

Report to: **Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **3 March 2011**

By: **Director of Adult Social Care**

Title of report: **Progress report: Review of Alignment between the social care and financial assessment processes, Scrutiny Review, April 2010**

Purpose of report: **To inform members of the progress made against the action plan resulting from the above Scrutiny Review.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- 1. consider the progress made against the Scrutiny Review action plan; and**
 - 2. decide if further updates are required**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The review considered a number of finance related aspects of the assessment process, including the timeliness of financial assessments, the devolution of funding responsibility to officers and staffing capacity to undertake financial assessments.

1.2 Implementation of recommendation 2(g) *A more user-friendly style of letters sent to service users who make a personal contribution towards the cost of their service to reduce the number of complaints in this area* is ongoing. We are in discussion with Serco about how this can best be achieved.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Appendix 1 is the action plan arising from the Scrutiny Review of the Alignment between the social care and financial assessment processes, and the right-hand column contains the progress update against the recommendations.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the progress against the recommendations and to decide if further updates against the action plan are required.

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Lead Member(s): Councillors Glazier and Bentley

Background documents: None

East Sussex County Council Adult Social Care Action Plan: Alignment between the social care and financial assessment processes

Recommendations	Action	Outcome	Progress February 2011
1. That Adult Social Care investigates the feasibility of expanding the provision of financial support to more vulnerable service users, who do not have family or friends to support dealing with their finances when they lose capacity, so that a greater number can receive help to manage their finances in the remit of Appointeeship or Deputyship.	Feasibility study to be undertaken	More service users will be supported to manage their finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Social Care has increased its capacity to take on the remit of Deputyship, under the supervision of the Court of Protection, to protect the property, financial affairs and personal welfare of people who lack mental capacity to make decisions for themselves. Following the Scrutiny Review, a post was funded to support this work and ICT systems are being investigated that can further assist with supporting this work. 48 additional people are now supported in this way, an increase of 25% since September 2010.
2. That Adult Social Care monitors the development of the following service improvements to ensure that they are successful in addressing the particular issues raised by the Review Board: a) A 'buddy system' within the financial assessment team so that staff are able to manage	Staff to 'buddy' other members of the financial assessment	Service users experience will improve as the	2a) The buddy system has been implemented and is working well .

<p>cases on behalf of colleagues when they are on leave or off sick.</p> <p>b) Electronic 'triggers' within the Carefirst database to provide an earlier alert to the Financial Assessment Team that a financial assessment is required.</p> <p>c) Final assessments for service users leaving the Living at Home programme to be carried out by that team to speed up their discharge from the programme.</p>	<p>team</p> <p>Carefirst trigger to be developed</p> <p>Living at Home Service staff to be trained in Financial Assessments</p>	<p>assessment process can continue in the absence of team members</p> <p>Improved efficiency of the financial assessment process.</p> <p>More timely financial assessments.</p>	<p>2c) An alternative approach was implemented. Training Living at Home Service staff was, on balance, not the most effective way of delivering the improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral processes have been reviewed and the Financial Assessment team are now notified of individuals who will require appointments, 5 weeks into the 6 week support provided by the Living at Home. This enables appointments to be booked in advance, ensuring that benefits advice given is timely and relevant. If individuals require Living at Home Service support in excess of 6 weeks, a the financial assessment team book a full financial assessment with the service users
<p>d) Financial questions within the social care assessment so that officers can provide a more accurate indication to service users as to what their</p>	<p>Financial questions to be developed, tested and included in the Assessment as part of Self Directed Support</p>	<p>Service users have a more accurate assessment of what their likely personal contribution will be.</p>	<p>2d) The Social Care Assessment documentation has been reviewed as part of the LEAN project for the Self Assessment Pathway.</p> <p>The decision has been made to use the core assessment tools (BICA & Needs Profile) provided by the</p>

level of personal contribution is likely to be.			organisation FACE with overview and other appropriate specialist assessments as required for more complex needs. This enables the Resource Allocation System (RAS) to be applied to the majority of service users (if required), providing consistency of assessment and indicative personal budgets. Using the FACE assessment tools separates the two different functions of assessment and scoring for resource allocation. In current SSA there is sometimes confusion between these two functions.
e) A new process to manage appeals against the outcome of financial assessments so that there is consistency in the way these complaints are handled.	Appeals process for financial assessments to be developed	A more consistent approach to complaints for service users and carers	2e) Over the last 12 months there have been 2 cases taken to the Local Government Ombudsman regarding complaints relating to financial assessments. In both cases the appeals process has been upheld. This demonstrates the robustness of the new process to manage appeals.
f) Use of two types of assessments during the social care assessment process. With initial assessment being used for the provision of low level services so that the process for providing these can be speeded up.	Develop assessment for 'simple' services and a separate assessment for more complex cases	The service user experience of having their needs assessed will be proportionate to their level of need Vulnerable people will no longer receive inappropriately	2f) See 2(d) above. 2g) We are in discussion with Serco about how this can

<p>g) A more user-friendly style of letters sent to service users who make a personal contribution towards the cost of their service to reduce the number of complaints in this area.</p> <p>h) A computer based prompt system used to alert social workers in hospitals as to who needs a care package put in place before they are discharged.</p>	<p>SERCO letters sent to service users to be made more user friendly</p> <p>Develop an electronic system to alert hospital based social work staff of individuals requiring social care support</p>	<p>worded letters about charges for services</p> <p>People's social care needs will be assessed in a timely way and care packages can be organised before hospital discharge</p>	<p>best be achieved.</p> <p>2h) Following the Scrutiny Review, a trigger system was implemented which has resulted in reducing numbers of complaints relating to hospital discharge. In addition, a trial was undertaken where benefits advisors were placed in hospitals, however patients did not have the necessary information with them for meaningful advice to be given so this trial was discontinued. As for 2(c) above, financial assessment appointments are set up in advance to ensure timely advice and support is given. In complex cases, social workers and financial assessors are now undertaking joint visits to ensure all the right support and information can be provided in one visit.</p>
<p>3. That Adult Social Care:</p> <p>a) provides advice and guidance to service users so that they are able to make informed decisions on who they employ to support them;</p> <p>b) Develops a robust mechanism for carrying out service user reviews. This will</p>	<p>Accessible information about employing personal assistants to be developed</p> <p>Ensure timely and proportionate reviews</p>	<p>People can make informed choices about employing personal assistants</p> <p>Care packages will be proportionate to service user needs</p>	<p>3a) A comprehensive range of support has been developed for people considering employing personal assistants and also for personal assistants themselves. Examples include: Quarterly Focus magazine designed for Direct Payment Employers, Carers and Personal Assistants; 'Support with Confidence' training to accredit personal assistants; Face to face and e-learning opportunities for personal assistants and their employers.</p> <p>3b) Between April and December 2010, a total of 11,653 clients received a review. This equates to 81.2% of all</p>

<p>identify whether service users are accessing the right level of support to meet their needs and, where necessary, flag up any risks which can be quickly addressed; and</p> <p>c) Closely monitors the number and complexity of financial abuse cases handled by the Financial Assessment Team. This will ensure that the Team has sufficient resources to manage any additional workload and minimise delays in carrying out assessments.</p>	<p>are undertaken.</p> <p>Establish monitoring processes for financial abuse cases</p>	<p>Financial assessments will be timely and vulnerable people will continue to be safeguarded against abuse</p>	<p>clients.</p> <p>3c) The numbers of Financial abuse cases are closely monitored through the Adult Social Care Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Steering Group and East Sussex Safeguarding Board. Between April and September 2010, 12% of safeguarding referrals (102 out of 849) were identified as Financial Abuse. The most common perpetrator relationship for Financial Abuse (18%) was family member. Deprivation of capital is increasingly becoming an issue in financial abuse cases. These cases are extremely complex and resource intensive to manage. We are working with partners including Trading Standards colleagues to raise awareness about financial abuse, and about abuse to vulnerable adults more generally, for example the 'Speak Up, Speak Out' Campaign held in Autumn 2010. The Safeguarding training plan is also being reviewed for April 2011, which includes training provided to independent sector providers.</p>
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