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub Committee.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the content of the report and report on the progress and work achieved by the Loan Equipment Service.

3. Details

3.1 The Loan Equipment Service (LES) provides equipment for North Tyneside residents requiring these due to age, illness or disability. The service is accessed by Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Social Workers, District Nurses, Health Visitors, and GPs on behalf of their clients/patients.

3.2 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 & servicing of equipment
- Collection of equipment, decontamination & recycling, and
- Assessment & Demonstration Suite

3.3 The LES is located within two units at the Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate, North Shields. The premises contain warehousing, decontamination and recycling bays, workshop, and offices. There is also a demonstration suite with various adaptations on display. The suite is also used for various training events which include moving and handling training.

3.4 The LES was originally set up using flexibilities enabled by The National Health Services Act as a partnership with the NHS, within pooled budget arrangements. North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care has been the lead partner since its inception in early 90's. The LES is currently resourced through the Better Care Fund (BCF).

3.5 The LES is made up of technical, logistics and administrative staff. The technical team deliver equipment, assemble, fit and demonstrate to customers homes and demonstrate when required. They also service and repair equipment both within the community and in the unit ready for re-issue. Equipment is collected from customers when it is no longer required. Equipment recyclers decontaminate equipment through various processes, refurbish so it can be re used to maximise resources and reduce landfill. Logistics officers manage the warehouse, procuring and receiving deliveries of equipment, organising routes and deliveries to customers.

Administrative staff deal with enquiries from internal and external customers. They also manage a reception where customers, relatives or their friends collect equipment or drop it off when it is no longer required.

3.6 The LES also supports two satellite stores, one at North Tyneside General Hospital and the other at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital. This is for customers who require basic equipment on discharge back to their homes within North Tyneside.

3.7 Equipment is provided for both children and adults following an assessment of need by a North Tyneside Council Occupational Therapist or an NHS Occupational Therapist, physiotherapist or District Nurse. North Tyneside Council also operates a gateway system where some customers are sign posted and supported to buy their own equipment or if appropriate triaged through the Council's select and direct service where customers are assessed over the phone with specific questions without the need for a home visit and assessment. This is for basic equipment and only when it is ascertained that it is safe to do so. A follow on call from the select and direct service is always carried out after it has been provided to ensure that the equipment was suitable and meeting the customers need.

3.8 The LES operates during normal office hours and also delivers equipment on Saturday mornings to support hospital discharges.

3.9 LES offers a secure web based on line ordering facility for assessors. Each assessor has a unique pin number which allows access to different equipment types based on their clinical expertise. Some requests dependent on their value require further authorisation by a senior practitioner. Special one-offs require a submission of a funding report for further consideration by a "Virtual Panel" represented by a Assistant Director level within NTC and clinical lead within Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust.

3.10 Customers whose care packages are funded through Continuing Healthcare (CHC) are also provided with standard stock items however one off specialist items (e.g. bespoke seating) are resourced directly through CHC funding.

3.11 The LES supports both residential and care homes for short term loans up to a period of 12 weeks. This support can enable customers who are palliative care to die in the setting of their choice. This provision can also facilitate discharge from hospital into a care setting whilst the nursing is awaiting delivery of a piece of equipment.

3.12 The LES has 294 different types of standard equipment within the catalogue range. There are also a range of specialist items that have been returned and processed ready for reissue.

- 3.13 New equipment is purchased through several NHS and Local Authority framework agreements. The frameworks are used both at a regional and national level.
- 3.14 The LES “fast tracks” and prioritises equipment to facilitate hospital discharge and to prevent hospital admissions whilst ensuring routine equipment is delivered in a timely manner. During last 12 months 90% of all equipment including specials were delivered within 7 days from the assessment by the referrer. The provision of equipment maximises independence and helps reduce the need for care.
- 3.15 During the 2017-18 financial year, the LES issued equipment to the value of £2,257,154 of which £ 672,774 was spent on new equipment.
- 3.16 Customer feedback is sought on a range of questions which is carried out on a monthly basis. The survey returns contain many positive comments from customers. Satisfaction levels are consistently high at 9.59/10 average for the last 12 months.
- 3.17 The overall activity of the service is outlined in Appendix 1 which includes the value of equipment provided and returned.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1 - activity report

5. Background Information

The Care Act 2014

National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing Care 2012

Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998