

1st October 2012

Agenda Item: 12

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PERSONAL CARE AND SUPPORT –YOUNGER ADULTS

OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION REGARDING CHANGES TO THE PROVISION OF EMERGENCY BEDS WITHIN LEARNING DISABILITY SHORT BREAKS SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise members of the outcome of the consultation on proposals to alter the provision of emergency beds within learning disability short breaks services as detailed in the Delegated Decision Record dated 2nd May 2012; AH/2012/00038.

Information and Advice

2. In May 2012, the department gained in principle (delegated decision AH/2012/00038) approval to reduce the provision of emergency beds within the directly provided short breaks services. This in principle agreement required consultation with carers and users of services. A three month consultation was carried out through the summer, and an equality impact assessment completed.
3. In line with other areas of County Council services, the learning disability short breaks service has been reviewed in order to maximise the use of resources whilst maintaining current service utilisation in line with the demand for respite care. Currently, around 300 families access the County Council services' 34 standard and 7 emergency beds.

The Nottinghamshire County Council's residential short breaks services are shown in the table below.

Service	Location	District	Standard Beds	Emergency Beds	Total
Helmsley Road	Rainworth	Newark & Sherwood	10	2	12
Holles Street	Worksop	Bassetlaw	8	2	10
Kingsbridge Way	Beeston	Broxtowe	8	1	9
Wynhill Lodge	Bingham	Rushcliffe	8	2	10
Total Beds			34	7	41

4. The service review highlighted that the emergency bed provision is under utilised, being occupied for only 30% of available nights, whilst there is relatively high occupancy for the standard planned admission beds which on average have over 80% occupancy, and over 90% in peak seasons
5. Therefore, a proposal was developed to remove three of the current seven emergency beds, and locate emergency bed provision in the centre of the County at Helmsley Road in Rainworth.
6. The reduction in the number of emergency beds from 7 to 4 will not reduce the overall number of short break beds across the County, as the 3 beds will become book-able standard occupancy beds. The effect of this will be to enable some of the inefficiency due to under-occupancy of the emergency beds to be eliminated.
7. Where emergency beds are requested by service users known to the service and there is capacity within the service that they normally use, they will be allocated a bed-space within that service. For example; a service user known to the Wynhill Lodge service requires an emergency stay due to the illness of their carer. If Wynhill has a vacancy they will be able to stay at Wynhill. If Wynhill had not got capacity within the service to provide, the bed-state at all other services would be looked at and where possible that individual would be placed within one of the other services. If no beds are available within the standard beds across the service, the individual would be booked into one of the emergency beds at Helmsley Road.
8. Where an emergency bed is requested for a service user who is not known to the Short Breaks service, they would be allocated an emergency bed at Helmsley Road, where staffing would be provided at a level to meet the needs of the individual.
9. The emergency beds at Helmsley Road will only be staffed when they are occupied. This service will be commissioned through the Community Learning Disability Teams, with the cost of the provision based on the needs of the individual. Any additional demand on the community care budgets will be met within existing resources. The additional staffing will be sourced from the County Council's permanent establishment, or through the relief staff lists as appropriate to the needs of the individual.
10. The removal of emergency beds creates a recurrent efficiency saving of £98,200. This is achieved by a reduction to the permanent staffing establishment. These posts are currently unoccupied by permanent staff at Helmsley Road and are being covered on a temporary basis, therefore there is no requirement for staff to be considered at risk of redundancy.
11. In order to provide the emergency accommodation at Helmsley Road it will be necessary to improve the facilities at the service. The cost of these improvements, estimated to be £50,000, will be met through the Short Breaks reserve currently held by the department.
12. The changes to the location of emergency bed provision and the increase in planned bed availability represents a change to the service and therefore a consultation process was undertaken with family carers and commissioning teams. Three consultation meetings were arranged for family carers to attend with individual letters sent to home addresses. The meetings were arranged in the south, centre and north of the County. The letter outlined the proposed changes and offered the opportunity to attend a meeting or to respond in writing or by telephone. The consultation meetings were attended by eighteen carers and comments were received by email, letter and telephone from a further six carers.

13. At the meetings there were some very positive comments made about the services and the value which family carers place on being able to access the Short Breaks Services. Carers expressed views about the overall reduction in emergency beds, and they looked for reassurance about how emergency situations would be responded to in the future. Some of the questions and comments made are listed below:

- **Why is Helmsley Road having the decrease in book-able beds, and not all other areas?** It was explained that the separate buildings at the Helmsley Road service meant it was possible to reserve one 4-bed bungalow for emergencies. This would only be staffed when occupied and in this way savings on staffing costs could be achieved. It was explained that in order to gain efficiencies it was not possible to locate one emergency bed in each service, as this would not generate savings through reduced staffing.
- **It does not always feel like parents and carers are contributing enough financially to the Short Breaks Service. It could be considered to increase contributions. This service is very valuable and paying for it would be better than risking losing it.** *(Other parents / carers present did not agree with this as some people are not in a position to pay more).* At this time Nottinghamshire County Council are not seeking to increase charges for access to Short Breaks. It is recognised that not all families are in a position to pay more for the services they receive.
- **It is important that the Short Breaks remain flexible** – the flexibility is good currently.
- **We want to work together with both the services and each other, and will help by postponing a Short Break where possible to accommodate people in need of an emergency stay, as we may need someone else to move the dates of a short break in an emergency situation for us.** This was acknowledged as being a very positive position adopted by carers at all of the consultation meetings, though it was also noted that not everyone would be able to be as flexible as others.
- **Some service users do not like being put into strange / different environments.** It was acknowledged that some people who use services are not able to adapt well to being in different environments. Each person who uses services has an individual set of care plans which lay out how care and support is provided and would be used in any placement made in an emergency. It was noted that some people who use the services are already familiar with more than one location which increases their flexibility in case of emergency.
- **Concerns about the increased distance that would need to be travelled in order to get to Helmsley Road for an emergency stay. Many service users would get upset when staying in an unfamiliar service, particularly if the reason for the emergency stay was due to a trauma (e.g. sudden bereavement).** If a service user who is known to a service has to use the emergency beds at Helmsley Road, the managers would seek to return the person to the service they are familiar with as soon as possible. However, by increasing the number of standard beds available in each unit it is less likely that people already known to the services will need to use Helmsley Road.
- **Carers praised the service and the staff team at Kingsbridge Way and said how professional and dedicated the staff were and that they were confident in leaving**

their sons/daughters there for breaks. Carers were thanked for these positive comments.

- **Sorry I can not attend the meeting, but have one concern, S has a lot of health problems Kingsbridge have learned to cope with her as she is on oxygen 24/7, if she had to go anywhere else they would not have a clue how to deal with her. I am 76 and had one mini stroke there is only S and me at home now even though the family call in each day or phone to make sure we are alright. Hoping it will be a long time before we need an emergency bed.**
- **First to praise the service you offer which in our opinion is second to none, and to encourage you to maintain this essential service with enough funding to maintain the present standard offered. I understand the situation as far as the emergency beds are concerned, but I would be gutted if my daughter couldn't have emergency care in the centre she knows and (more importantly) where they know her. I believe this is essential for those users who have high level and complex needs. Leaving P with people who don't know her would add a huge amount of stress to what would be, (if an emergency bed was needed), an already stressful and distressing situation.**

Through discussions with carers it was agreed that where emergencies occurred for users of services, managers would seek to accommodate them within the service that they knew. Where this was not possible a bed within the emergency bungalow at Helmsley Road would be used.

Where an emergency arose for a person not known to the service, the emergency accommodation at Helmsley Road would be used. Carers at the meetings appeared reassured by this and that there was not an overall reduction in the number of short breaks beds available.

Other Options Considered

14. Some carers suggested that charges are increased to reduce the need for efficiencies in other areas. Increased charges are not being considered at this time.
15. Some carers asked that consideration be given to having one emergency bed in each service making four in total. This option appears attractive geographically, however this does not maximise the use of resources as it would not allow any reduction to current staffing.
16. Some carers suggested that an emergency bed be designated in each service which could be booked on the understanding that if it was required for an emergency admission, the booking is cancelled. This option again does not allow any staffing efficiencies as all beds would need to be staffed on a permanent basis. Designating the four emergency beds at Helmsley Road remains the favoured option for this, as this allows the service to reduce the permanent staffing compliment, and staff the emergency beds on a needs only basis.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

17. These recommendations are made to maximise the use of resources given the low level of demand for emergency accommodation, and the requirement to maintain the number of

beds which can be booked for short breaks and to ensure that carers continue to get breaks from their caring responsibilities.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

19. Users of services requiring a short break in an emergency may be allocated emergency accommodation at Helmsley Road rather than at their usual service.
20. The number of beds that can be booked at Helmsley Road will be reduced from 10 to 8. This will be mitigated by introducing some existing and new service users to other services in other parts of the County.

Financial Implications

21. A recurrent efficiency saving of £98,200 can be achieved through these proposals. A non recurrent revenue expenditure of £50,000 is required to implement the proposals. This expenditure is to improve decoration and furnishings and can be sourced from the Learning Disability short breaks reserve.

Human Resources Implications

22. The staff reductions proposed will not present any human resources implications as the posts identified do not have an incumbent.
23. The trade unions have been consulted and agree that if there is an emergency it is far better for a bed to be available near by to the user and probably in a familiar venue.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that following consultation members endorse:

- 1) the emergency beds within the Learning Short Break Service are reduced from 7 to 4 which will be based on the Helmsley Road site, with the provision of standard beds being increased from 34 to 37 at other units across the County.
- 2) The staffing establishment at Helmsley Road be reduced by 137 hours as follows with the following posts being disestablished:
 - a. 2 fte (74 hours) Care Worker, Grade 2
 - b. 1.7 fte (63 hours) Night Care Workers, Grade 2.
- 3) The improvement and redecoration works are made to Helmsley Road to furnish the emergency respite care bungalow.

JON WILSON**Service Director for Personal Care and Support – Younger Adults****For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Ian Masson

Tel: 01623 635748

Email: ian.masson@nottsgov.uk**Constitutional Comments (LMc 18/09/2012)**

24. The Adult Health and Social Care Committee has delegated authority to approve the recommendations in the report

Financial Comments (RWK 19/09/2012)

25. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- a. Letter inviting carers to Consultation Meetings.
- b. AH/2012/00038 - Changes to the provision of emergency beds within the Learning Disability Short Breaks Service – 2nd May 2012.
- c. Equality Impact Assessment: Changes to the provision of emergency beds within the Learning Disability Short Breaks Service - May 2012.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Mansfield East – Councillors B Cross and M Wright
Worksop North East and Carlton – Councillor A Rhodes
Chilwell and Toton – Councillor R Jackson and J Doddy
Bingham – Councillor M Suthers.