

Provision of Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities / Summerwood Day Centre

This report provides the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee with an outline of the changes for adults with learning disabilities who previously attended Summerwood Day Centre and an over view of the provision of community services for learning disabled adults.

Background

There are currently 540 learning disabled citizens in Nottingham receiving care and support packages to meet their daytime and evening care needs.

Timeline in relation to changes to day services

March 2021 Nottingham City Council operated 3 day centres for adults with learning disabilities and one for citizens with physical / sensory impairments: Martin Jackaman Centre (72), Spring Meadow Centre (69), Summerwood Centre (17), Acorn Centre (44) supporting a total of 202 Citizens (37%) of the 540.

March 2021 consultation was launched to close 1 internal learning disability day centre.

Consultations with affected stakeholders was conducted for 45 days via Zoom meetings, use of an independent organisation and the "Have Your Say Portal".

It was proposed that on closing Summerwood day centre, affected citizens currently using that day centre could access a combination of Spring Meadow or Martin Jackaman day centres. These day services would still retain the ability to accept new referrals.

May 2021 consultation closed and the decision was taken to close Summerwood day centre and support the affected citizens to attend Spring Meadow day centre.

September 2021 Summerwood closed. There were 17 citizens attending Summerwood prior to its closure and all 17 citizens transferred to Spring Meadow centre receiving the same level of service as they did when attending Summerwood.

No staff were put at risk of redundancy as there were vacancies across the Adult Provision services and staff were redeployed accordingly. Many of the staff moved to Spring Meadow to enable continuity of care.

January 2022 Despite the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic the internal Learning Disability service provision at Martin Jackaman Centre and Spring Meadow centre are operating at almost pre – pandemic levels.

Citizens and carers of those that moved to Spring Meadow have all reported that they are happy with the new service. No complaints have been received.

Both Spring Meadow and Martin Jackaman day centres services are built on maintaining and improving citizen's independence, health and well-being, in a supportive and light hearted atmosphere - all of which is done in consultation with the citizens attending and their advocates.

Assessment overview

Assessment colleagues based in the South Whole Life Disability (WLD) Team have reported that since the closure of Summerwood they have received no requests for building based day services from citizens living in Clifton.

The assessment team has received excellent feedback in regard to the 17 citizens who moved to Spring Meadow. Families have reported that they have been surprised at how well their loved ones have adjusted and how impressed they are at the range of activities available at Spring Meadow. Many of the families have said they are building up really positive relationships with the Spring Meadow staff team.

The citizens have commented that moving to Spring Meadow has enabled them to meet up more regularly (sometimes daily) with friends that they previously only saw at certain events, such as the Evergreen drama group. As well as being able to see old friends more regularly citizens have also said that moving to Spring Meadow has meant they have been able to make new friends. A number of citizens have said how they really like the different activities on offer at Spring Meadow.

Supported Living

The Whole Life Disability Team have continued to receive enquiries from families in regard to Supported Living. Supported Living is a more independent option than residential care for citizens who require accommodation with support and is something that Adult Social Care have been developing over the last 4 years. The aspiration in Nottingham is to support people to live as independently as possible and in the least restrictive settings; supported living enables citizens to do that.

This ambitious programme is set to continue for a further 3 years with plans to develop 60 units per year of supported living accommodation across both WLD and Mental Health.

Provision of Community Services for Learning Disabled Adults

Summary

Prior to COVID-19 the provision for adults with learning disabilities and autism and their carers across the City was primarily buildings based for both day and short break services, with some community based opportunities. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, service provision across the City shifted significantly, with day centres being closed in line with government guidance.

Many of the City's external day centres are now in operation, albeit at a reduced capacity. During the pandemic most services provided outreach support and alternative digital provision.

Market Overview

This information is based on a market intelligence exercise undertaken at the end of 2021, plus information taken from Nottingham City Council's Day and Evening

Services Framework. During October and November 2021 all day centres on the framework were contacted for information about their capacity. There are 27-day centre providers in total, however the information below relates to all day centres who support people with learning disabilities, of which there are 16.

Out of the 16 day centres who operate a day service for people with learning disabilities:

- 14 day centres were open and operating with 2 day centres unknown.
- 10 day centres indicated they supported citizens with all levels of need with 2 day centres indicating they could cater for citizens with low to medium level of need, the remaining day centres are unknown.
- 10 identified they had capacity for taking on more citizens.
- As of Oct 21 there were 183 citizens supported in the external market, and the highest attending day service supports 51 citizens.
- The average cost for a full day, medium rate in the external market is £77.26.

Current Position – External Community Care Market Risks and Pressures

Day centre provision is usually based on a high volume, low cost model, which relies on providers having a volume of citizens accessing the service. During and post-Covid, providers are unable to support the same numbers of citizens they once did at any given time. Should this situation persist it may impact on the business models of some providers. Covid related guidance for day centres has not been recently updated.

Recruitment and retention in the whole care market has been challenging for some time. Analysis by ADASS identified a turnover rate of approximately 30% of workers leaving the market on an annual basis. The issues for staffing have been worsened considerably, particularly during the latter half of 2021. This is due to a multiplicity of factors including;

- Reluctance to work in the care sector following Covid
- High sickness levels due to Covid, particularly in the light of the Omicron variant
- High sickness levels of stress and anxiety
- Reluctance of some staff to be vaccinated - 82% of the wider care market is vaccinated
- Brexit
- Furlough changes
- High employment levels
- Competition from retail and hospitality
- Alongside this, we have also seen significant increase in levels of demand for services linked to the impact of Covid.

The impact of this workforce shortfall is now affecting our ability to provide community based services to meet assessed eligible needs.

Respite Care

Carers have told us that it is often difficult to find pre-bookable respite care for their disabled child/adult with disabilities that they care for. We are working towards commissioning more pre-bookable options for planned respite care in care homes and also options that may support the person in their own home while their carer has a break.

Current Situation

Over recent years respite provision has been secured through short term placements in existing residential services which are made under the existing contract for Residential and Nursing Care. More recently providers have stated that due to the risks associated with Covid, they are now increasingly reluctant to allow short term placements on a regular basis within their homes. Current issues with recruitment have also made this situation more demanding having created a general lack of specialist provision in the local area.

Discussions with regional Local Authority colleagues have further demonstrated that adequate provision of respite is a regional challenge. The majority of Authorities, regionally, are currently unable to meet the need in their area and are also reliant on short term placements in residential care. Those who have been able to meet the demand for respite generally have use of internal provision and / or small block contracts. Although there is internal provision within Nottingham City, it is not able to meet the needs of all citizens requiring respite.

A specification of what the requirement for respite has been developed and is ready share with the market via a soft market test. The purpose of this process is to gauge the interest and feasibility of commissioning a small number of beds to be utilised primarily for respite, but also for short term emergency placements

Next Steps

The soft market testing is due to start imminently and the results of this work will influence next steps in commissioning a respite service

Paul Haigh – Head of Adult Social Care Provision

Amy Groom – Market Intelligence Manager

Oliver Bolam – Head of Mental Health & Whole Life Disability

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