



**Performance Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 13 March 2014**

ADDENDA

7. Contract Quality Assurance - Adult Social Care

This is the background paper referred to under Item 7.

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13 MARCH 2014

ADULT SOCIAL CARE - CONTRACT QUALITY ASSURANCE

Report by Sara Livadeas, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning

Introduction and context

The Joint Commissioning Team is responsible for monitoring the quality of contracted services. It discharges this function through the provision of leadership, contract management and contract monitoring of services.

Over 15,000 adults in Oxfordshire receive support services that are funded by the Council in some way. About 6,000 of these receive long-term care and support. These services are provided by over 300 external suppliers.

They range from large national organisations working with certain age groups or disabilities, to smaller local organisations aimed at supporting people with very specific needs.

The county council has a strong commitment to work with its suppliers to ensure that good quality services are available for people who reside in Oxfordshire and need support to help meet their assessed needs.

The Joint Commissioning Team within the Social & Community Services Directorate works across both adults and children's directorates. It leads the commissioning and contracting of services that meet the needs of adults, children and families in an efficient and cost effective way. The Team works with NHS partners across social and healthcare services and provides support to social work teams who help arrange support packages for individuals.

The Joint Commissioning Team maintains a Contracts Register of all contracts and sets out plans to monitor these.

This paper provides

- a summary of the work carried out by the Joint Commissioning Quality Procurement & Contracts Team;
- progress towards the delivery of assurance about the quality of services funded by the Council and delivered to people in Oxfordshire; and
- the themes that are the focus for assurance in the period through to March 2015.

Managing our Contracted Services

The 'landscape' of contracts is constantly changing as services are de-commissioned, contracts cease and new services are commissioned and implemented. When making these changes the Joint Commissioning Team operates within the context of the Commercial Services Board that is located in the Chief Executive's office.

Our contract management work confirms that contracts are achieving the overall general outcomes for the people who receive services whilst our contract monitoring looks at the key performance indicators that providers are to achieve.

Once contracts are in place the Directorate monitors the delivery of these through a range of activity. All contracts have a named Quality & Contracts Officer allocated to them.

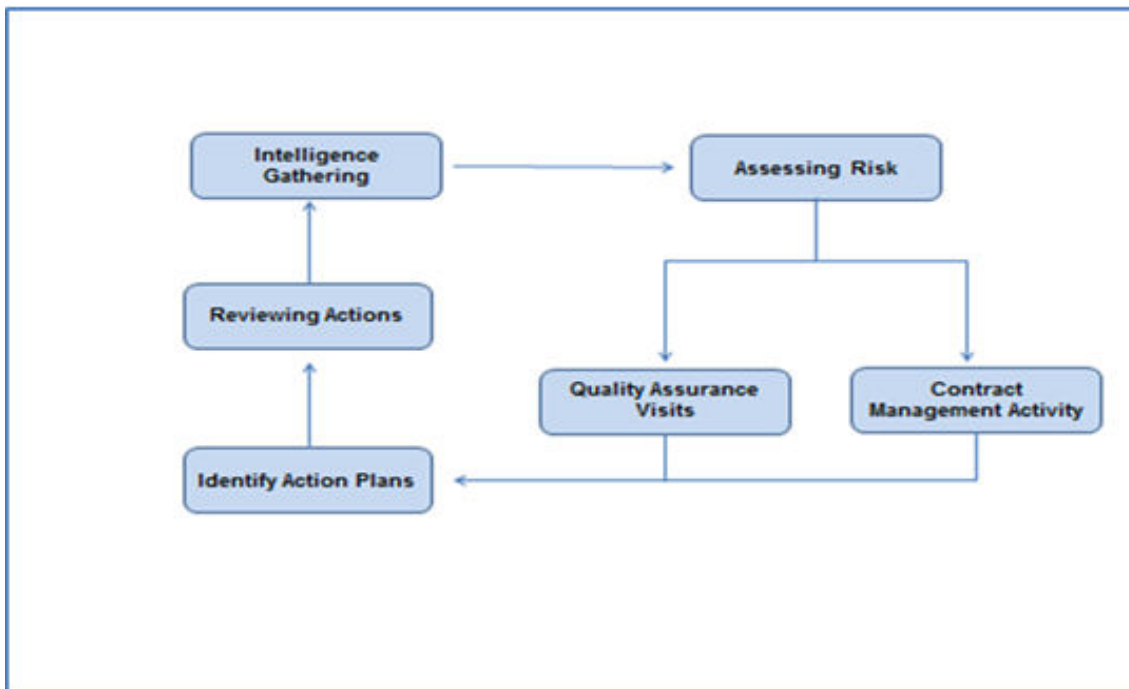
To assure the quality of the services delivered the Joint Commissioning Team has an internal target to review all contracted services annually as a minimum. This activity is undertaken as part of an annual monitoring plan with the Team's performance against planned monitoring activity being reviewed on a monthly basis.

During the period April - December 2013 the team undertook 414 out of 438 visits which reflect 95% monitoring activity versus planned activity. A number of monitoring visits did slip or were postponed and these have been rearranged at an alternative date.

Assuring the Quality of Services

The Council commissions a broad range of services, many of which are complex in nature. To ensure that these receive an appropriate and proportionate management response and to allocate staff resources effectively we adopt a risk based approach to our quality assurance work.

The following diagram shows how the process is informed by market intelligence gathering.



The intelligence we receive helps determine the type of contract management activity that is required and the frequency of quality assurance visits.

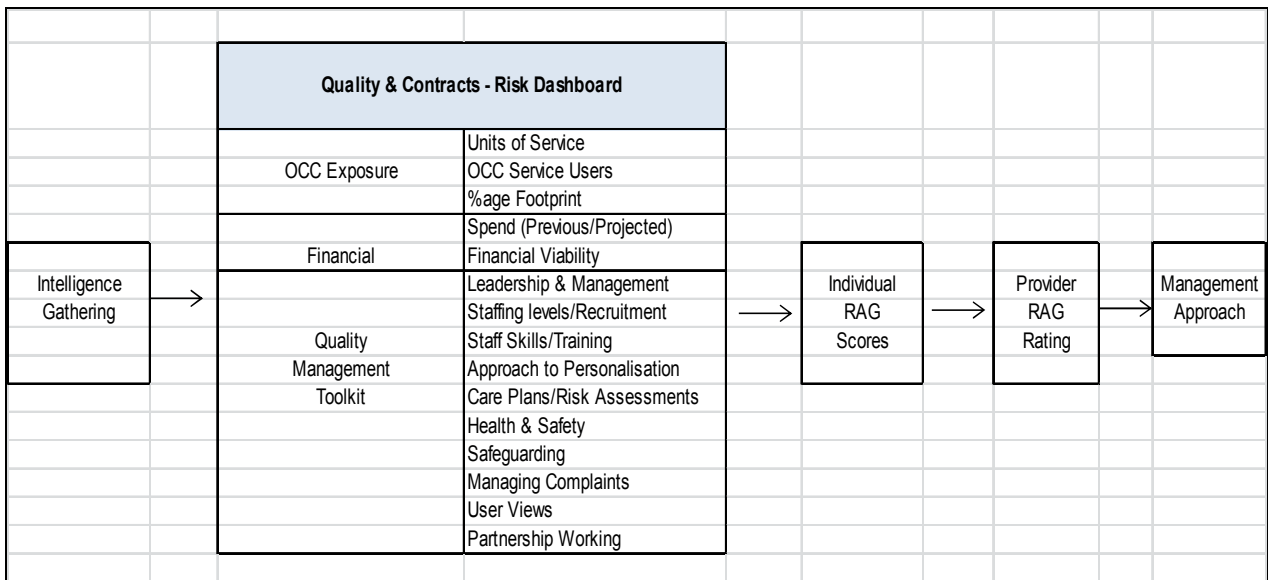
Our approach begins with an intelligence gathering phase, which takes into account information from the appropriate regulatory body and the council's own assessment of

risk. This risk assessment includes views from safeguarding teams from both the council and health services. Alongside this there is a review of the number of placements with a service, the number of safeguarding alerts and the level of complaints for individual providers. The final element of the risk assessment is to review feedback from Adult Social Care staff involving the outcomes from a selection of individual care management reviews.

Where we identify that there are contract actions that need to be undertaken or there is an increased risk we increase the monitoring activity to ensure that the risk is managed appropriately.

The action plans that result from the monitoring activity then feedback into the information cycle.

The key role of the contract management process is to judge and manage provider performance. The following diagram shows the information flow that assists with that judgement.



The Quality Monitoring Toolkit outlines the main areas we consider during our quality assurance visits and includes

- Leadership & management
- Staff levels & Recruitment
- Staff Skills & Training
- Personalisation
- Care Plans & Risk Assessments
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Managing Complaints
- User Views

In addition to this the quality assurance visits include discussion with managers, staff and service users. Other methods of gaining feedback including customer surveys and

phone-in days for services such as home support are also used to help inform the provider rating.

The outcome of the quality monitoring activity informs an internal risk-rating based on a Traffic Light **Red Amber Green** (RAG) system. This system is also invoked if we are notified of a significant event between monitoring visits.

Where such risks and incidents are identified there is a review of the quality assurance activity and an appropriate allocation of staff resources for more frequent on-going assurance purposes.

Changes in rating are notified to social and healthcare staff involved in the purchase of care services so they are aware of the concerns with service delivery. The ratings we use are

- **Amber:** Indicates that there is an issue or a piece of information that may affect a decision to make a placement. Before making any placements with the provider staff are asked to check with the Joint Commissioning Team
- **Red:** Indicates that no further placements should be made with the provider (unless senior managers authorise it in exceptional circumstances following a risk assessment) as there is a major unresolved issue.

Senior Managers within Social & Community Services receive updates on contracted providers that have a risk rating of Amber or Red.

The information provided as a result of contract monitoring activity is also used for a range of purposes, including the allocation of staff resources and informing our quality assurance programme for the coming year.

To ensure ownership of quality at all levels we have

- identified key tasks that we require staff to discharge to support the effective delivery of the Risk Dashboard
- a reporting structure to ensure that issues are reported on time through line managers, actions taken and risks escalated to an appropriate level.
- emphasised the areas of Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Information Governance in the work we carry out.

The frequency of monitoring is reviewed systematically having due regard to the size and complexity of the contracted service, and a provider's response to any action plans put in place to improve services.

As well as the in-county services the Joint Commissioning Team also support the monitoring of out-of-county services.

- Our role involves us in supporting the monitoring of services for c.100 care related placement settings for Older People. To do this we contact all 'host' local authorities to hear their views on relevant service providers in their areas and we review Care Quality Commission reports.

- There are also around 300 Learning Disability adults in out of county placements and these are managed by the Learning Disability Team with support and vetting of services delivered by Joint Commissioning's Quality & Contracts Team when required.

Members may wish to note that the Chief Executive's Office is leading on the procurement of a contract management system to support the contract management function across the council.

Key External Links

At a more strategic level our market intelligence comes through a variety of groups and links. In the following forums we may discuss and share information about services that operate regionally, nationally or where the council may have multiple out-of-county placements

- Thames Valley Quality Surveillance Groups: multi-agency meeting - Clinical Commissioning Groups, Local authorities, regulatory bodies, Healthwatch (meets every two months)
- Thames Valley Quality Surveillance - Care Homes Task & Finish Sub-Group. The aim of the group is to find joint ways of working in relation to monitoring and supporting quality and safety in care homes in Thames Valley area (meets every two months)
- Quarterly Meetings are held between Social & Community Services representatives and the Lead Care Quality Commission Inspector for Oxfordshire (quarterly)
- South East Region ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) Contracts and Market Development Sub-Group (meets quarterly). Discusses strategic contract and market development issues in the south east region and in particular where there are cross-cutting or cross boundary issues.

The Quality of Services in Oxfordshire

A recent review of published results from Care Quality Commission inspections is suggesting that in Oxfordshire

91 % of standards for care homes for older people we work with are compliant
92 % of standards for domiciliary care agencies we work with are compliant

Furthermore across Oxfordshire we are finding that people are generally satisfied with the services they receive.

- **Care Homes** - A survey of care home residents in February 2013 showed that, in respect of all care home services, overall from the responses received 95% of people were satisfied with services (65% of them being extremely or very satisfied), and only 1% were dissatisfied.

- **Home Support** - The quality of care in Oxfordshire is generally good and there is a solid foundation of quality home care providers delivering services in the county. We know this because we assure quality through a number of activities and these contribute to our assessment of the overall quality of services delivered:
 - annual user surveys;
 - the use of phone in days;
 - a review of complaints;
 - analysis of electronic time monitoring data;
 - annual quality monitoring visits carried out by Council staff;
 - reviewing Care Quality Commission reports.

Overall our surveys suggest that 90% of service users are either satisfied or very satisfied with the service they receive.

Key areas for improvement that have been highlighted from complaints and individual feedback are; late visits, missed visits and poor continuity of care. These areas have been addressed in the Customer Service Standards for Home Support, developed by service users, informal carers and care providers. The standards are being used as the basis for our contract monitoring of customer satisfaction and the results of this work will feed into a provider's rating. A copy of the Standards is appended to this report for information.

Our intention is to facilitate the development of more Customer Standards in different service areas in the coming year.

Planning for the future

Based on our risk based approach and over the coming twelve months our quality assurance activity will focus on the following service areas.

- Care Homes for Older People
- Intermediate Care Services
- Respite Services
- Home Support Services
- The Reablement Service
- Crisis Response Services
- Extra Care Housing
- Learning Disability Providers on our Framework Contract
- Equipment Services
- The Alert Service
- Physical Disability Day Services.

These service areas will receive monitoring visits which focus on certain key themes:

- **Provider Care Plans** - to ensure these are updated, relevant and available to all established and temporary staff.
- **Provider Risk Assessments** - to ensure these are updated, relevant and available to all established and temporary staff.

- **Health & Safety** - to provide assurance that providers are responding to their health & safety obligations as they should
- **Safeguarding**- to ensure that providers are promoting safeguarding with their staff and that they are safeguarding service users from harm or the potential of harm
- **Provider Quality Assurance Systems** - to ensure that providers are carry out checks to ensure that all standards including those listed above are delivered to the required standard.

We will also carry out some lower level monitoring of some universal services such as Day Support, Lunch Clubs, Advice and Information. These services receive a lower level of attention due to the level of assessed risk.

SARA LIVADEAS
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March 2014

APPENDIX

Standards for Home Support Services

If you receive support at home from a care agency, these standards are for you, they set out what you can expect.

If you are a care agency, these are the standards that are expected from your staff and the standards that Oxfordshire County Council will use to monitor the quality of your services.

Home care staff will:

- introduce themselves when they arrive;
- know you and your support plan;
- be trained to deliver the support you need;
- always deliver support to a good standard.

When your home care worker visits you, they will:

- focus their attention on you;
- be pleasant and treat you with dignity and respect;
- do their very best to arrive on time and let you know by telephone if they are going to be late;
- tell you when they are leaving;
- check to see how they can best support you at the start of each visit;
- not rush you - they will help you at a pace that suits you;
- carry out all agreed tasks;
- make sure that you are comfortable at all times;
- communicate and discuss topics that interest you;
- check that you are happy with the support you are given and encourage you to tell us how they can improve;
- show you your care record if you ask for it;
- be aware that their visit may affect other household members.

These standards have been jointly written by people who receive care in their home and home care support agencies.

If you have any compliments, comments and complaints about the home support you receive please contact your care agency; usually talking to someone in the service can put it right. But if not, please contact Oxfordshire County Council by calling 01865 815906, emailing complaints@oxfordshire.gov.uk or writing to: Complaints Team, Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND.



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