

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**Health and Care Scrutiny Committee
29 November 2019**

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SUBJECT: Update on Adult Services Assist function

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Background

An important area of concern that the CIW inspection identified in January 2018 related to the functioning of the Front Door Service (Powys People Direct) and failings in our responsiveness and engagement with people who made contact with us and who, how, why and when they were referred into Adult Social Care.

Powys People Direct (PPD) was formed in April 2015 and formed a joint front door service with Children's Services in Powys. Within Adult Service PPD offered a dual function as a single point of access for new referrals and also a "Can I speak to" function for access to named professionals. In January 2018, two reviews were undertaken in relation to the functionality and performance of the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service in Powys People Direct.

These reviews were commissioned in advance of the Adults Services inspection by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in early 2018. Internally, we had already recognised that PPD was neither fit for purpose, nor understood widely either within Powys County Council or by our residents, as having the critical role of providing Information, Advice and Assistance to support people to be both better informed and better able, to self-manage their levels of independence and resilience, which is pivotal to developing a Strengths Based Approach to Social Care.

The CIW Inspection findings served to focus and expedite the redesign to our "front door" that we were already planning.

The key objectives for our new "Assist Front Door" were: -

- To enable timely appropriate information to be provided at first point of contact
- To enable timely appropriate advice to be provided at first point of contact
- To enable conversations which will result in good information to make informed decisions
- To enable good information to be recorded and the referral is triaged and prioritised

- To ensure that performance information is recorded and considered to inform development of the service going forward
- To ensure that the quality of the referrals is considered via the Quality Assurance Framework in Adult Social Care
- To enhance communication between first point of contact and the longer-term teams.

2. Progress to date

- We have Implemented forms and systems which complement the strengths-based approach. (Online form, enquiry form on WCCIS). These forms and processes ensure consistent approach to service delivery and ensure contact officers are working efficiently.
- Quality assurance in place through social worker screening all referrals once completed.
- The social worker screens all referrals before they are forwarded to teams. This ensures only appropriate referrals are assigned to team.
- A Quality audit tool is currently being tested. This will provide further evidence to measure the continued impact and development of the Assist team.
- Continued and consistent short call wait times (around 37 seconds) with on average 94% of all calls answered. This is a measurable improvement and has improved the experience of citizens and professionals alike contacting the team. On average it took 47 seconds in October to take a call which is a slight increase on September; the average abandonment of call has reduced leading us to recognise that individuals are now anticipating earlier answer (previously we saw more calls abandoned)
- Following training of Contact Officers to prescribe low level technology enabled care and release of the videos on social media, the team have noticed an increase in the number of calls asking for equipment/assistive technology; this is supporting the prevention and early intervention agenda.
- Staff have undertaken outcome focussed training and it is being implemented into work. This has strengthened the delivery of the what matters conversation at the first point of contact.
- 2 members of the team have undertaken mentoring training which will ensure staff continue to receive development and peer support opportunities to build and develop their skills.
- Contact officers currently going through training for carers assessments, to ensure we can provide the right information and advice at the right time in line with our statutory responsibilities.

- Funding has been identified to support a Contact Officer to undertake Welsh language training which will support the gap within the Service in light of the failure to recruit a Welsh speaking Contact Officer.
- Assist officers have received training to deliver Part 10 of the Social Services and Well – being Act (Advocacy).

3. Next steps

The team look forward to continuing expanding the offer of information and advice through ongoing partnership working with colleagues and partners alike. The service is committed to a journey of continuous learning and improvement and committed to working with a strengths-based approach.

Following recent training the team are looking to forward to embedding the Advocacy functions as stated below:

- ensure that access to advocacy services and support is available to enable individuals to engage and participate when local authorities are exercising statutory duties in relation to them, and
- to arrange an independent professional advocate to facilitate the involvement of individuals in certain circumstances.