

WIRRAL PLACE BASED PARTNERSHIP BOARD**28 SEPTEMBER 2023**

REPORT TITLE:	UPDATE ON CARE MARKET SUFFICIENCY WORKSTREAM, HEALTHY WIRRAL PROGRAMME
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CARE AND HEALTH

REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides an update on the Healthy Wirral work stream for Care Market Sufficiency. The purpose of the workstream is to ensure sufficiency in community care market to respond to local needs. The workstream directly supports the community care market, care homes and domiciliary care, to increase capacity and to improve safe flow to services to meet demand from both a community and hospital setting.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Wirral Place Based Partnership Board is recommended to:

- 1) Note the improvements to the Care market capacity and flow for domiciliary care.
- 2) Note the work competed with care homes to improve safe transfers of care from a hospital setting.
- 3) Endorse the future work of the care market sufficiency group.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Progress has been made to support the community care market to pre pandemic 2019 levels of domiciliary care cases actioned from the e-brokerage system and also the numbers of actual hours delivered and billed for by domiciliary care providers.
- 1.2 Care homes providers have worked proactively with the safe transfer of care hub to remove any barriers to safe discharges from hospital and to support hospital flow by ensuring people can be safely transferred to care home settings.
- 1.3 Work will continue with the community care market to set new targets for September 2023 to March 2024 to meet local demand and to support winter planning arrangements.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options were considered as improvement was both a local system priority demand and a requirement for the local authority as a statutory duty under the Care Act.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The workstream was established in April 2022 and the priorities of the workstream were agreed as:
 - Increase capacity and responsiveness of Domiciliary Care Provision to support for pathway one discharges from hospital, "Home First" service and Clatterbridge Intermediate Care Centre (CICC), to meet requests for packages of support from people living at home in their communities.
 - Review of Care Home market responsiveness to support pathway two discharges from hospital to care homes and admissions, planned and unplanned, for people who can no longer remain living in their own home.
 - Identification and removal of barriers to community care market responsiveness.
 - Identification of enabling activities to support community care market.
 - Responsiveness.
 - Review of input other sectors (e.g. Supported Living Outreach) and roles.
 - Domiciliary care pick-up levels returned to 2019 levels.
- 3.2 The workstream focussed primarily on domiciliary care services to improve capacity within the sector to return to pre pandemic levels of delivery. A baseline was set from April 2019, which was the point at which the new care and support at home commission went live.

3.3 Progress on domiciliary care Actual Hours delivered has been evidence based as follows:

April 2019 Baseline Hours delivered	Actual Hours Delivered April 2023	Actual Hours Delivered June 2023	September 2023 Target
58,571	60,326	64,816	58,567

3.4 Progress on hours picked up via e-brokerage system are as follows:

April 2019 Baseline Hours picked up	Hours picked up April 2023	Hours picked up June 2023	September 2023 Target
3194	3255	3607	3212

3.5 Progress on packages accepted via e-brokerage system is as follows:

April 2019 baseline packages accepted	April 2023 packages accepted	June 2023 packages accepted	September 2023 target
286	265	313	288

3.6 Progress in the numbers of people in receipt of a domiciliary care service has been evidence based as follows:

April 2019 Numbers of people in receipt of a service	April 2023 Numbers of people in receipt of a service	June 2023 numbers of people in receipt of a service	September 2023 Target
1648	1376	1482	1608

It must be noted that since 2019, Continuing Health Care packages have also been included in the number for domiciliary care and can account for the larger package sizes currently being delivered to meet complex needs.

3.7 Since 2019, the Council has also opened a further 3 extra care schemes for older people which has increased capacity to a total of 329 apartments in Wirral, which means that in addition to increased capacity to people living in their own homes in the community, capacity has also been increased to meet the needs of 348 people who live in Extra care. The total hours commissioned in Extra Care in June 2023 was 11,008.

3.8 In January 2022, the Council commissioned 7 block sets of mobile night services per night, which in July 2020 increased to 9 block sets of mobile nights, totalling 4536 staff hours. Plans are in place and have been agreed to increase with a further block set of hours in August 2023, which will take the total to 5040 hours per month.

3.9 Therefore the total number of hours for domiciliary community support for people in their own homes, for day and night-time domiciliary care and people in Extra Care in June is 80,360 per month.

3.10 The care market sufficiency group has been tracking numbers of staff working in the domiciliary sector with a target to increase staff numbers by September 2023. Progress to date is as follows:

Numbers of staff April 2022	Actual staff numbers April 2023	Actual staff numbers June 2023	Target numbers of staff September 2023
1234	1252	1260	1270

3.11 Numbers of people waiting for domiciliary care have reduced from have reduced overall from 250 in January 2023 to 105 in July 2023

3.12 The brokerage system has been refined to include postcode data which enables domiciliary care providers to match capacity on rounds to people on the waiting list more effectively.

3.13 The care arranging team (CAT) has returned to working for the Council from 1 July 2023, and is now line managed within the commissioning and contracts function of Adult Social Care. This move has enabled closer working with functions to support the community care market alongside a review of business processes that has supported improvements for both domiciliary care and care home placements.

3.14 Four new domiciliary care providers have been assessed and undergone due diligence process to increase the number of domiciliary care framework providers to 26 in total.

3.15 The care market sufficiency group has been working closely with the safe transfer of care hub to improve flow in to care homes and has held workshops in June and July to understand any barriers to discharges and to remove those barriers to ensure people can be safely discharged. Key outcomes of the workshops are:

- A new discharge checklist to be implemented in July 2023 in the hospital discharge centre, with checks in place for both the discharge centre and care homes for admissions.
- A named worker to be put in place in the safe transfer of care hub to work closely with patients and their families at point of key decision making to facilitate discharges.
- System changes to e-brokerage for care home placements with a mandate to use for all practitioners and care home providers.
- Video tours of care homes to be progressed and uploaded to Wirral info bank for each care home to support individual and their supporters with decision making on discharge destination.

3.16 A further workshop will be held in September 2023 with the domiciliary care sector and the safe transfer of care hub to identify and remove any barriers and improve business systems and processes.

- 3.17 The care market sufficiency group is working closely with the safe transfer of care hub to introduce a technology enabled care offer to support discharges, with a stakeholder group to meet in August 2023.
- 3.18 Targets for care homes and domiciliary care will be revised during September weekly meetings, with new targets to run up to March 2024.
- 3.19 Work is underway with mental health services to develop a new housing support model and is linked with Mental Health Commissioner from ICB.
- 3.20 A new 8-apartment scheme to support mental health discharges from hospital and to prevent hospital admissions is now operational in Birkenhead.
- 3.21 A new contract for care homes will be deployed in September 2023 and will include new requirements to support 7-day discharges, work proactively with e-brokerage systems, support falls prevention initiatives and introduce electronic care planning.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The workstream has provided and supported the domiciliary care market with a range of initiatives funded through workforce recruitment and retention, adult social care discharge fund and other grants including:

- Skills for Care “Finders Keepers” value-based recruitment programme
- “Care Friends” recruitment support application
- The purchase of 39 e-bikes
- Funds for support with fuel costs
- Additional training
- Use of pool cars for staff
- Driving lessons
- Winter retention payments of £300
- Increased hourly incentive payments for staff.

These initiatives totalled £283,000 and were managed with a sustainability grant approach.

- 4.2 The Council allocated £1m of the market sustainability fair cost of care funds for 2022/2023 to increase frontline staff wages in domiciliary care to £11ph from 1 August 2022, in advance of the Real Living Wage announcement in Autumn 2022 of an increase to £10.90ph.
- 4.3 In March 2023 the Council agreed further funds to increase staff wages to £12ph for front line domiciliary care staff, which were implemented from April 2023.
- 4.4 In total for financial year 2023/2024, the Council allocated funds to improve rates and fees for all care sectors of £14.2m.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Care Act 2014 places a duty on the Local Authority to promote diversity and quality in provision of services, including the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs. The Local Authority must have regard to market sustainability, fostering continuous improvement in the quality of such services and the efficiency and effectiveness with which such services are provided; also, to encourage innovation in service provision. The work undertaken with the care market sufficiency group supports the Local Authority to meet its statutory obligation to meet needs for care and support within the market environment required by the Act.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The representation on the care market sufficiency group is inclusive of people from the Council's commissioning and contracts team, the safe transfer of care hub and the ICB continuing health care lead.
- 6.2 A new post will be introduced in August 2023 of a Care Home Co-ordinator post to support the safe discharge hub and named workers with transfers of care to Care Homes. It is envisaged this post will work closely with the Care Home trusted assessor based in the safe transfer of care hub.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Had the Council not agreed support for the Community Care Market sufficiency group, the impact of this would have meant that targets as part of the Healthy Wirral Programme would not have been met, capacity would not have increased and recruitment for frontline community care market staff would not have progressed.
- 7.2 The Council could have held the fee rates at existing levels for 2023/2024, but this was not an option given the national requirements in relation to wages, the impact of inflation and the requirement to increase capacity within the sector.
- 7.3 A risk log is in place for the project and mitigations are in place to minimise risks, these are shared in a weekly highlight report to system leaders. The key risks are in relation to recruitment for the domiciliary care sector and sufficient capacity to meet demand, and safe transfer arrangements from acute settings to commute care settings.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Two workshops have been held with the safe transfer of care hub for care home, with a further workshop planned for September 2023 for the domiciliary care market.
- 8.2 Representation and presentations have been made at the care provider forums on the requirements of the market to support capacity increases.
- 8.3 The new safe transfer checklist for care homes has been briefed to the care market and will be presented formally at both the Registered Manager forum and Care Home Provider forum in August 2023.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. The Equality Impact assessment can be found here:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The domiciliary care market is working to introduce electric vehicles and also e-bikes have been purchased to support reductions in carbon emissions.
- 10.2 Many domiciliary care staff walk to work in their local area.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Many of the services provided on Wirral are delivered by Local Businesses with offices, services and staff based in Wirral.
- 11.2 The investment by the Council of £14.2m for financial year 2023/2024 for the Community Care Market staff being paid the Real Living Wage of £10.90ph, and £12ph for frontline staff for providers who choose to take it up, has had a positive impact on recruitment to the sector.

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APPENDICES

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Market Sustainability plan
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/fair-cost-care/market-sustainability-plan>

Market Position Statement
<https://www.merseysidemarketpositionstatement.co.uk/intro/>

Project Initiation Document and Highlight Reports, Health Wirral Programme

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee (Outcome of Engagement on Rates and Fees)	06.03.2023