



Sarah Norman
Chief Executive

BY E-MAIL

CareandReform2@communities.gov.uk

My Ref: CEX/AH
Your Ref:
Date: 29 May 2020
Enquiries Sarah Norman
Direct Dial: 01226 775831
E-Mail: sarahnorman@barnsley.gov.uk

Barnsley's Care Home Plan

This covering letter outlines the partnership arrangements in place in Barnsley to ensure care market resilience, the enhanced offer of support to all Care Homes and our forward plan as per the request.

Introduction

Care homes provide invaluable support to some of Barnsley's most vulnerable elderly and disabled residents.

Very early into the Covid-19 outbreak, partners across health and social care recognised the significance of getting alongside the care sector to support their response to Covid-19, sharing an understanding of the potential risks and considering what we could do together to manage those risks. This ensured that across adult social care, community health, the hospital and public health, we were doing all that we could to keep residents and staff as safe as possible.

In developing Barnsley's Care Home Support Plan, we have utilised the existing joint commissioning arrangements and partnership agreements across health and social care.

The plan has been aligned to the Enhanced Health in Care Home Framework, ADASS Confidence Matrix, the NHS response to Covid-19 and key principles for care homes to form a shared assurance and delivery plan for Barnsley. It details Barnsley's support offer in its entirety, including key areas such as infection, prevention and control (IPC), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), workforce and financial sustainability and aligns with all current regional and national guidance.

Executive leadership has been driven by the Director of Adult Social Services, Director of Public Health and the CCG's Chief Nurse.

A Care Home Assurance and Delivery Group has been established with senior representation from key partners. This group is responsible for ensuring all operational requirements within the plan are delivered, identifying gaps in support and proposing new developments/opportunities.

The group currently reports into a Bronze health and social care cell, escalating challenges/barriers as necessary.

Engagement with care homes during the Covid-19 outbreak has been integral to the development of Barnsley's plan. Long term the plan will form part of Barnsley's Excellence in Care Programme, and providers will play an active role in its further development and implementation.

Confidence Level

A number of elements of support detailed in the plan have been implemented and there are established assurance and governance arrangements in place to oversee this.

Data Collection

All care homes are contacted daily by telephone from a member of the Virtual Care Home Team. This call includes data collection to be added to daily reports which are shared with all partners alongside offering advice, guidance and support to care homes as required.

Data collected via this call focuses on the presence of Covid-19 within the care home, resident deaths and recovery.

Barnsley's joint commissioning team carry out further data collection to inform occupancy rates, PPE stocks and staff capacity. This data is used to form a care home dashboard.

Additionally, all care homes have an allocated Contract Officer within the Joint Commissioning Team.

Contract Officers act as a point of contact for Registered Managers and escalate queries/concerns via the Head of Service who forms part of the Bronze cell. The Bronze cell is chaired by the CCG Chief Nurse and attended by colleagues from South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust, the local GP Federation, Barnsley Hospital National Foundation Trust and Barnsley Council.

Significant work has been done in recent weeks to increase the number of care homes providing data via the NHS Capacity Tracker. Once implemented, other data collection will be stood down and the tracker used as the main source of data.

Financial Support

Through its joint commissioning arrangements Barnsley has a history of working in partnership with its care providers.

The following details Barnsley's current approach to addressing financial pressures in the care home sector:

- In 2018 work was undertaken to determine the average cost of residential care across the borough. The outcome of this work led to a 14.9% increase in weekly residential/nursing fees between 2017 and 2019.
- An interim uplift of 5.2% has been implemented from April 2020 to reflect the changes to National Living Wage however there is a current proposal to increase fees by a further 8.2%. This is subject to an agreement that the increase will be passed to care workers and is currently subject to negotiation with care home providers.
- In response to the Covid-19 crisis and to address costs pressures facing care home providers, the council has made one off payments to all care homes it did business within the financial year 2019/20. Payments, ranging from £5000 to £50000, were made in March 2020 and reflect an increase in excess of 10% of profiled 3-month payments to care providers in 2019/20. This is in line with Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and Local Government Association (LGA) advice / guidance.
- The council has additionally committed to a payment to plan position including the temporary on-going payment of voids caused as a result of the death of a service user funded by the council at the time of death.
- We will shortly be issuing payments to all care homes via the Infection Prevention Control grant allocation based on CQC registered bed numbers.

Partners will continue to review this position and have given a clear message to all providers that should they be facing financial pressures they should contact us directly to discuss further support.

Alternative accommodation

The majority of care homes in Barnsley have to date had the capacity and capability to isolate residents returning from the hospital in line with the national guidance on Infection Prevention and Control.

Concerns have been addressed on a case by case basis. They have included alternative approaches such as an extended stay in the hospital for those testing positive for Covid-19 until the risk of transmission is reduced.

Commissioners have additionally secured twenty beds in one care home with the ability to operate hot and cold units. The beds have been commissioned under a short-term block contract agreement and reflect an Intermediate Care offer.

Several other homes have 'empty' units which can be secured at short notice should the demand arise.

Workforce

Barnsley is part of the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System 'Bring Back Staff' (BBS – wave 2) to care homes process led locally by the CCG Chief Nurse.

Should a person wish to return to work in a care home in Barnsley, the Chief Nurse would work with the Joint Commissioning Team to ascertain where the individual would best be placed, based on need at any given time.

To date, there have been no cases of returning staff expressing an interest in working in a care home and little demand from care home providers with providers utilising their own staff to cover absences to reduce the risk of covid transmission in the home.

Our enhanced offer to care homes does include the use of volunteers to support with non-care tasks; such as administration to reduce the burden of care homes. The council also has an emergency resilience team on standby should the need arise and Commissioners have issued a shared Memorandum of Understanding across all care homes to support access to staff from other homes where this is required and safe to do so.

As requested, this letter gives a brief summary of our current and long-term approach to supporting care homes across the borough. It is backed up by a detailed and comprehensive plan that will be used to further develop our partnerships with care homes and improve on the quality of care being delivered.

We would welcome further discussions with colleagues from the national team regarding this plan to contextualise Barnsley's offer.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Norman
Chief Executive