

Report title: Written Partner Update: Update from Essex Social Care	
Report to: Essex Health and Wellbeing Board	
Report author: Nick Presmeg, Executive Director for Adult Social Care	
Date: 21 September 2022	For: Information
Enquiries to: Nick Presmeg	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is provided to the Essex County Council Health and Wellbeing Board to provide a short written update on Social Care in Essex.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to note and discuss the update.

3 Background and Proposal

- 3.1 Adult social care pressures have reduced during August, meaning that the Council has lowered its LAPEL status (local authority pressures escalation level) from Level 3 to Level 2. This is due largely to a reduction in care home outbreaks and also due to a reduction in hours of care that are proving difficult to source (for example, on 28 August there were around 1,575 hours of care in the community proving difficult to source, down from 2,175 hours proving difficult on 31 July, down from 2,477 on 26 June). The level of unsourced packages has reduced by around 70% from the highs seen in December 2021.
- 3.2 Although the overall position has improved, pressures remain. Demand coming in as safeguarding concerns is persistently higher than pre-covid and July 2022 saw the second highest monthly volume of safeguarding concerns in the last three years. Referrals into the Mental Health Wellbeing Team are now consistently 40-50% higher than pre-pandemic levels. Self-referrals continue to be the highest source of referrals and the West of the county continues to be the source of the most referrals geographically; with anxiety and depression being the main reported reason adults are seeking support.
- 3.3 There continue to be workforce recruitment and retention challenges in the sector, especially in the domiciliary care market. This is creating some capacity challenges in domiciliary care.
- 3.4 There has been an increased use of residential beds in the system, with length of stay in interim placements growing. This is also driving an over-spend position on

adult social care budgets as the number of people in residential care is above budgeted-for.

- 3.5 Reablement provision has remain challenged and ECC has procured alternative reablement capacity (ARC) to supplement the existing reablement offer provided by ECL. This will replace the existing in-lieu of reablement provision. The new contracts will offer some certainty to the wider health and care system to 2024 and their mobilisation is being supported by the CONNECT team to ensure processes and practice is optimised to best effect.
- 3.6 Work is underway on a Market Shaping Strategy and a fair cost of care exercise, a significant piece of work that is expected to conclude in the autumn. The response rate from care providers has been positive so far.
- 3.7 The Government has published a consultation on funding allocations to local authorities for care charging reforms. The County Council is developing its response and will submit by the deadline at the end of September.