

Review of in-house Homecare Team - Business Support Arrangements

Final Report

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Background

The Business Change Team was commissioned by the Head of Regulated Services to undertake a review of the business support arrangements within the in-house Homecare Team. The aim of the review was to identify opportunities to redesign the support function in a way that:

- Removes waste and duplication of effort
- Improves services to the professionals they support
- Improves the customer experience of the service
- Reduces operating costs

Although this review is confined to a small area of the business, consideration has been made to the wider Adults transformation programme and the recommendations below compliment the current thinking of how business support could be redesigned in the future.

Method

Over the two-week review period, interviews and observations were conducted with all the admin staff, the Admin Manager and a sample of Homecare Supervisors. This ensured a rich picture of the current state was built and a range of ideas for improvement were captured. This report contains the amalgamation of these and provides the Adults Services Management Team with recommendations for consideration and a sense of the scale of opportunity if the recommendations are implemented.

Current State

The Business Support Team comprises of 1 Admin Manager and 5 Admin staff (4fte). Their primary role is to support the Homecare Manager and 8 Supervisors in the weekly rostering of 67 Care Assistants within the in-house Homecare Team. They also support the collation of timesheets and expenses claims.

The team are all based in DMJ 3rd Floor but is split into 4, each supporting a geographical area; there is no resilience within the current seating and workload arrangements; absence cover is managed when the need arises, but is informal and unstructured.

Key findings and Recommendations

General Observations	Recommendations	Benefit
<p>Team Structure</p> <p>There are 4 geographical areas and each one is supported by 1 FTE, as each admin members only covers 1 geographical area this means there is no resilience as they have limited knowledge of the other geographical areas.</p>	<p>The Business Support Team are centralised, and together support the entire service – the principle of economies of scale would ensure the team can ‘do more with less’, as well as provide additional capacity and resilience.</p>	<p>1.5fte = £38K Plus opportunity for further savings of approx £48K. Total saving £86K</p>
<p>Roster/Scheduling Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On average 130 rosters are sent out on a Wednesday via 1st Class post costing approx £73.15 per week, the roster covers the period from the coming Sunday through to the following Saturday. Rosters are sent to the Client and Care Assistants. • Admin send out the roster to Care Assistant’s and Clients with gaps as resources have not been allocated to those slots. As a result of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosters to be sent to clients via second class post costing approx £16.25 per week. • If hand held devices (PDA’s) are fully utilised then the Care Assistants will be able to receive live schedules, reducing the need for them to receive hard copies through the post. • Configure Web Roster to create a “To be confirmed” entry on schedule When slots are then filled, a call should be made to the client and Care Assistants 	<p>Postal Savings = £2958 pa @ £56.90 pw Further postal savings = £416 pa</p>

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<p>unconfirmed bookings additional calls are received from Clients regarding what cover will be provided and questions around the billing (i.e. never received care why am I being charged).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx 100 admin hours per week is spent on rescheduling appointments due to sickness, meetings or upon the Care Assistants request for the appointment to be amended • When an 'early start scheduling' is booked first thing in the morning by admin some Care Assistants are very resistant and refuse to take on the additional time slots. This has an impact as either the appointment is covered by the supervisor or the work is offered as bank hours at an additional cost (via Energy 2 Care) • Admin staff schedule in unconfirmed time slots for the following day and then call the Care Assistants and Client to 	<p>will receive live schedules via their PDA's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management of rosters will reduce the time spent rescheduling appointments. Managers to reiterate to Care Assistants that any meetings are to be booked in advance and that scheduled appointments must be kept and cannot be changed unless there are unforeseen circumstances. • Same as above. Managers to reiterate to Care Assistants that scheduled appointments must be kept and cannot be changed or refused unless there are unforeseen circumstances. Bank hours system could be implemented to utilise the Care Assistant hours that are not worked as a standby system. • If PDA's are fully utilised, the new scheduled in appointments can be seen live by the Care Assistants. (<i>Care</i> 	<p>Reduce non value add rework which equates to 3 FTE's time</p> <p>Reduced use of bank staff through Energy2Care</p> <p>Reduced need for Supervisor and Bank staff to cover</p>

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<p>confirm the time. When a Care Assistant is on a day off the scheduled in time is left grey for the Evening Supervisor to call the Care Assistant between 9-10pm that evening. There is a risk that if the supervisor is unable to make contact with the Care Assistant then the appointment could potentially be delayed in the morning causing stress and anxiety to the client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The admin staff are allocated Care Assistants for their areas (i.e. North & South) If a Care Assistant has been scheduled to visit a client within north but their area is south then admin will delete the scheduled appointment and leave it unconfirmed. This causes additional rescheduling. • Some Care Assistants and Operational Managers are limited to local visits due to either no car or are specifically walkers. The impact is if no Care Assistant is able to walk to a location and there is no other available resource then bank hours are used costing additional money. For example 	<p><i>Assistants will need to make sure they check their PDA's regularly, the benefit being they can check their live schedule when it is convenient to them and not wait for a phone call).</i> Ensure the Client receives a service from the Care Assistant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a scheduled in appointment has been confirmed this should not be changed unless there are unforeseen circumstances. If the admin team are pooled into a central team as per the above recommendation this will cease. • As part of the future recruitment process the Job Description is to include that Care Assistants have access to a vehicle. This can be private vehicles or pool cars depending on further analysis by the service area 	<p>shifts</p> <p>Reduce waste effort of scheduling</p> <p>Reduce demand for bank staff</p>

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<p>Energy2Care are used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union meetings called at short notice impacts on scheduling times. Also Care Assistants claim money to attend these meetings on their days off. Since January 2010 365 hours have been taken up within Union meetings or Union training. Costing approx £2922.00, this is based on basic hours and does not include if over- time was paid due to a day off. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team manager to liaise with the Trade Unions to ask for more notice for meetings. It should also be made clear to Care Assistants that they need to let admin know ASAP when they know that a meeting is scheduled to reduce the need for rescheduling and additional costs 	<p>In the region of £6000 pa</p>
<p>Annual Leave/Expenses etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across all staff in Home Care annual leave is offered on a first come first serve basis, regardless of which team or shift, often leaving one shift without full cover. Overtime then has to be paid to other members to fill the gaps. From June 2009 to May 2010 £41,620.68 has been paid in overtime (This includes basic, 1.5 and double pay) • Care Assistants are claiming parking charge expenses when they drop off their time sheets. The expenses claimed under 'Parking Charges' equate to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of people permitted to have leave at anyone time and evenly split this across both South & North teams to prevent shortage of coverage • Use PDA's for timesheets - they can be sent electronically to the office and therefore this will stop paper work and the need to park up and drop off. In 	<p>Reduced overtime costs</p> <p>£365 pa</p>

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<p>£365.28 from June 2009 to May 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timesheets are signed by the supervisor (briefly checked) and the verification is completed by admin staff as very often the supervisor is out of the office and therefore unable to check against web roster. The verification process includes entering on to a spreadsheet and checking within web roster and ticking verified. This process currently equates to 5 hours per week. (Spreadsheet can only be accessed by 1 at anytime) • Care Assistants send in their timesheets ad-hoc and sometimes these are received too late and after the payroll deadline. Therefore some Care Assistants do not receive their money on time. • The majority of timesheets are received with CUTS (Customer Unable To Sign) 	<p>the meantime arrangements could be made to drop them off at more accessible locations and transported in the internal post.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors to take on the responsibility of ensuring the timesheets are verified and signed off. The data entering of the information admin can complete. Once PDA's are fully utilised there will be no need to complete spreadsheets as the scanning element on the PDA will record the timings at each client location • Supervisors to remind Care Assistants of the deadlines to get timesheets in and processed within time. • Supervisors to reiterate to Care Assistants that a signature from the 	<p>Support Care Standards</p>

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<p>on even when the client is able to sign to confirm the length of time the Care Assistant has been caring. This is required for audit purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expense forms are received with no proof of some of the expenses - for example phone calls, and therefore there is no audit trail of the expenditure • All time sheets are filed within the office taking up a lot of space (retention policy 7 years) 	<p>client needs to be obtained when clients are able to sign. PDA's will eliminate the need for signatures as the PDA can scan client's barcode providing accurate timings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigation of expense claims to understand the extent that are submitted with no evidence. Possibility of staff having work mobile phones to eliminate the need for claiming credit on pay as you go phones. • All timesheets that are older than 2 years to be stored at another location. Review the possibility of storing at Hillmead. If PDA's are fully utilised then there will be no future concern regarding storage, as it will be electronic. 	<p>Reduce costs for expense claims</p> <p>Reduced storage</p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Assistants are currently under 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Care Assistants timetable to 	<p>Reduced use of</p>

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<p>utilised and are not covering contractual hours. The impact is that Swindon Borough Council are paying twice either by overtime or through Energy2care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over a period of 12 months 7740 hours has been lost due to high levels of sickness within the Care Assistants team. From June 2009 to May 2010 this equates to £62K, this figure is based on the basic hourly rate of £8 per hour. Please note the above sum is not taking into consideration money paid out to Energy2Care or overtime (in-house) to cover the schedules • 'Restricted access' - is requested by either the client or Care Assistants; this impacts when scheduling jobs. Currently within web roster there are 140 restrictions of which the most common reason is the Client has requested a restriction. • Web Roster creates a report to show the timings of Care provided for clients. The 	<p>be undertaken to ensure contractual hours are met. Currently Care Assistants contractual hours are under utilised and Swindon Borough Council are paying twice (i.e. Energy2Care)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers to review the levels of sickness and Swindon Borough Council sickness policy to adhered to at all times. Including the referral to occupational health if appropriate. Due to historical poor absence management within the team, HR involvement has already engaged with Diagnostic Health Solutions. • Business Rules to be put in place to work through concerns with the Client and Care Assistants. This will prevent restricted access and will eliminate further restrictions on scheduling appointments – leading to greater utilisation of the overall workforce • Home Care to review the report already created electronically and liaise with 	<p>bank time (Energy2Care) and overtime</p> <p>Reduced overtime and bank staff costs</p> <p>Reduced demand for overtime and bank staff</p> <p>Reduced admin and Finance admin</p>

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<p>mainstream clients that are billed are in upper case for ease of reading. The purpose of this report is to be sent to the billing team so they can process the bills out to mainstream clients. However, the billing team do not like the layout of the report and therefore the Admin Manager spends approx 2 hours per month handwriting the same information to pass to the billing team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin independently order stationery on line and do not follow the IProcurement process for ordering stationery. • Social Care Managers are not carrying out appointments to review the clients care package and therefore the client remains on the roster, as this is Home 	<p>Kevin Logan from the billing team to agree a report for the billing period. Report to be created within Web Roster and emailed direct to Kevin, this will give back 2 hours per month capacity, for the Admin Manager and the same for the Billing Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The set up of Iproc to be arranged and training to be given, to ensure that the Swindon Borough Council stationery policy is adhered to. Using this process will reduce stationery costs, as it will be within the discounted contract that Swindon Borough Council have. Change Team to investigate the possibility to have a central point for ordering stationery items within DMJ to achieve economy of scale. • Social Care managers to take on responsibility to ensure the client review is carried out within 4 to 5 weeks of the Care Package. This will 	

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<p>Care's duty of care. This has an impact on admin as 8 weeks are scheduled in to care for the client when it should only be 6 weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMDS-SC (National Minimum Data Set for Social Care) is a data record held for all Social Care Workers. A major update of the database is carried out annually to produce a report which is sent to the Care Quality Commission. The database is only updated retrospectively instead of frequently and therefore the information is not kept up to date. Should an audit report be carried out Swindon Borough Council could be held liable for further action. • Work packages received from the hospital do not give sufficient time for Care Assistants to carry out their specific duties. This impacts admin, as they have to estimate the time to be 	<p>reduce scheduling in unwanted appointments (refer to timings on bullet point 3 above) as well as enable more capacity with Care Assistants for scheduling in appointments. Supervisors to continue supporting Social Care Managers to reduce the backlog of reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good house keeping - admin are to update NMDS-SC (National Minimum Data Set for Social Care) monthly to ensure accurate information is held at all times. • Admin to complete work package for the client and if any anomalies arise regarding inadequate times this is to be escalated to a Supervisor immediately. Supervisors to take on 	

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<p>scheduled with the client. Admin have built up the knowledge over time, however, the Care element should come direct from the Care Manager. Should admin estimate the care time incorrectly then this could impact on scheduling and a client not receiving the correct amount of care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New client packages are created by admin and are not checked by a Supervisor. Previously this was the Supervisor role of creating the new package but due to time constraints admin carry out this role. 	<p>the responsibility of ensuring the correct time for scheduling is provided and Supervisor to liaise direct with the relevant Social Care Manager to ensure a correct time limit is agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors to take on the responsibility of ensuring the new client packages are created and correct before these are distributed within the Clients home. 	
<p>ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interactive staff planner within web Roster is slow to refresh and load and can take from 10 seconds to 60 before refreshing or loading. • Crisis client is created within spreadsheet to generate a unique reference number and then the same information is duplicated into Web Roster. On average each client takes approx 1 minute to create within the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin to review the interactive staff planner and record timings and dates of when this is running slow in order to pass to ICT to review if there is a pattern • Review Web Roster to see if it has the capability to generate a unique reference number this will eliminate an additional spreadsheet. 	<p>Increased admin capacity</p> <p>Increased admin capacity</p>

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spreadsheet. Potentially the unique reference number could be duplicated and this could lead to confusion.		