

The Impact of COVID-19 on Adult Social Care and Care Homes in Barnsley

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the local authority's recent submission to government outlining Barnsley's system wide offer to care homes as part of the response to COVID 19.
- 1.2 Although the report focusses on the impact COVID 19 has had on care homes in Barnsley and the response from services across health and social care, a short presentation will be given on the day to provide an update on how adult social care has been impacted in the wider sense.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Barnsley care homes support over 1,800 residents across 72 homes. A large number of homes are occupied by elderly residents who are classed as vulnerable to COVID 19, as such the need to wrap those homes with support is essential in response to the COVID 19 outbreak.
- 2.2 Care homes also play an invaluable role in the 'Discharge to Assess' model, ensuring fast discharges from hospital beds to ensure there is capacity to support those needing acute care as a result of COVID 19.
- 2.3 Very early into the COVID 19 outbreak adult social care and health professionals recognised the significance of getting alongside both the care home market and the home care market in Barnsley to ensure their preparedness for COVID 19; to share understanding of the potential risks and what could be done together to reduce them. This ensured that teams across adult social care; community health; the hospital; and public health were doing all that could be done to keep residents and staff as safe as possible.
- 2.4 Barnsley's approach to supporting its care homes ensures that care homes are given the support; advice; guidance and tools they need to safely support residents through this outbreak and to ensure staff working in care homes are supported to continue their caring role.
- 2.5 As a response to the challenges within the care sector the government launched the Adult Social Care plan which described the four pillars:
 - 1) Controlling the spread of infection
 - 2) Supporting the workforce
 - 3) Supporting independence, supporting people at the end of their lives, and responding to individual needs
 - 4) Supporting local authorities and the providers of care

3.0 Current Position

- 3.1 Following increasing media coverage of care homes during COVID 19, the government issued further guidance and communications to councils with a requirement that each council, working

alongside health partners, develops a care home plan to evidence how care homes are being supported. The planning return was submitted by the deadline of 29 May.

3.2 The return consisted of a letter (Item 4b) that sets out a short overview of activity at that time along with a forward plan. In addition, a short template had to be completed, reporting on the number of homes accessing the support offer at that time, covering the following areas:-

- Infection prevention & control measures - including isolating residents and restricting the movement of staff
- Testing - including testing all residents and asymptomatic staff and testing those discharged from hospital
- Access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and clinical equipment
- Workforce support – including appropriate training and individuals returning to the workforce
- Clinical Support – including named clinical leads and access to mutual aid

Because the figures reported in the template were subject to change as the response to COVID escalated, the document has not been attached but a brief update will be given at the meeting.

3.3 The care home plan is reflective of a system wide approach to supporting care homes. The plan was produced with representatives from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council; South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust (SWYPFT); Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); Barnsley Healthcare Federation (BHF) and Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (BHNFT).

3.4 Engagement with the residential care sector was undertaken to enable the plan to be collated and 100% of the homes in Barnsley participated in the completion of the plan. The return includes homes that the local authority does not directly commission from, as well as details of issues and support needs.

3.5 Care home plan submissions are being reviewed through the regional Better Care Fund team and formal feedback will be provided. Where required the plan will be amended subject to this feedback.

3.6 Each Local Authority is required to publish their Care Home Plan alongside transparent data regarding rate uplifts and other extra funding available to care providers e.g. cash flow support, and this information was published by 29 May 2020.

3.7 Data from the return will be incorporated into Barnsley's broader care home assurance and delivery plan. The governance of this plan will be overseen by the Bronze health and social care cell and reported to both Cabinet members and Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG's) governing body as required.

3.8 All care providers are being sent a regular information bulletin with updates on guidance, links to useful information and information relating to Barnsley's COVID-19 response plan.

4.0 Government Funding

4.1 The Council was allocated COVID 19 funding to support key frontline services including adult social care as well as an additional infection control funding of £3m to specifically support care providers to reduce the rate of transmission in and between care homes and to support workforce resilience.

4.2 The total payments made to date (and committed) as direct support to care providers in Barnsley against the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic is £7.0M, analysed as follows:

Whom	Purpose of Funding	£
Care home providers	Infection control: to reduce the rate of transmission in and between care homes	2.3M
Domiciliary care & Supported Living providers	Infection control: to support wider workforce resilience in relation to Covid-19 infection control measures	0.7M
All care providers (including care homes)	Support to care sector to ensure financial resilience and to cover additional cost pressures arising from: use of temporary staff; increased statutory sick pay; cost of procuring personal protective equipment (PPE)	3.1M
Care homes providers	On-going payment for voids as a result of the deaths in care homes during the pandemic period	0.7M
Domiciliary care & Supported Living providers	Providers are being paid 'on plan' i.e. based on the planned care hours (rather than actual hours of care provided)	0.2M

Infection Control Funding

- 4.3 The Infection Control Funding is ring-fenced for adult social care. The grant conditions require 75% of the funding (£2.250m) to be paid directly to care home providers (on a per beds basis) and must be used to fund a range of infection control staffing costs, including paying the wages of staff self-isolating; recruitment of additional staff; limiting staff to segregated COVID-19 residents; limiting the use of public transport by staff; and providing accommodation for staff to limit social interaction outside work.
- 4.4 Consideration is currently being given to allocating the balance of the infection control funding £0.752m to other care providers (domiciliary care, supported living, etc.) to support wider workforce resilience in relation to Covid-19 infection control measures.
- 4.5 The funding is conditional on care home providers completing the NHS Capacity Tracker on a consistent basis. Funding is allowed to be clawed back from providers if it is unused or has not been applied for infection control purposes. The Council is required under the grant conditions to submit a certified statement on the use of the funding on the intended measures by 30 September 2020.

5.0 Invited Witnesses

5.1 The following witnesses have been invited to attend to answer questions from the committee:-

- Wendy Lowder, Executive Director Communities, BMBC
- Sharon Graham, Head of Service – Commissioning, BMBC
- Cllr Jenny Platts, Cabinet Spokesperson – Adults & Communities, BMBC
- Jane Sivakumar, Chief Nurse, Barnsley CCG
- Gill Stansfield, Deputy District Director General Community, SWYPFT

6.0 Possible Areas for Investigation

6.1 Members may wish to ask questions around the following areas:-

- What have been the biggest challenges in responding to the pandemic?
- What are your key concerns for the future for both the community and the organisations providing care?
- What lessons have been learned as a result of responding to COVID 19?
- How has Barnsley fared in comparison to other local authorities in the region?
- Do you think adult social care responded to the pandemic quickly enough in Barnsley?
- What is being done to ensure that front line staff feel safe?
- How has the movement of agency staff been managed to prevent the spread of infection between homes?
- How do you know whether care homes are compliant with infection control measures?
- What infection control measures are in place for domiciliary care and how many cases have been identified in this section of the community, either those working in this area or those in receipt of services?
- What measures were put in place to ensure that existing care home residents were not put at risk when admitting patients discharged from hospital?
- What feedback have you received from the Better Care Fund team regarding the care home plan?
- Can you give examples of how you have provided tangible support for people with learning disabilities and those in assisted living accommodation?
- How are care homes overcoming the challenges relating to COVID-19 when dealing with people with dementia?
- Have all 72 care homes in Barnsley taken part in the testing scheme and are all homes reporting data? If not, why not?
- How often is testing carried out and how quickly are results reported back?
- What can members do to support adult social care and care homes in responding to COVID 19?

7.0 Background Papers

Item 4b – BMBC Care Home Plan Letter

Department of Health Quick Guide – Discharge to Assess Model:-

<https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/keogh-review/Documents/quick-guides/Quick-Guide-discharge-to-access.pdf>

Department of Health & Social Care Policy Paper – Action Plan for Adult Social Care

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-adult-social-care-action-plan/covid-19-our-action-plan-for-adult-social-care>

8.0 Glossary

ADASS	Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
BHF	Barnsley Healthcare Federation
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CQC	Care Quality Commission
ICS	Integrated Care System
IPC	Infection, prevention & control
LGA	Local Government Association
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SWYPFT	South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust
SYB	South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw

9.0 Officer Contact

Anna Marshall, Overview & Scrutiny Team
01 July 2020