



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	CONSULTATION – BELFAST HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST: EXCELLENCE & CHOICE (LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICES)
Date:	Friday 18 th February 2010
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Relevant Background Information

Purpose

To bring to the attention of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee details of a further “*Excellence and Choice*” consultation by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (the Trust) on its future service delivery, this time in relation to Learning Disability Services in Belfast, and to present a draft response for further comment and endorsement.

Background

Towards the end of 2008 the Trust issued the consultation: “New Directions: A Conversation On The Future Delivery Of Health And Social Care Services In Belfast” which set out its strategic thinking regarding future service delivery generally. This consultation document builds on the thinking set out in New Directions and outlines the strategic direction and plans for the future of learning disability services in Belfast and at Muckamore Abbey Hospital. Some consultation has already taken place with people with learning disabilities and their families in developing the strategy. The purpose of the paper is to seek views on the strategic direction for adult learning disability services from the wider population.

Key Issues - Strategic Context

Policy

The regional policy for learning disability services is set out in the Equal Lives report (2005), developed as part of the Bamford review on mental health and learning disability, and in the subsequent Implementation Action Plan (2009) which sets out the Government’s proposals on how to take forward the recommendations of Equal Lives. The strategic direction of the Belfast Trust as outlined in the consultation paper is in line with the recommendations in the government’s Action Plan.

The Equal Lives report highlighted that people with a learning disability in Northern Ireland do not enjoy equality of opportunity and that they are often excluded from the opportunities that other citizens enjoy.

Financial Implications

The Equal Lives report made 74 recommendations and the cost of implementing these in full was estimated at approximately £175 million over a fifteen to twenty year period. Initially an extra £17m has been secured by the Minister of Health to begin this process over the 3-year period 2008/09 to 2010/11. The Belfast Trust’s share of this is almost £3.8m. The Belfast Trust currently has around £52m available annually from the Health and Social Care Board to support the delivery of adult learning disability services. However, the Trust has to achieve efficiency savings of 3% a year from 2008 – 2011 as well as managing an underlying deficit. This equates to £5m efficiency to be achieved over the 3-year period for adult learning disability services. The Trust recognises that there will be challenges in delivering its vision for Learning Disability Services in the current financial climate and that the implementation of some of the proposed elements will rely on appropriate levels of funding being secured. The Trust therefore aims to make the best use of existing resources and any new funding to invest in more modern services and achieve efficiencies in order to deliver the services that people with learning disabilities have said they want and which are

detailed in Equal Lives. Some of the recommendations within the report are therefore subject to resources.

Young People

Elected Members have previously expressed the view that there are limited facilities provided for people with learning difficulties, particularly young adolescents, and as such additional resources needed to be targeted in that area. Within this consultation, the Trust states that as part of the further enhancement of the Trust's community based (non centre) daytime provision for adults with a learning disability, an initial focus will be on the needs of school leavers.

Guiding Principles

The Trust has developed a number of guiding principles, in collaboration with service users, their families and carers, to guide the approach to learning disability services. The fundamental principle underpinning reform in learning disability services is **individualisation**. The direction of travel for the service is away from congregated living and large institutional establishments towards services that are flexible and tailored to suit the needs of an individual.

Summary of the Consultation

The Trust currently delivers services to people with learning disabilities through three strands. They are:-

1. Somewhere to live and a fuller life.
2. Access to additional support in the community, including specialist community treatment and support services and respite.
3. Access to specialist inpatient assessment and treatment services.

Within these parameters The Trust is proposing:

1. Somewhere to live and a fuller life:

- An expansion of supported housing across the city of Belfast.
- The replacement of the four remaining residential homes with a range of supported housing options for the people who live there to improve their quality of life.
- The further enhancement of its community based (non centre) daytime provision for adults with learning disability, focusing initially on the needs of school leavers.
- The re-provision of existing out dated centres with purpose built facilities providing no more than forty places at a time.
- That in future day centres will only provide services for people who are unable to meaningfully participate in integrated community opportunities.
- The further development of the supported employment model and supported employment opportunities in Belfast.

2. Access to additional support in the community, including specialist community treatment and support services and respite:

- The re-provision of residential respite services in dedicated respite facilities no more than four beds in any one facility.
- Enhancement of Community/ leisure - based respite.
- Increase of Family respite placements as a form of respite break.
- Increased access to mainstream services where appropriate.
- The expansion of Multidisciplinary Community Learning Disability Teams to provide proactive services and support to people with learning disability to access mainstream & learning disability specific services.
- Development of Specialist service networks including epilepsy services, genetics, complex health services, autism services, primary care mental health services, dementia services, and addictions services.
- Development of Specialist Mental Health and enhancement of Behavioural Services.
- Enhancement of specialist treatment options provided across the city of Belfast, including a

community forensic service.

3. Access to specialist inpatient assessment and treatment services:

- To provide access to acute inpatient mental health beds for people with high levels of adaptive functioning/mild learning disability who require therapeutic intervention as a result of mental health problems.
- To bring forward a plan to resettle all remaining longstay patients from Muckamore Abbey hospital by 2014 subject to the appropriate levels of funding being available.
- To commence a discussion with all relevant stakeholders on the future of inpatient specialist assessment and treatment services at Muckamore Abbey hospital.

The full consultation document can be accessed at:

http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/involving/reference/Excellence_and_Choice_Learning_Disability_Nov09.pdf

Recommendations

The deadline for the consultation is 25th February 2010 (new extended closing date); therefore the Committee is asked to approve the draft response and its submission to the Belfast Trust subject to Council ratification on March 1st.

Key to Abbreviations

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust - the Trust

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Draft Belfast City Council Response to the consultation

Appendix 2 – Summary of the Belfast Trust 'Excellence & Choice' consultation on the future provision of Learning Disability Services in Belfast.