

“What steps are being undertaken by the County Council to improve re-ablement services with Oxford Health?”

Response of Councillor Arash Fatemian given at meeting of County Council on April 3rd.

We have conducted a procurement exercise to identify a new provider for the Reablement Service. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, the current service provider, has been identified as the Council’s Preferred Provider. We are in the process of finalising the contract terms with them, including performance criteria.

Under the new contract, Oxford Health will be paid for the number of people it supports (reablement episodes). It will receive a bonus if it achieves the Council’s targets for number of new people (in-take) and good outcomes for service users. Outcomes are measured by the increase in independence following the end of the reablement episode. Payment by episode introduces a very significant incentive for Oxford Health to increase the number of people it supports – if it does not do so, it will not be paid. The agreed targets for the new contract are 3,250 episodes of reablement in Year 1 and 3,750 episodes in Year 2. If Oxford Health achieves these targets the benefits will be quickly felt by the wider system, as the current in-take is just 1,800 episodes a year. By getting more people into the service we should see a knock-on reduction in delayed transfers of care from acute and community hospitals.

The Council is taking steps to strengthen its arrangements for contract and performance monitoring of the Reablement Service, ahead of the new contract coming into effect. Contract and performance monitoring will focus on:

- a) Strategic overview – maintaining a high level, strategic overview of service / contract performance, with monthly, Director-level meetings between the Council and Oxford Health to discuss performance.
- b) Oxford Health’s capacity & capability – a range of contract monitoring activities aimed at establishing whether they are and remain capable of delivering the performance required, including monitoring of staffing levels, deployment, training, complaints and user satisfaction, handling of serious incidents etc.
- c) The Service’s effectiveness – delivering the service and the performance required – performance monitoring activities focused on assessing the Provider’s performance against the targets and KPIs, including in-take levels, responsiveness and outcomes for service users.

These activities and the intelligence gained at each tier above will inform the others and the over-arching commissioning process. Oxford Health currently provides monthly reports on their service activity and performance. We will be requiring weekly reporting and initiating from May 2012 a series of monthly performance monitoring meetings, including director-level meetings, to increase the focus and pressure on Oxford Health to improve its performance.