

# LCC Home Care Forum

## 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025

### 9:30 – 12:00pm

Chair: Caroline Cosh, Clifton Homecare Limited

Deputy Chair: Carol Hargreaves, Masterstaff

Notes: Adam Livermore, Commissioning Support Officer, Lancashire County Council

Agenda Item	Notes
1) Welcome and Introductions	Caroline Cosh welcomed everyone and introduced herself and Carol Hargreaves as Chair and Deputy Chair respectively.
2) Update from Provider working Group	<p>Caroline Cosh updated that there are 13 providers involved in the working group, and a meeting was held at SureCare in Preston in December. The plan is for meetings to take place every six weeks.</p> <p>The next one is on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January and will be focusing on Short Term Care. All short-term care providers will be attending, along with Joe Cragg and Andrea Cox from LCC Commissioning, and a social care representative. The meeting will discuss challenges, such as the backlog of assessments that aren't taking place in a timely manner. Jon Blackburn added there had been several queries about Short Term Care at Home (STCAH), such as what happens when it is a spot purchase or a block contract. LCC have worked through the various scenarios internally and intend to share that with the working group. This will include when clients are going into hospital and not being offered to the previous care provider.</p> <p>Caroline Cosh added that the working group is now closed, and all areas of the county are represented. However, they would encourage everyone to continue to raise issues via the Lancashire Homecare email she and Carol Hargreaves monitor, <a href="mailto:lancshomecareforum@gmail.com">lancshomecareforum@gmail.com</a>, and they would be happy to take any topics of discussion forward.</p>
3) Update of Key LCC appointments . Overview of new PDPS Providers.	Jon Blackburn gave an update on the recent request for providers to update their wards. The recent request for changes has been confused as providers were also able to change them in June, so he may be contacting some providers to ask for clarification. When the new brokerage system goes live, providers will be able to see what wards they are in. There is also the possibility that the system will



<p>Rate Increases</p>	<p>allow providers to change their own wards at quarterly windows. Karen Thompson asked if LCC will be able to remove wards if providers aren't accepting work in those areas. Jon Blackburn stated that was possible, but that LCC would contact a provider if they are not accepting. When queried about whether it was fair to penalise providers by removing them, KT clarified that the purpose would not be to penalise, but to ensure we have an accurate reflection of the active providers operating in the wards across the County.</p> <p>The link for eBrokerage training can be found here:  <a href="https://clickdelegate.lancashire.gov.uk/conferenceDetails.asp?eid=8163">https://clickdelegate.lancashire.gov.uk/conferenceDetails.asp?eid=8163</a></p> <p>The training in February is aimed at existing providers, not new providers. There will be further sessions for the 37 new providers nearer sign-up.</p> <p>In the new system, providers will be offered all packages for wards they are registered in. The new system will also allow a more accurate picture of the market, so providers can be informed of any gaps.</p> <p>Karen Thompson presented a PDF of the new structure at the top of LCC, which will be sent out with the minutes. There have been several changes in recent months following departures, and several positions are interim for the moment, including the Chief Executive, some directors, and some Heads of Service. CQC are inspecting in February, and there won't be any plans to make positions permanent until after the outcomes of that. Claire Evans asked why there was such an exodus. Jon Blackburn agreed that it looks like there has been a shake-up, but there hasn't been. Several people have retired or moved on to other positions at the same time.</p> <p>Jon Blackburn shared a presentation with the forum. The Care Navigation target for sourcing care is 5 days, and we are at 3.8. The total time to place target is 9 days total, and we are under target at 6.5 days. Following the reduction in referrals from May to October, there have been some signs of an upturn, though the December data hasn't been fully captured yet. LCC are unsure why it is increasing, as it could be increased demand due to time of year, or social care getting to the backlogs. They will continue to monitor as there could be key indicators about trends in the next quarter. There is also an increase in the amount of people receiving homecare, trending up from the lowest point</p>
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between September and October. Caroline Cosh asked if there is anyone in the council doing statistical analysis of the issue. Jon stated there is a Business Intelligence team who could be asked for anything specific, though he also has his own information dashboard which he is getting the numbers from. He is always open to hearing what information providers want. For the reasons behind the statistics, they could talk to people in operational teams. The operations representative had to send apologies due to an urgent situation.

LCC are reaching the end of the Homecare transfers process. There are low numbers of packages left to transfer, due to providers joining the PDPS. The transfers process should be completed in the next four weeks. Any one of the 43 people being transferred could also take a direct payment instead. Margaret MacDonald stated that, in the first round, work was given to providers, and those who didn't get anything were told they should get something in the second round. She asked if LCC had moved away from that. Rebecca Yates clarified LCC managed the project in rounds due to volume, as putting everything on at once would have flooded the portal. With recent packages, they have been transferred from providers with two or three people so it has been easier to offer them via the portal. Margaret MacDonald stated her organisation hadn't received anything, and other providers stated in the chat that they hadn't either.

There are 37 new providers joining the PDPS on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, which is still less than pre-PDPS. There are ongoing discussions with Procurement about closing the PDPS on round three for Homecare. However, there are other services on the PDPS, and LCC need to determine if closing Homecare to new providers means that other services also need to be closed.

Jon Blackburn stated that the fees paper is going to Cabinet for a decision on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February, but LCC are not in a position to give any more information at the present time. Karen Thompson added that the cabinet paper will be open to public access at the end of January, and she will send out a link to providers.

Donna Briggs asked why Lancashire haven't consulted about fees as other councils have. Jon Blackburn agreed to discuss it internally, as in previous years there have been

such exercises. Margaret MacDonald asked if the Local Authority could move the meeting where cabinet considers fees earlier as the current timing makes it difficult for providers to budget. Jon Blackburn agreed to take the point back to internal discussions, but added part of the timescales was due to the sheer amount of work involved, as the fees paper is for the entirety of social care, and starting it too early mean factors influencing the uplift cannot be fully considered.

Hayley Southern raised that packages of care are coming through with minimal information. When replying, providers must indicate how they would address the service user's support needs. Other providers indicated the same problem. Rebecca Yates agreed information can be limited. It would require discussions with social care. Jon Blackburn and Caroline Cosh updated that they were planning to get someone from social care on the provider working group to feedback issues like this.

Chat asked if double-up packages are still coming with two singular CPLIs. Margaret MacDonald answered that that was still happening, from her experience. She felt that it was messy administratively for her provider's system. Karen Thompson added that it is done that way as an attempt to standardise CPLIs from the LAS redesign.

Rebecca in the chat asked about reducing from double up packages using hoists. Neil Harrison stated there are no recent changes, it is called Proportionate Care, and people can be re-assessed to determine if they can have a single carer.

Chat asked if packages will still come through at 11 with the new eBrokerage system. Jon Blackburn confirmed they would approximately, but there may be some staggered packages coming through at a couple of minutes past. Caroline Cosh recommended checking between 11 and quarter past.

**Action:** Karen Thompson to send providers a link to the fees paper when it is published.

**Action:** Jon Blackburn to have internal discussions about consulting providers during the fees uplift process.

**Action:** LCC to arrange social care representation for the next forum.

4) Provider Only Meeting	As the minutes are handled by LCC, they were not taken for this section.
5) Feedback	<p>Caroline Cosh fed back to LCC attendees.</p> <p>Providers raising challenge or complaints on behalf of a service user have received feedback that they aren't allowed to do that. What is the process when a person has given consent for the advocacy? Karen Thompson stated if any formal complaint is made on behalf of a service user LCC would send the service user a letter to confirm consent. If it's in relation to a package of care, LCC would encourage either the service user or their next of kin/family to make the request on their behalf. They would still need to check with the social worker to confirm the views being expressed are those of the service user, and any complaint would need to go to the service best suited to address it.</p> <p>Contracts/Commissioning are not always involved actively in a safeguarding enquiry, though Contracts would still like to know as it is intelligence for the service.</p> <p>Is a provider able to get an earlier review on request, and what is the process? Karen Thompson answered providers would be able to ask, but requests may still be declined. Reviews might be pushed back due to an internal contract management strategy as contracts are put in different tiers for review frequency. PDPS contracts would all be tier two though, dependent on organisation size and volume of work, they may be moved up and down.</p> <p>Providers were under the impression that communications had gone out to Social Care and Care Nav to ensure packages are returned to prior providers upon hospital discharge. However, several providers have said that is not the case in multiple instances. Jon Blackburn answered that Short Term Care at Home is not primarily commissioned by Care Navigation. In some instances, workers have not looked at the system to see if there is a previous provider involved. LCC are starting to overcome those issues. It depends if it's a block or a spot contract, as the spot contracts can be offered out to all providers, and they will need to work through the scenarios to figure out what is happening. They have developed a set of principles based on these scenarios which will be taken to the provider working group.</p> <p>Caroline Cosh raised providers felt no-entry cases were not being dealt with quickly. She asked LCC to investigate soon</p>

as there was a risk of safeguarding issues. Jon Blackburn agreed that it could be investigated.

Caroline Cosh suggested a direct line for providers to manage the long delays when contacting the hub. Jon Blackburn agreed to discuss the possibility with Customer Contact Centre managers.

Caroline Cosh asked who providers can escalate challenges to if they are not getting a timely response from the Hub. Neil Harrison asked for individual issues to be sent to the contract management mailbox, as each provider has their own contract officer who can progress issues internally.

Samantha Pilkington raised that providers have had issues getting outcomes when bidding on packages, and some have been pending for years. Karen Thompson asked for examples to be sent to her so she could check them against the system. Neil Harrison added that the new eBrokerage system will automatically generate a response for unsuccessful applicants.

Caroline Cosh asked if providers could support Jon Blackburn when requesting social work representation at the forum. Jon Blackburn stated that he had been reassured that someone will be attending the next forum when he received the apologies today. Karen Thompson added that there was also Contract Management representation planned, but they are limiting numbers to avoid making the forum LCC heavy.

Carol Hargreaves raised that there are repeated issues such as issues amending CPLIs and no timescales for increases. Karen Thompson added that the CPLI issue has been a problem since the LAS redesign, and Tahera Chaudhrey has been working to find a fix. She added that Contracts and Commissioning are not always getting a quick response from adult social care either, and she will be chasing up with her new head of service. Jon Blackburn added that there are trends with backlogs in assessments, but that commissioning doesn't have information about scale. Operational representatives may not have all the answers but would be able to take feedback to operational teams directly. There is also confirmed ops support for the provider working group. Karen Thompson recommended that providers write to directors, so that the message is coming from multiple directions.

	<p>Precious New Leaf Care raised they have had issues contacting Occupational Therapists for referrals. Karen Thompson said she had received emails to that effect and would be making enquiries.</p> <p>Lisa Russell raised that they had been told by a social worker that they didn't have the authority to increase a package to two carers, and it would need to be signed off by two managers. They had been told to send the person to hospital. Karen Thompson stated there was a process to get senior management authorisation and asked Lisa to email her the details so she could investigate.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> LCC to investigate where no-entry cases are not being responded to quickly.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Jon Blackburn to discuss the possibility of a direct line to providers with the Customer Contact Centre.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Karen Thompson to check examples of packages not being given outcomes on the system.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Karen Thompson to make enquiries regarding providers having issues making Occupational Therapy referrals.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Karen Thompson to investigate Lisa Russell's two-carer package increase situation.</p>
6) Dates for Future Meetings	The provisional dates for 2025 are 23 <sup>rd</sup> April, 16 <sup>th</sup> July, and 5 <sup>th</sup> November.
7) AOB and Close	No further business was raised.