

Task and Finish Group Report – Domiciliary care

Reference Number: PAF/05/21

Report title: Task and Finish Group Report – Domiciliary Care	
Report to: People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Report author: Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 18 March 2021	For: To consider receipt and endorsement of the report and identifying follow-up actions
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County Divisions affected: Not applicable	

1. Introduction

This is the final report of the Task and Finish Group established to look at aspects of domiciliary care provision in Essex.

2. Action required

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Receive and endorse the attached final report of the Task and Finish Group looking at aspects of domiciliary care in Essex (Appendix);
- (ii) Endorse the recommendations for follow-up work to be undertaken after the May 2021 County Council Elections;

3. Background

- 3.1 The Committee resolved to establish a Task and Finish Group (the Group) to look at the current arrangements for, and oversight of, the delivery and quality of domiciliary care in Essex.
- 3.2 The Group established five key lines of enquiry:
 - To seek assurance that people will still be able to be referred into services, that access is available, (i) routes/options in normal course, and (ii) assurance that it is still happening during pandemic (including awareness, signposting and comms are in place) and how maintain confidence to refer into the 'system'.
 - To seek assurance that there is adequate monitoring of performance and service quality of domiciliary care providers and robust processes to monitor, identify and instigate improvement actions.

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- To seek assurance that there is adequate capacity in place.
- To understand the current provision of technological options available to support people in the home and how that can be further expanded and prevent unnecessary admissions to hospitals.
- To seek assurance that there are adequate discharge planning processes in place, arrangements for reablement (where appropriate) and identify issues for improvement.

- 3.3 The review started in October 2020 against the backdrop of, and through the lens of, a global pandemic background which meant that contributors and the local care system faced extraordinary challenges and demand pressures.
- 3.4 The Group held 11 evidence sessions between November 2020 and February 2021 with a variety of witnesses (listed in Annex 2 to the report). Whilst the Group has, in the end, still spoken to a wide range of contributors, there have still been some issues that the Group would have liked to have pursued further but was unable to do so due to pandemic pressures and the need to close the review ahead of the County Council elections in May 2021. In particular, the Group has not spoken to anyone from the NHS which, ordinarily, it would have done particularly in relation to discharge processes and this is referred to in a number of places in the report and has formed the basis of a number of recommendations for follow-up scrutiny work to be undertaken.
- 3.4 The report to some extent is an interim report acknowledging limitations placed on the Group due to the pandemic and imminent elections and that the review is not complete. However, it still highlights issues raised by contributors which the Group has stated it would still like ECC officers to investigate further even though many of them have not been formalised into recommendations.
- 3.5 The conclusions of the Group start on page 26 of their report. These conclusions comment on the challenges of the pandemic and the increasing focus on supporting people at home and assurance processes around that.
- 3.6 The Group has made seven recommendations which are reproduced below (page numbers are where each recommendation is derived within the report):

Recommendation 1 (page 11): The Group encourages further work to look at the feasibility and constraints in having a more flexible approach on who can undertake some individual assessments, subject to necessary safeguards, so as to facilitate a more informed and timely assessment process.

Recommendation 2 (page 12): That, after the County Council elections in May 2021, the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee further review the assessment process for support at home to include a focus on the challenges for the occupational therapist service.

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Recommendation 3 (page 14): That, after the County Council elections in May 2021, the Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee, together with the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee, should jointly investigate further the adequacy and safety of discharge processes.

Recommendation 4a (page 15): A simple contact sheet to be given to everyone being discharged from hospital – effectively a ‘one-stop shop’ contact card with a handful of key numbers giving both telephone and on-line addresses to signpost support and advice and entitlements and a step by step checklist to help guide next steps.

Recommendation 4b (page 15): the one-stop-shop contact sheet to include some simple tips to consider when looking at a service provider.

Recommendation 5 (page 20): That, after the County Council elections in May 2021, the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee should look at governance processes for user feedback and complaints handling in the domiciliary care sector to include how easy it is to feedback and/or complain, and changes made as a result.

Recommendation 6 (page 22): That, after the County Council elections in May 2021, the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee should seek further assurance about the part of the discharge process undertaken in hospitals.

Recommendation 7 (page 25): That, after the County Council elections in May 2021, the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee reviews the emerging potential of technology to further support people in their homes.

4. Update and Next Steps

The final report is attached as an Appendix. Next steps are as outlined under Section 2 - Action Required.

The following have been invited to attend to give their initial response to the conclusions and recommendations in the report:

County Councillor John Spence, Cabinet Member – Health and Adult Social Care;

Nick Presmeg, Executive Director, Adult Social Care

Moira McGrath, Director, Commissioning (Adult Social Care)

5 List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 – final report of the Task and Finish Group looking at Domiciliary Care in Essex