

**CABINET  
MONDAY 17 JUNE 2002 AT 2.00 P.M.**

**BEST VALUE REVIEW OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

Report of the Director of Adult Care Services

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**1. Purpose of Report**

To report the outcome of the best value review of mental health services for older people.

**2. Summary**

The report:

- presents the final report, recommendations and implementation plan arising from the best value review of mental health services for older people.
- highlights where improvements could be made to service provision.
- identifies changes that could be made to enable more people to be maintained more cost effectively at home for longer.

**3. Conclusion**

Cabinet is asked to consider the recommendations emerging from the Review.

**4. Background**

The County Council spends £2.5m on staffing for this client group and £16.4m on services. The NHS mainly via the Hertfordshire Partnership Trust spends £10.7m.

The Review shows how changes could be made from by shifting the balance of care from residential care, to domiciliary care, which is more cost effective.

A random sample of 35 older people in specialist mental health beds in residential care was analysed. The analysis indicated that 50% of them could have been maintained for longer in their own home before admission to residential care, possibly by about 30 weeks on average.

This would be possible only if additional or enhanced domiciliary services are established and funded. Significant improvements could be made by reconfiguring services and investing in domiciliary, rather than residential care. Such reinvestment would benefit more people in the community than if the same amount were spent on residential care. This would offer best value for the resourcing available.

The Review also indicates how integrated working between NHS and Adult Care Services staff would be more cost-effective and efficient and improve access, information and support to users and carers. Pooling resources between ACS and the NHS will improve service availability and should eventually provide more equitable services across Hertfordshire.

### **Hypothesis One**

“If we establish an integrated mental health service, it would improve the service to older people and their carers by being more co-ordinated, more flexible and cost effective.”

It is a national requirement of the NSF for Older People to have agreed protocols in place for the care and management of older people with mental health problems by 2004. The Audit Commission requires authorities to collaborate to provide specialist multidisciplinary teams for older people with mental health needs and to promote joint assessment and care management, shared case files and compatible IT systems. We recommend that we should aim to achieve a fully integrated Specialist Mental Health Team for Older People within Hertfordshire Partnership Trust by April 2004. This would be achieved incrementally and requires further consultation with staff and Unions. Meanwhile there are significant issues that can be progressed immediately and within current resources such as developing clear pathways and protocols, setting up local forums and providing better information for users and carers.

It is also suggested that Adult Care Services should identify dedicated time from within its Area Teams, and that opportunities to co-locate staff in existing Community Mental Health Teams within HPT should be taken.

### **Hypothesis Two**

“If we shifted the balance towards community based services from institutional care, it would promote independence by supporting clients to live in their own homes longer, and appropriately support carers.”

Significant service improvements can be achieved by shifting resources from residential to community/domiciliary care but this can only happen over time.

It is therefore recommended that the following would be initial priorities:

- Identify funds from specific grants, as available, to provide carers support services across the County, extending existing Agreements with voluntary sector organisations; and using Carers Breaks money to fund respite services.
- Pilot the use of technology and equipment and link this with the current work on establishing a joint equipment service with Health, and on the outcome of the Best Value Review of Services for Adults with Physical Disabilities or Sensory Loss.

- Establish a flexible, specialist Home Support Service provided by trained carers. Options for how this should be commissioned and provided will need to be considered in more detail.
- Review day care to achieve improved consistency and better quality. Evaluate the impact of improved home care/support, technology and support to carers before creating any additional day care or reconfiguring existing services. It is recommended that this be pursued in year two, when additional savings from a reduction of admissions to residential care would have accumulated.

How the recommendations will be implemented is outlined in detail in the report and in Appendices B, C and D.

Shifting the balance of resourcing to help maintain independence at home for longer will improve quality of life. It provides better value for money and meets a key priority in the County Council's Performance Plan *“to fight for the interests of elderly and disabled people and ensure they have access to our services so that they can maintain their independence”*.

No extra resourcing is required for the major recommendations about service delivery, as these will be met from reconfiguring and reinvesting in community services. Some additional resourcing may be required to fully integrate and co-locate staff, and this is indicated in the report.

Cabinet is invited to consider the recommendations and the implementation plan in appendices B, C and D.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications of the review recommendations are set out in section 8 of the review report attached.