

CWOP/26/10

Policy & Scrutiny Committee Community Wellbeing and Older People

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CQC Inspection Feedback

Report by: Audrey Bancroft, Senior Operational Manager/Clare Hardy, Executive Support Manager,

Telephone: 01245 434404/01245 435541

Email: Audrey.bancroft@essex.gov.uk/clare.hardy@essex.gov.uk

To receive and consider a report from Liz Chidgey, Deputy Executive Director – Adults Health & Community Wellbeing and Karen Wright, Internal Standards & Governance Director - Adult Social Care, on the CQC Inspection final report.

CWOPP Scrutiny Committee

Care Quality Commission Inspection Report 2010 – Summary document

Context:

Essex County Council received a full Inspection Report on the standard of adult social care in Essex on 1st June (ahead of initial schedule), following an inspection period which began in mid December. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care services in England, and we routinely receive full inspections approximately every four years.

The scope of CQC's inspections includes the following as basic requirements to be assessed:

- Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults
- Commissioning / Use of Resources
- Leadership

In addition, CQC inspect select specialist areas of service in two focused regions. This latest Inspection of Essex's services were as follows:

- Improved Health and Wellbeing for Older People (Tendring and Basildon)
- Improved Quality of Life for Older People (Tendring and Basildon)

Methodology:

Essex was given official notification of a full service inspection by the Care Quality Commission on 14th December 2009. This commenced a busy period of preparation and document submission, followed by a two week long fieldwork period during which the Inspection team were onsite.

Pre-Fieldwork

The initial pre-fieldwork period involved meeting the following requirements:

- Preparation of 300 case files and lists, from which the Inspectors selected 16 for review (including 8 for interview of the service user)
- CQC conducted a survey of 150 older people, from which they received 39 responses (around average for the exercise)
- CQC conducted a survey of 49 ECC's partners
- Submission of public information produced to support the delivery of social care services (for example leaflets and key websites)
- Submission of an Introduction to Essex document providing context (not a formal CQC requirement) and organisation structure charts
- Submission of a Self Assessment in which ECC assessed its performance in each of the key focus areas of the inspection
- Submission of approximately 300 key documents including strategies, policies, and practice guidance

Fieldwork

The Care Quality Commission spent two weeks onsite with Essex County Council from 22nd March to 31st March. This period involved a wide array of activity, and it was a key requirement that 40% of the Inspectors' time was spent engaging with service users and their carers.

The process included the following mechanisms to enable the Inspectors to make a full assessment of services:

- Public Open Forums – held in Chelmsford and Harlow to give members of the public the opportunity to attend and express their opinions
- Interviews of service users (8 of the selected 16 case files)
- Focus Groups – with service users, carers, employees, managers, providers, partners, advocacy services
- Site visits – the Inspectors visited a range of sites where they were able to engage with employees and see firsthand the directorate's working practices

Outcomes

The Care Quality Commission judges the performance of councils using the following four grades: 'performing poorly', 'performing adequately', 'performing well' and 'performing excellently'. Essex achieved the following grades:

- Safeguarding adults:
CQC concluded that Essex was performing excellently in safeguarding adults.
- Improved health and wellbeing for older people:
CQC concluded that Essex was performing well in supporting the improved health and wellbeing for older people.
- Improved quality of life for older people:
CQC concluded that Essex was performing excellently in supporting the improved quality of life for older people.
- Capacity to improve:
The Care Quality Commission rates a council's capacity to improve its performance using the following four grades: 'poor', 'uncertain', 'promising' and 'excellent'. CQC concluded that the capacity to improve in Essex was excellent.

Benchmarking shows that Essex compares favourably with all other authorities being inspected in these areas; in particular Essex is only the second and significantly the largest to have achieved 'performing excellently' in the Safeguarding adults category.

Recommendations for improvement

The report is very positive in offering constructive analysis of potential improvement – focusing on areas to be developed rather than identifying areas of deficiency or bad practice. Attached with this report is the improvement plan which has been developed by the service in response to the specific points made by the inspectors. This will be revisited every two months in partnership with the Care Quality Commission to ensure that improvements can be delivered.

Key areas of attention include the continued development of support and services to carers, particularly around providing health advice to carers to support their role and their assessments and reviews. There is also a specific recommendation to ensure that older people and their carers are provided with information and support around End of Life Care and making choices in this area. In addition, the Care Quality Commission has suggested more effective engagement with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, to ensure service delivery can be developed to meet their personal needs.

The attached improvement plan lists the planned activity and responses against each specific objective suggested by the Care Quality Commission's report.