

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Monday 8th February 2010

at 4.30 pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool**

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors Atkinson, Coward, Cranney, A Marshall, Preece, Richardson, Simmons, Worthy and Young.

Resident Representatives: Mary Green, Evelyn Leck and Mary Power

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2010 (*to follow*)
- 4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.
- 5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items.
- 6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No items.

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Investigation into 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services'

- 7.1 Discussion with people who have experience of directing their own support:-
- (a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and
 - (b) Discussion – Members of the Forum and people who have experience of directing their own support
- 7.2 Evidence from Manchester City Council:-
- (a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and
 - (b) Verbal evidence from a representative from Manchester City Council (*subject to availability*)
- 7.3 Suggestions for improvement to the implementation of the 'Putting People First' agenda:-
- (a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and
 - (b) Discussion – *Members of the Forum*

Care Quality Commission

- 7.4 Care Quality Commission:-
- (a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and
 - (b) Discussion – *Members of the Forum*

8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 24th February 2010 at 4.30pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

13 JANUARY 2010

The meeting commenced at 4.30 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Chris Simmons (In the Chair)

Councillors: John Coward, Kevin Cranney, Ann Marshall, Gladys Worthy and David Young.

Resident Representative: Evelyn Leck.

Also Present: T Kerr (The Stroke Association),
K McDonald (MIND),
S Walton (Artrium),
Councillor C Akers-Belcher, S Thomson, and Z Sherry (Hartlepool LINK),
M Coxon (Life Chances Partnership Board),
J Stansfield (In Control)
M Slimmings, A Osborne, J Osborne, A Campbell, P Turnedge,
D Hopkins, and C Robinson.

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Director of Child and Adult Services
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director of Commissioning
Jeanette Willis, Principal Finance Manager
Phil Homsby, Strategic Commissioner - Older People
Lyn Duncan, Development Manager
Laura Starrs, Scrutiny Support Officer
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

42. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Atkinson, Preece and Richardson and Resident Representative M Power.

43. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

44. Minutes of the meetings held on 14 October and 11 November 2010

Confirmed.

45. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

No items.

46. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

No items.

47. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

No items.

48. Investigation into Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services – Members of the Forum and people who have experience in directing their own support *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer reported that people who had experience of directing their own support had been invited to the meeting to share with the forum their experiences of self directed support and personal budgets. A couple who used a personal budget outlined their experiences of self directed support and personal budgets. They indicated that they did have some doubts in the first year but through understanding the system the couple were now able to tailor their care and make much more personal choices as to how spend their allocated budget. The couple did feel much more independent and their only criticism was that they had not been able to access a personal budget earlier.

The couple stated that they had been able through using a personal budget to access many different services they would not have previously known about. It had reduced the stress for the couple themselves and also the extended family as their quality of life was much improved. The support from the Young Onset Dementia Team based in Middlesbrough, had been excellent. The Director of Child and Adult Services commented that the Young Onset Dementia team was a Tees-wide service that Hartlepool was part of that is based in Middlesbrough.

In addition to this, a person who received a personal budget commented that his support from the independent living fund, his personal budget and access to work funding was allowing him to work full-time and gave him much more flexibility than he had had previously. Councillor Worthy commented that until people had a need to access these services directly themselves, they had little idea of the excellent services that were available to the people of Hartlepool. A member of the Life Chances Partnership Board indicated that both she and her husband had personal budgets which were working very successfully for them. However, she did feel that the introduction of self directed support had adversely affected the services at the Havelock Centre as many decided it was too expensive to attend and chose other services instead. This point was echoed by other people at the forum. Members commented that there had been great demand for places at the centre in the past and were concerned that the centre may be under-used as people saw it as expensive. The Director confirmed that numbers attending the Havelock Centre had fallen but that in lots of cases, this was people had chosen to use their personal budget in a different way that still met their needs. The Director indicated that the Department would continue to seek the views of users on this issue.

Questions were also asked about the level of choice that users had in relation to their budgets and whether they could change mid year, i.e. choices were not fixed for the full budget year. The Director confirmed that people could pick and choose and change their minds as they wished; there were no restrictions. Members did feel that service users may need to be reminded of that.

The Development Manager relayed to the meeting the views of a member from the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board who used a personal budget. The view was that as with many users new to the system, there seemed to be some initial reticence but the user was now very positive about the system and the flexibility it gave.

A full-time carer commented that there were financial issues for some families wishing to use the personal budgets system. These related to those with greater health needs and the fact that Hartlepool Borough Council took the receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) into account in its financial calculations yet didn't when calculating Council Tax benefits for instance. It was indicated that the receipt of DLA was not means tested and was a benefit that all authorities took into account as set out in government guidance. There was a pilot for the use of personal budgets for health care currently underway and this may in the future address some of the concerns raised.

A representative from the Hospital of God at Greatham commented that the hospital had seen a drop in the numbers attending their day care services and was concerned at the number of unused places. If the service was to become unpredictable in terms of numbers, the organisation may need to review its provision.

The Chair thanked all those who attended for their input into the debate and particularly thanked those people who had attended the meeting to give direct

feedback on the services they used.

Recommended

That the comments be noted.

49. Investigation into Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services – Evidence from the Managing Director of In Control *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Managing Director of In Control, Julie Stansfield, gave an overview of the service to the forum and a report on the introduction of Self-Directed Support in Hartlepool 2006-2009. Ms Stansfield indicated that the system of personal budgets had been introduced well in Hartlepool, with problems being resolved very quickly for people using the service.

A person who received a personal budget commented that she had always found the staff at In Control very helpful. There had been some reticence with the family initially at accepting what they saw as charity and this was sometimes a feeling other users had. But it was not charity, it was an individual's right to local services and once past that, people did find the system excellent.

Members queried how people came into the system. The Director indicated that individuals could come forward themselves or be referred into the system by reference from social workers or general practitioners for example. Some people choose not to have social care input even if they were eligible. Once an individual was eligible for a social care service, then they were eligible for a personal budget.

There was comment that many older people did find the assessment, particularly the financial assessment, very intrusive and many would rather not receive a service than reveal their financial situation.

Recommended

That the Managing Director of In Control, Julie Stansfield, be thanked for her presentation.

50. Investigation into Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services – Evidence from Oldham Council in relation to the Implementation and delivery of the Putting People First Agenda *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

Ken Stapleton from Oldham Council attended the meeting and gave a presentation outlining the issues that Oldham had encountered when introducing personal budgets. Mr Stapleton highlighted that few complaints were coming through from residents with personal budgets who had organised

their own care arrangements. Mr Stapleton highlighted that the personal budget provision allowed individual users to make their own decisions; not care professionals making decisions for them. This did mean that service users were in the position to make their own 'bad' choices but that they should be allowed to do so. There was some concern that users would be making poor choices and should be guided by professionals. The Director of Child and Adult Services indicated that there were strong processes in place to support individuals. Where individuals had the capacity to make their own decisions without direct support, then they should be entitled to do so in the knowledge of the risks concerned.

The Scrutiny Support Officer stated that the representative from Manchester City Council was unable to attend the meeting and the Chair suggested that if possible, they be invited to a future meeting on this investigation.

Recommended

That Ken Stapleton from Oldham Council be thanked for his attendance and presentation.

51. Investigation into Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services – Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Portfolio Holder for Adult and Community Services, Councillor Ged Hall, indicated there were a large range of services that could be accessed by people with personal budgets. The process was about empowering people and changing the roles of professional social care staff. Social workers now needed to empower people to make their own decisions and choices, wherever possible. The Authority is moving away from agreeing block contracts for day care as places were not being taken up by people and this is challenging the purchasing of services. Demographics reveal the growing number of older people and people with disabilities both providing great challenges for care services. This was now coming to the fore in the discussion on the development of a national care service. The people now coming into the care services were those who have only known independent thought and action. They were placing greater demands on services as they had their own views about what they wanted and who would provide it. It did raise the general anomaly on who is declared old; the ages used in different areas of services ranged from 50+ to 65 and above.

Councillor Hall indicated that he was very pleased to hear comments on the implementation of self directed support and personal budgets and felt that the success in Hartlepool was due to excellent officers we have working on these services.

Concern was raised at the delay that could occur in receiving assessment when discharged from hospital. The Portfolio Holder commented that anyone was open to seek a social care assessment if they considered they needed

one. Some Members were concerned that some elderly people in particular may feel too proud to claim these services. The Portfolio Holder indicated that this was a matter he felt strongly about. Most people have paid into this society throughout their working life and these services were not charity, they were what was due to them. Julie Stansfield commented that awareness was not just a local issue but a national one. Some do feel there is a stigma attached to this. Self directed support gives people real choices and could bring them out of isolation.

The Chair commented that he hoped that through this investigation, some of those stigmas could be removed and greater publicity could be given to these services.

Recommended

That the Portfolio Holder be thanked for his attendance and presentation.

52. Six Monthly Monitoring of Agreed Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum's Recommendations *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer provided Members with a six monthly progress report on the delivery of the agreed scrutiny recommendations of this Forum. The Resident Representative queried recommendation ACS/08-9/5f "That, where possible, the Council influence future residential care developments to locate dementia units on the ground floor of any new development in Hartlepool." The report indicated that informal discussions have concluded that frail older people, who may be immobile, are just as vulnerable as those with dementia. Therefore, it is felt it would not be beneficial to insist that dementia units be located on the ground floor of any development. The Resident Representative considered that this was not appropriate and that dementia patients were simply being put out of the way.

Recommended

That the report be noted.

53. Issues Identified from the Forward Plan

No items.

The meeting concluded at 6.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

25 JANUARY 2010

The meeting commenced at 4.30 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Chris Simmons (In the Chair)

Councillors: Kevin Cranney, Ann Marshall, Carl Richardson, Gladys Worthy and David Young.

Resident Representative: Evelyn Leck

Also Present:: Councillor Ged Hall, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Public Health Services
Councillor Victor Tumilty, Portfolio Holder for Culture, leisure and Tourism.

Officers Nicola Bailey, Director of Child and Adult Services
Laura Starrs, Scrutiny Support Officer
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

54. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Preece.

55. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

56. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2010

Approval of the minutes were deferred to a future meeting.

57. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

No items.

58. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

No items.

59. Adult and Community Services Department: Budget and Policy Framework Consultation Proposals 2010/11 *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the Budget and Policy Framework consultation process for 2010/11, the Forum was presented with the Initial Budget Pressures and Potential Sources of Additional Income for the Adult and Community Services Department for 2010/11. The Chair commented that the Forum had discussed the 'pressures' in some detail at the previous meeting and asked Members to focus their comments on the five proposed sources of additional income set out in Appendix B to the report.

Members questioned the comment "Volatile owing to levels of income involved" in relation to Commissioning Budgets. The Director of Child and Adult Services commented that there were two major national policies that affected this area. The more people that utilised social care, there were currently around 4500, the more income the authority received. The authority was assuming, in accordance with national and local statistics that this would continue to be the case but you simply never can tell. Residential and nursing care was volatile due to the amount of capital that users coming into the system may have as this affected the charging. This simply could not be predicted.

In relation to the increased admission fees for sport and leisure, Members queried why this was linked to the free swims initiative. The Director indicated that the fees would be reviewed across all sports and leisure and not just at the Mill House Centre. People taking up the free swims were not creating income. Any price increases would be subject to Portfolio Holder approval.

Members expressed their concern at the potential for an increase in lettings fees for community centres and similar venues. Members were concerned that groups were being forced out of council facilities to other venues and even out of the town due to the recent rises in letting fees on council premises. The Director stated that a survey of all other centres with other neighbouring local authorities was undertaken and Hartlepool still has the lowest charges. If groups were going out of the town, they were paying more. The Director indicated that charges at council facilities were still the lowest in the town as well. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism indicated that it may be helpful if members received details of the comparison charges with other local authorities and organisations to show the situation more clearly. The Chair welcomed that information and requested it be forwarded to all Members of the Forum.

In concluding the debate, the Chair indicated that the Forum's comments would be forwarded to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at its meeting on 29 January 2010 as part of the finalisation of the comments from Overview and Scrutiny to the executive.

Recommended

That Scrutiny Coordinating Committee be informed that the Adults and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Members supported the Adult and Community Services Departmental budget pressures and the proposed income increases for 2010 / 2011. The Forum did, however, emphasise that in relation to the increased income from lettings, they would like the proposed increase to be such that it would not discourage local clubs / groups from using community rooms.

60. Items for Discussion

No items.

61. Issues Identified From The Forward Plan

No items.

The meeting concluded at 4.40 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

8 February 2010



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST – THE DELIVERY OF
PERSONALISED ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES:
DISCUSSION WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE
EXPERIENCE OF DIRECTING THEIR OWN
SUPPORT – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that people who have experience of directing their own support have been invited to attend this meeting to share with the Forum their experiences of self directed support and personal budgets.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 26 August 2009, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Enquiry / Sources of Evidence for this scrutiny investigation were approved by the Forum.
- 2.2 Subsequently, people with experience of directing their own support have been invited to attend this meeting to share their views on direct payments and personal budgets.
- 2.3 Members may choose to seek responses to the following questions:-
- (a) Do you feel that directing your own support has changed how you live your life? If so, could you give some examples?
 - (b) Can you explain how you prepared your plan? And does your plan meet all your needs?

(c) Do you feel that:-

- (i) Meetings with your care manager / social worker happen in a way that is right for you?
- (ii) You can talk about what has worked well, what has not worked well, and any changes you want to make for the future?
- (iii) Your care manager / social worker explains clearly what will happen?
- (iv) You can change your mind about what you want to do?
- (v) You do not have to wait for a meeting to make changes to your support, but you still tell your care manager / social worker about any big changes that you want to make?
- (vi) You can ask for a meeting with your care manager to talk about your plan when you want?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the people in attendance at this meeting to inform their investigation into 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services'.

Contact Officer:- Laura Starrs – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: laura.starrs@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Adult Social Care Services: Scoping Report' Presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 26 August 2009.

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

8 February 2010



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST – THE DELIVERY OF
PERSONALISED ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES
– EVIDENCE FROM MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
– COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that a representative from Manchester City Council has been invited to attend this meeting (*subject to availability*) to give evidence in relation to the ongoing inquiry into 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Adult Social Care Services'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 14 October 2009, Members agreed to invite a representative from Manchester City Council and Oldham Council to attend a future meeting of the Forum as part of the evidence gathering process for their investigation into 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Adult Social Care Services'.
- 2.2 A representative from Oldham Council attended the meeting of the Forum held on 13 January 2010. Therefore, a representative from Manchester City Council has been invited along to this meeting to share with the Forum how their authority is delivering the 'Putting People First' agenda.
- 2.3 Manchester City Council is a much larger authority who has taken a different initial approach to the delivery of the 'Putting People First' agenda because they did not join up with 'In Control'.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the representative from Manchester City Council, seeking clarification on any relevant issues from the representatives where felt appropriate.

CONTACT OFFICER: - Laura Starrs – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: laura.starrs@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Adult Social Care Services: Scoping Report' Presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 26 August 2009; and
- (ii) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services – Options for Gathering Alternative Practice Evidence from Other Local Authorities in Relation to the Implementation of the Putting People First Agenda' Presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 14 October 2009
- (iii) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Personalised Adult Social Care Services – Evidence from Manchester City Council and Oldham Council – Covering Report' Presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 13 January 2010

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

8 February 2010



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST – THE DELIVERY OF
PERSONALISED ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES
– SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ‘PUTTING PEOPLE
FIRST’ AGENDA – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To facilitate a discussion amongst Members of this Forum in relation to suggestions for improvement to the implementation of the ‘Putting People First’ agenda.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 26 August 2009, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Enquiry / Sources of Evidence for this scrutiny investigation were approved by the Forum.
- 2.2 One of the approved terms of reference which the Forum agreed was to identify suggestions for improvements to the implementation of the ‘Putting People First’ agenda. Therefore, after having received the evidence from the various sources Members may like to suggest suggestions for improvements to the implementation of the ‘Putting People First’ agenda.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum discuss their suggestions for improvements to the implementation of the ‘Putting People First’ agenda.

CONTACT OFFICER: - Laura Starrs – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: laura.starrs@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Putting People First – The Delivery of Adult Social Care Services: Scoping Report' Presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 26 August 2009; and

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

8 February 2010



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: CARE QUALITY COMMISSION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the role of the Care Quality Commission in the assessment of Health and Adult Social Care.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In April 2009 the Healthcare Commission, the Mental Health Act Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection were replaced by the Care Quality Commission, who produced the document 'Voices into Action' in November 2009 (attached as **Appendix A**), highlighting how organisations such as Overview and Scrutiny Committees can become involved in the new arrangements.
- 2.2 Members may wish to note that there is no requirement of the Forum to provide commentary this year and that contact will be forthcoming from the local Care Quality Commission team, explaining how the Forum can provide information throughout the year.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members note the content of this report and consider any information they would like to submit to the Care Quality Commission as part of the registration process for social care providers and independent healthcare providers to help the Commission decide whether they meet essential standards to register with them.

Contact Officer:- Laura Starrs – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523087
Email: laura.starrs@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Care Quality Commission (2009) *Voices in Action*, Available at:
[http://www.cqc.org.uk/_db/_documents/Voices_into_action_\(electronic\).pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/_db/_documents/Voices_into_action_(electronic).pdf)
[Accessed 14 December 2009]

Voices into action

Your part in our assessment of health and adult social care in 2009/10



A guide for local involvement networks (LINKs), overview and scrutiny committees, local safeguarding children boards, foundation trusts' boards of governors, learning disability partnership boards, local voluntary organisations and representative groups

November 2009

It is important for us to hear what people who use services have to say about their experiences. We are therefore grateful to those groups who work hard to gather comments from local people. You can now send us information when you want to about the health and adult social care issues that matter to you. This guide will explain how you can do this.

Key messages

You do not need to write a commentary this year about your NHS trust's declaration for the NHS performance ratings in 2009/10.

To help us judge how well NHS providers meet essential standards, please send us information about any NHS provider by the **end of January 2010**.

To help us judge how well social care providers and independent healthcare providers meet essential standards, please send us information about them by the **end of March 2010**.

You can also send us information at any time of the year. We will use your information whenever you send it, as part of our ongoing checks on services.

You can now tell us about any health or adult social care service provider. You can also tell us about primary care trusts and local councils that commission services to make sure the right services are provided in your area.

You can send us information, including your own reports, using a new form on our website from 1 December. You can also share it with our local area managers.

We also encourage you to share any information with local services to help improvement.

We do not have powers to deal with individual complaints.

What is the Care Quality Commission?

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the new independent regulator of all health and adult social care in England. We inspect all health and adult social care services in England. We also protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

We promote the rights and interests of people who use services and we have a wide range of enforcement powers to take action on their behalf if services are unacceptably poor.

People who use health and social care services are at the heart of our work, so we want to make sure that their voices are heard.

You can learn more about CQC on our website, by reading *About the Care Quality Commission* at www.cqc.org.uk/publications.cfm?fde_id=10979 and more about how we plan to involve people by reading *Voices into Action* – our ‘statement of involvement’ www.cqc.org.uk/_db/_documents/A4_Report_2009_01.pdf

Which services and organisations do we check on?

We check on all health and social care services **provided** by the NHS, local authorities, voluntary organisations or private companies. These include acute and community hospitals, ambulance services, foundation trusts, services for people with mental health or learning disabilities, community nursing services, hospices, care homes, supported living services, transport by an NHS provider and substance misuse rehabilitation services. For a full list of services regulated by the Care Quality Commission go to our website: www.cqc.org.uk/aboutcqc/whatwedo/activitiesweregulate.cfm

We also check on primary care trusts and local councils that **commission** health and social care services. Commission means that they arrange the local services that people need in their area.

Who can send us information about health and social care services?

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to tell us about local people’s views of both health and adult social care services, and to do this at any time of the year. Anyone can send us information about their experiences of using these services. This includes representatives of people who use services, their carers and families, representatives of the public, as well as individuals themselves. We will try to use as much information as we can when we assess services.

In our first year, we are building relationships with local groups that represent people who use services. The main groups we are working with at the moment are local involvement networks (LINKs), overview and scrutiny committees and foundation trusts’ boards of governors.

We are also inviting learning disability partnership boards and local safeguarding children's boards to send information to us, building on their involvement in the NHS performance ratings in 2008/09 (known before as the annual health check).

From 2010, we will be inviting a much wider range of representative groups to contribute their views and experiences of services into our assessments. We will also be finding out the best ways to bring more individual voices and experiences into our assessments. We will tell you more about this in 2010.

How can you send information to us?

You can tell us your views and experiences by talking to your local area manager at CQC (contact details from our National Contact Centre – see back page) and sharing reports with them, or sending your information through our website at **www.cqc.org.uk/localvoices** from 1st December 2009. There is a form on the website to help you structure your information, or you can directly send us reports and surveys.

You can share information with your local area manager in whatever way suits you best. They may ask you some questions to make sure they know how many people the information covers, or whether it has been discussed with other organisations.

You do not need to show the information you send us to any health and social care services. However, we hope that you will use it as part of your discussions with local services about making care better.

What can you send us information about?

We are interested in any information that will help us check up on health and adult social care services. You can give us your views and experiences of any of the services and organisations we regulate, or tell us about how they work together in your area.

You can tell us where you think a service is providing good care, as well as examples where care is poor. We are especially interested in the views and experiences of care of those people who have not been listened to, or have not received acceptable standards of care in the past.

Do you have a complaint or concern about health or adult social care services?

The Care Quality Commission does not deal with individual complaints about services. If you have a complaint about a particular service, you should first contact the provider. For more information, go to the complaints page on our website.

If you have urgent concerns about the wellbeing of a child or vulnerable adult, which may or may not be related to the quality or safety in a particular service, you should contact your local authority children's or adult social care department. For more information, go to the safeguarding page on our website.

Telling us about health and adult social care service providers

From April 2010, all organisations that provide health and adult social care services in England will be required to register with us to be able to operate. To do this they will have to meet essential standards of safety and quality. You can give us your views and experiences about any of these standards.

Standards for health and adult social care service providers

Involvement and information

We are looking at how people are involved in their care

- How do people understand about the care they are getting?
- How do people receive the information they need about their care?
- How do people give their informed consent to treatment and care?
- How are people supported to say what they think about their care?

Personalised care, treatment and support

We are looking at how people are given the individual care and welfare they need

- How do people receive the food and nutrition they need?
- How do service providers cooperate with other services to meet people's needs?

Safeguarding and safety

We are looking at how vulnerable people who use services are looked after safely

- How are medicines given at the right time and in the right way?
- How are medical devices used and managed properly?
- How suitable and safe are premises?
- How safe do people feel?
- How available, safe and suitable is equipment for individuals' needs?

Standards for health and adult social care service providers (contd)

Suitability of staffing

We are looking at how people get the right care from the right staff

- How do services choose staff with the skills to match people's needs?
- How do services make sure that there are enough staff to do the work?
- How do services make sure staff are properly trained?

Quality and management

We are looking at how people know they are getting the best and safest services

- How are services being made better?
- How are people supported to say how they feel?
- How are checks done to make sure that staff do their job properly?

Suitability of management

We are looking at how people's care and treatment are being met

- Are staff registered with their professional bodies if they need to be?
- Are staff supported to do their job well?
- How do staff use what they are told to make services better?

Telling us about primary care trusts and local councils

You can tell us what you think about primary care trusts and local councils that commission or arrange the local services in your area. These are some of the areas of performance we are looking at:

- Do they put people first, to ensure they get the care they need?
- Do they make sure that their services are safe and of a good quality?
- Are they spending their budgets sensibly, to get the best services they can for people with the money available to them?
- Do they lead the services in their area well?

Telling us about how well services work together

You can tell us whether services work well together in your area:

- How well people are cared for when they move between services such as hospitals or care homes and community services.
- How well information about people's care or treatment is shared between different services.
- How well people's care is planned across different services.

Giving us information for our national reviews and studies

You can also tell us about services that we are looking at in our national reviews and studies, such as our review of health and social care for families with disabled children and young people. We will let you know if there are opportunities for you to support local improvement work in services as part of these studies.

Top tips for sending us your views and experiences

- ✓ Tell us what matters most to your group and the people in your community. What are the most important points you want to get across?
- ✓ Think about examples of good practice, as well as problems or areas that you think should be improved.
- ✓ Read about the new essential standards for quality and safety that we expect all health and social care services to meet. Try to match these standards (on pages 4 and 5 of this guide) with the information you want to give us.
- ✓ We are interested in recent experiences of care. It will help if you can give us information you have gathered since 1 April 2009.
- ✓ Try to find facts and examples to back up your information. These may include notes from a meeting or visit to a service, the results of a local survey, or a set of personal stories from individuals with dates and supporting documents.
- ✓ Please note that your information must not include any confidential or personal information, such as the names of individual patients or staff, or their contact details.
- ✓ You do not need to send us all the supporting information you have, but we may ask you to show us this to help us use your information.
- ✓ It will help us to know whether the views or experiences you tell us about are common among the people in your group or community.

Our local area managers can offer advice on putting together your information and evidence.

What we will do with the information you send us?

Your information will become part of our profiles of health and adult social care organisations. This is where we keep all the information we have about each organisation. We will use your information:

- To help us spot problems or concerns in local services that we need to act upon.
- In our assessments and reviews of different types of organisations.
- To look at how well a service provider meets essential standards of quality and safety. This will help us decide if the service provider can register with us and be allowed to provide its services to local people.
- To help us decide if we need to ask a service provider to make improvements in some areas of its care, to show us that it will meet all these standards in future.

We may also use your information:

- To look at how commissioners of services (like primary care trusts) find out what services people need, and if money is being spent wisely to provide services in the local area.
- To help us check what local councils tell us about their own performance in their self-assessments in 2010.

Over the next few months, we will be giving you more information about how we are going to assess commissioners and how we would like to involve you in this.

How will we give you feedback?

If you send us information through our website, we will send you an email to tell you that we have received it. We will also publish a report every year that says what we have done with the views and experiences of services that people have sent us. You will also get feedback from your discussions with local area managers about how we are using what you have told us.

How else can people get involved in the work of CQC?

Giving us advice

We have set up an advisory group and sounding board for LINKs, overview and scrutiny committees and other representative bodies to advise us on what we do and how we do it. For information about this, please contact **Clare.Delap@cqc.org.uk** or **Lucy.Hamer@cqc.org.uk** in the involvement team.

Responding to consultations

Please see **www.cqc.org.uk/getinvolved/consultations.cfm** for more details of our latest consultations.

Further information

To send us information about local views and experiences of health and social care, please visit our web page **www.cqc.org.uk/localvoices** from 1 December 2009.

For more information, please visit our website **www.cqc.org.uk**.

You can also subscribe to our monthly newsletter by visiting our website at **www.cqc.org.uk/newsandevents/newsletter.cfm** or by ringing our National Contact Centre on 03000 616161.

We hope you find this information useful. If you have any other issues you want to discuss with us, please contact your local area manager or email **enquiries@cqc.org.uk** or ring our National Contact Centre on **03000 616161**.