

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 3 SEPTEMBER 1997

No 4

REPORT ON FUTURE SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING
DISABILITIES

Addendum on the Community Living Strategy

As described in the main body of the Report, this strategy is about to launch into its first partnership with Housing Associations to develop small housing units in which people, with learning disabilities, will be tenants and will be helped to develop their potential to run their own lives. Most of those moving into such units in the first instance will come from Homes owned and run by the Authority or from Homes, run by the independent sector, where the local authority purchases places. However there are financial implications of this policy which need to be considered.

Residents in the Authority's hostels get paid Income Support of £62.45 of which £48.35 is paid to the Authority as a contribution to the care provided and £14.10 is retained by the resident as a personal allowance. In independent living settings residents will receive Housing Benefit which will be paid to the landlords of the accommodation as rent. This benefit will cover all the costs of the accommodation including repairs, maintenance and general landlord services. However Housing Benefit will not cover any daily living or care costs and the basic income support the resident will receive will be needed to help them pay for food and other living necessities. There will be no contribution from that money for care needs which previously has been partially funded from the Income Support paid by residents.

Care Needs

Residents in the more independent settings will still need care, probably 24 hours a day, although it is expected that the staffing provided will focus on training and the development of living skills as well as care, allowing residents to develop increasing independence. The Council will initially lose money on developing this kind of accommodation unless it can find a means of gaining contributions towards the costs of care, whether this is provided, as in these homes, by Council staff or, as in other settings, by voluntary organisation staff and purchased by the Council.

It is however possible for people who are tenants in their own right to be assessed for the Disabled Living Allowance, and the Severe Disability Premium by the Department of Social Security and to be awarded these according to level of their disability and of their need for support in their own home. In order to meet the criteria for these benefits the tenant must be responsible for paying living costs in his/her personal accommodation.

It is proposed that in future all independent living schemes are organised in such a way that they -:

- 1) provide tenancies on a rented basis to residents where housing benefit is claimed to a level to cover all the maintenance responsibilities and the furnishings and fittings of any communal areas.
- 2) ensure that every tenant is assessed by the DSS for benefit levels according to their needs for support and that each tenant then is charged at the rate of dependency assessed for the care package he or she needs.

This would mean that every tenant would receive a minimum income of £70.10 which would include the Severe Disablement Allowance and Disability Premium. Most would also receive the Disabled Living Allowance Mobility component of either £13.15 or £33.10. Mobility benefit would be left with the tenant so that they could choose their means of getting about.

Someone with slightly greater needs could also receive the lower rate DLA Care Component of £13.15 which could be contributed towards the care support received from Social Services. Someone with higher dependency again could receive the middle rate of the Disabled Living Allowance Care component of £33.10 and the Severe Disability Premium of £37.15 allowing for a contribution to care costs of £70.25.

Those needing the highest level of care could receive the Higher Rate Disabled Living Allowance Care component of £49.50 and the Severe Disability Premium of £37.15 thus allowing a contribution to care costs of £86.65 (Examples are attached of each level of potential charging).

Conclusion

If residents could be asked to contribute their benefits related to their dependency and level of need for care to the costs of care provision, this would leave each person with an income for daily living needs and with all their housing needs provided for while Social Services would provide or purchase a full package of support care for them according to their individual needs.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree that in independent living situations, tenants in receipt of the Disabled Living Allowance Care Component and / or the Severe Disability Premium, can be charged the amount offered by those benefits to contribute to the cost of their care packages.

Example

Person A

Aged between 25 and 65 years

(i) Income Support = £70.10
(including Severe Disablement Allowance and Disability Premium)

+

(ii) DLA (Mobility) = £13.15

or

£34.50

(NB Mobility benefit is always disregarded)

Income retained by individual (i) and (ii) £83.25

or

£104.65

Contribution to Care Costs

NIL

Example

Person B

(i)	Income (Income Support including SDA and Disability Premium)	=	£70.10
(ii)	DLA (mobility)	=	£13.15
(iii)	DLA (care)	=	£13.15
	Contribution to Care Costs (iii)	=	£13.15

Example

Person C

(i)	Income (Income Support including SDA Allowance and Disability Premium)	=	£70.10
(ii)	DLA (mobility)	=	£13.15
(iii)	DLA (care)	=	£33.10
	+		
(iv)	Severe Disability Premium	=	£37.15
	Contribution to Care Costs (iii) and (iv)	=	£70.25

Example

Person D

(i)	Income (Income Support including SDA and Disability Premium)	=	£70.10
(ii)	DLA (mobility)	=	£13.15
(iii)	DLA (care) Higher rate	=	£49.50
+			
(iv)	Severe Disability Premium	=	£37.15
Contribution to Care Costs (iii) + (iv)		=	£86.65

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