

**ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN 2001/02 BY THE
SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE**

Report of the Director of Adult Care Services

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1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report:

- Informs members of the findings of the Annual Review of Social Services Performance in 2001 - 2002 by the Social Services Inspectorate
- Highlights areas of particularly good performance, as identified by the Inspectorate
- Identifies areas of development identified by the inspectors.
- Informs members of the authorities Performance Rating for 2001 –2002.

2. Summary of Report

2.1 This report presents the findings of the Social Services Inspectorate Annual Review Letter, a copy of which is attached as Annexe 1 of this report. This report only addresses those points that relate to ACS. A similar report was considered by CSF Scrutiny Committee on 19 June.

2.3 The Inspectors noted that there have been some important areas of improvement and consolidation over the year. These included:

- Clear strategic leadership in developing partnerships with key agencies including the development of intermediate care, rehabilitation services, the Partnership Trust for Mental Health Services and Learning Disability Services
- Effective financial control mechanisms which have focused staff awareness
- Substantial progress on reduction of delayed transfers of care

2.4 Inspectors identified the following as areas for development:

- Sustaining the improvements made in services for adults through developments in commissioning by close working partnerships with the emerging PCTs and further use of the Health Act flexibilities
- Recruitment and retention of Staff (a similar point was made for Children Schools & Families).

1 Background

- 1.1 The Social Services Inspectorate monitors local authority Social Services Departments through the following Processes:
- Monitoring position statements returned by local authorities, (in June and October)
 - Published Performance Assessment Framework, Performance Indicator data (submitted in October)
 - Monitoring of reviews and plans including Joint Investment Plans and Capacity Plan
 - Annual Review Meeting (held in March)
 - Informal discussions with authorities, and the results of inspections, throughout the year.
- 1.2 Following the Annual Review Meeting, the Inspectors formally write to authorities setting out their view of performance, identifying strengths and areas for development in the forthcoming year.
- 1.3 Authorities are required to present the letter to an appropriate meeting of the council within two months of the receipt of the letter, and make it available to members of the public at the same time.
- 1.4 The evidence summarised in the letter is used, in conjunction with the processes outlined above to determine the councils' Performance rating.
- 1.5 Hertfordshire received a Social Services Performance Rating for 2001/02 of two stars (on a 0 – 3 star scale). Separate judgements are given to services for children and services for adults. Services for adults were judged as serving “some” people well with “excellent” prospects. Later this year during the Autumn, the Social Services Performance Ratings for all Councils will be updated and republished in order to enable the ratings to contribute directly to the comprehensive performance assessment CPA. Some Councils ratings may change.

2 Conclusions of the Letter:

- 2.1 The Inspectors view of the development of ACS was extremely positive and identified many areas of strengths and improvements during the last year. They referred to the leadership and development of an impressive strategy for services for older people and the delivery of increased intermediate care services that have contributed to the reduction in the number of delayed transfers of care of people currently older people in acute hospitals. They commented on the way in which we involved service users and carers in planning and on good quality services for people with mental health problems

and the work we have done to reshape accommodation services for people with learning disabilities.

- 2.2 The Inspectors noted the increased and high unit cost in all service users groups. (This particularly relates to the cost of residential and nursing home care in the independent sector) and the importance of sustaining current achievements in reducing delayed transfers by continuing development of the market for residential nursing home and domiciliary care. A report on our approach toward developing capacity in the independent sector is elsewhere on this agenda. The Inspectors said we had a strong management team that gives a positive steer to the work of the department and that there is excellent partnership working with PCTs and Trusts. They consider our prospects for improvement in 2002 to be excellent as evidenced by the judgement linked to the star rating (paragraph 1.5).
- 2.3 Recruitment and retention difficulties were also identified as an area that requires strategic response. Members will be aware that this problem is not unique to ACS and is referred to in the Best Value Review of Human Resources elsewhere on this agenda.
- 2.4 The Social Services Inspectorate will be inspecting our services for Older People between 19 June and 1 July. They will be checking that we are meeting our statutory requirements, progressing national priorities and delivering quality services to users and their carers. Based on their findings the inspection team will make recommendations for improvement. The findings will be a useful basis for our Best Value Review on Older Peoples' Services which is due to start in August and will report to Cabinet in March 2003. The findings will be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.