

Social Care Hearsay! 2013 Priorities

PRIORITY 1

What can Oxfordshire County Council do to keep on improving our services?

About services in general you said:

- Listening to people – Hearsay! – would be good to see easy read before event
- Not everyone has a computer
- Random visits to monitor quality
- Focus groups with staff in care homes
- People need to be able/prepared to complain
- Measuring the right thing i.e. staff turnover
- Information/reports to be made available
- Language barriers i.e. English not first language, jargon
- Improving training, training for informal carers
- Establishing good practice
- Champions
- Monitoring – where action can be taken, monitoring by stakeholders/officers – are we measuring the right point
- Too many carers/improve transition of services from children to adults difficult

About improvements regarding transport you said:

- How is transport managed in other counties? e.g. Lincolnshire has received funding from EU to set up a scheme which is now self-funded. How can we help communities to help themselves, funding, practical help, to set up local schemes, work with communities
- Information on transport – what has happened to dial-a-ride?
- Link up services – oyster card for Oxfordshire, bus can share school run and lifts for elderly
- Public transport not easy for disabled if you need to use a walker/wheelchair – training for bus drivers
- Cost – extend concession – oyster card for Oxfordshire
- Personal service/trained drivers
- Repeated journeys – co-ordination of transport services/flexibility

About getting in contact with social workers you said:

- How can we make things better?
- Getting practical help important
- Being pro-active with self-funders can head off safeguarding issues and coordinating care Need to include self-funders in regular assessments
- Someone to come quickly when you call
- In Brighton & Hove dedicated review team (care coordinators) allocated to different care providers (15 people in team) that worked well. People see same social worker each year
- Social worker got to know families well – continuity
- Increased no of reviews & on time
- Prevented safeguarding problems

- Knowing who your care manager is important and phone number, info pack sent out, single phone no/equipment/care/assessment

PRIORITY 2

How can the Council help prevent us from experiencing discrimination?

About handling abuse on public transport you said:

- Everyone on table seen or experienced abuse – can be drivers/staff – passengers
- Know where to complain/talk to someone, be clear about what to do if it happens
- Knowing that your complaint will be dealt with
- Make a note of time date number of bus to report to manager
- Transport staff have to have training and be checked on people
- Easy read for timetables and no jargon/bigger print/braille
- Awareness training in schools/colleges
- Clear messages on buses/trains saying if abuse is seen or reported you will be told to leave the bus/train and be fined

About going back to employment particularly for mental health service users you said:

- Representatives groups
- Carers groups – Bicester
- Information from My Life My Choice
- New employment scheme should ask the questions – do you want to go back to work? If not there may be valid reasons: should not be coerced
- Need more support finding a job and support when in the workplace
- Money – threat in changes to benefits – cuts to money, fear of being out of work – regaining benefits
- Assessments need to review mental health (individuals are 'parked') they only consider physical impairments
- Atos and assessment companies need more robust assessment that is inclusive of mental health
- People with mental health issues may be on strong medication which may influence/impact job – should be part of assessment (may be withdrawn and not want to socialise)
- Peer mentor for support in work
- Training and educational needs of employers to understand mental health
- The stigma attached to mental health
- Need a national scheme to encourage people with disabilities to set up their own companies/business
- 'Discrimination is being actively encouraged by the changes'
- Atos and A4E are not liaising with voluntary organisations to enlighten user needs
- Employers could seek help from voluntary sector as mentors
- Negative - Government is actively discriminating against disabled people – by encouraging them to work and cutting benefits
- Positive – support should be given to individuals to enter and stay in the work place rather than bouncing in/out
- No advantage – poor on benefits and poor in work – actually worse off
- Stress and becoming unwell – going back on benefits, no support to find a job

- Can't be supported in the workplace because it identifies you as a service user
- Threat of having benefits withdrawn
- The Government are pitting the employed against the unemployed and the able bodied against the disabled.

PRIORITY 3

How can the Council help with support networks?

You said:

- Where is the support/advice to set up a carers group? Carers Oxfordshire/voices
- Training for carers (existing groups) (i.e. KAT) and advertise widely
- Info is scattered for families of children with learning disabilities – great to have external facilitator to take strain off carers. Otherwise can't sustain it. Get a lot of info from other carers (funded by Comic Relief)
- Carers groups should use Carers Oxfordshire
- Carers groups need to be engaging with a programme – people talking about their problems all the time is depressing
- Support networks can be key to aspects of everyday living e.g. exorbitant taxi costs to get to groups/appointments for Social & Community Services users
- GP's useful to keep updated on latest info
- Banbury carers group has just folded. People are choosing to do other activities.
- People with LD who are carers need more support
- More social networks for young adults and adults with LD – not much there
- Support to start a community/carers group
- How to get volunteers to work together without offending people (OCVA)
- Good neighbourhood schemes – need to promote better
- Needs to be a drive by all to ensure all carers groups in Oxfordshire know about Carers Oxfordshire and have funding information

PRIORITY 4

How can the Council keep us informed and help us find out what we need to know?

About changes affecting benefits you said:

- Is learning disability losing to other parts of OCC?
- Universal credit changes - what are the disadvantages?
- Blue Badge difficulties?
- Reduction case contracts & their provision
- Inform OXON people about the impact of the cuts to local Government from Central Government
- Does the District Council know?
- Inform OXON people about DWPP's GL 24 in their rights

- Biggest problem: ensuring that alcoholics, drug addicts don't use their benefit/direct payments wrongly – will lead to increased homelessness
- What is the safeguarding?
- Do Head teachers know enough & offer parents sound guidance where appropriate? To point them in the best direction
- Those receiving direct support, will they be recompensed for the reduction in Council Tax (?10%) on benefit – what help might they hope for? any? Might OCC help here?

About being informed in general you said:

- Key times e.g. – diagnosis, referral, schools identify a concern etc, big changes, transition – need an information pack with signposting to more information and support groups
- Face to face, parents groups, very effective
- Could we make better use of national information or join up with other areas to produce it?
- Where does the knowledge and info need to be? GP surgeries – everyone goes, leaflets, receptionist (& GPs), schools, SCS, libraries, CAB, on-line (but not just on-line), churches, community centres,
- Good examples – networks, social groups, noticeboards/newsletters, carers groups, groups like this need some support to sustain themselves (busy working carers don't have the time to organise and facilitate), information is accessible and powerful through other carers and helps people feel less isolated
- On-line info – has a place but you usually want to ask follow up and clarification individual questions to a person. Going through a hub to get to other organisations info is a good idea. Needs to be very clear and easy to navigate.
- Good information about welfare benefits and concessions – really important but complex and difficult to follow. Can this be more joined up with info about health and social care?
- Train/inform the leaders of groups/librarians/GP receptionists etc.
- People don't know what DP and PB etc. are – never mind acronyms – talk simply – otherwise people don't even know what to ask about
- Phone numbers of SF (support finder), don't know what's on SF
- Disability website – broken down by special interest areas – and make sure not to fall between the cracks (e.g. not one disability/complex)
- Orgs across disability/illness/issue groups don't speak to each other
- Integrating info across health/social care/housing – join up as good model
- Get a write up in the press – Oxford Mail, Times, Banbury Guardian

About housing maintenance you said:

- Housing Association saying you have to do it yourself – garden, cleaning windows, home maintenance, light bulbs, what if you're disabled
- Trust a Trader – list of recommended people – trading standards
- Charging for services that used to be free
- Bounced between utilities and housing provider – whose responsibility is it? – housing providers/private owned
- Solutions – housing providers should know how many people living in their properties – join up provision across a lot of people and it would still be safe and cheaper
- H&S high standard bulbs not available
- 'Community Service' – is it safe? Trust? – vulnerability
- Voucher schemes

- Residents groups – advocate
- 'Staying put' scheme? - Alan to tell us! My Life My Choice – easy read, Home Improvement agency
- Advocacy
- Waiting 2 years for new loo – constantly passed on from one person to the next – whose responsibility
- Support people to set up their own business e.g. hearing disability