

Governing Body Meeting			
Date:	Tuesday 13 July 2021	Time:	2:30 pm
Venue:	MS Teams		
Questions from the general public received in advance			

Email received 25/05/2021

I have received a number of concerned letters as below. Can you clarify the situation that supported living Services face and provide information that may alleviate the concerns felt by the many people that have written to me?

I am writing to you to request your support to save a vital community mental health service in Merseyside.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust provides Supported Living Services (SLS) for service users with a diagnosis of a learning disability who may also present with additional mental health issues and has been doing so for over twenty-five years. However, I understand that this will be scrapped later this year. I am dismayed that service users will then be expected to arrange their own care using personal care budgets. This decision is both saddening and frustrating and I am extremely concerned about the plans for the future of the service.

Clearly such a valuable service should continue to be provided by the public sector- ideally in its current form. This service is a rare example of a care service which puts people over profit and quality care over quarterly financial reports. I am sure you'll agree with me that the social care sector is fragmented, underfunded and failing. We must not let this service be transferred to a private provider that is only interested in profit. Merseycare, the CCG and Liverpool City Council need to take responsibility and ensure that this service is protected.

Please could you write to the CCG, Liverpool Local Authority and Merseycare and ask them to urgently reconsider their decision?

LCCG response sent 09/06/2021

Decommissioning of Mersey Care Foundation Trust Supported Living Service

1. Background

- 1.1 Mersey Care Foundation Trust (MCFT) directly provides a 24hr supported living service (SLS) to 10 adults with learning disabilities living in their own homes. It has provided these services for approximately 20 years, having established the service originally to facilitate the closure of a long stay hospital which it operated at that time.
- 1.2 As a health care provider MCFT decided that it will not continue to offer supported living services in the future. It intends to withdraw from the provision as the 10 people the service currently supports move on to personal budgets
- 1.3 The purpose of allocating a personal budget is to ensure that people have the maximum level of choice and control over their care and support and are fully involved in making decisions about how their assessed needs are met.
- 1.4 In line with its obligations under the Care Act 2014, Liverpool City Council and Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (LCCG) are working closely together in arranging for each adult to have a Care Act assessment. In line with the Care Act, following assessment, each adult will be allocated a personal budget to fund their future care and supports.

2. The Process

- 2.1 At all stages, the adults will be fully supported in their decision making by LCC social workers and the people that are close to them. They will also have access to independent advocates and, where families and carers have expressed a wish to be part of the process, they will be fully included and informed.
- 2.2 The Council, LCCG and MCFT are in agreement that the wellbeing of the adults is of paramount importance and this will guide how the process is undertaken from start to end.
- 2.3 Whilst the social care needs of the adults will be reviewed through a Care Act assessment, social workers will also complete a Continuing Health Care (CHC) checklist and arrange for CHC assessments will be completed where the checklist identifies that any individual may be eligible for CHC funding.
- 2.4 Upon completion of the Care Act and CHC assessments, the Council and LCCG will allocate a personal budget to each adult and support them to develop a plan to use their budget to fund their future support to live a life which is as fulfilling and independent as possible.
- 2.5 Each adult will be offered options on how to take control of their personal budget. There are a number of options available and these will be explained fully along with details of what each option would entail. No-one will have to arrange their own care and support.

- 2.6 One option is to take some (or all) of the budget as a Direct Payment and to arrange future support directly. For adults choosing that option, they will be supported by LCC's in-house team at all stages. In addition, adults will be offered the opportunity to meet with an independent user led organisation to plan how their support. This will enable the person (or someone on their behalf) to take control of and manage their Direct Payment and future support to meet their assessed needs in the way they choose.
- 2.7 Adults will also be able to choose to continue to receive a care service arranged and managed by the Council and/or LCCG. Where adults choose this option, they will be offered the opportunity to be fully involved in choosing a future provider and in selecting a staff team to support them.

3. Ensuring Future Support is of High Quality

- 3.1 Liverpool has a diverse independent specialist care and support sector for people with learning disabilities. Many of our commissioned providers are from the not-for-profit sector. The sector already supporting more than 1000 people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions - including many with complex needs - across the City. We are confident that providers from the sector with a proven track records can provide high quality care and support to the adults in the future.

4. Transition to new arrangements

- 4.1 Whatever support arrangements each adult chooses, the transition to new support arrangements will be managed sensitively and carefully and will take place over time to minimise any potential impact on the people supported.
- 4.2 A core principle of this work is that the transition period will be personalised to each adult's needs to ensure a safe transition to future care and support provision

5. Support from MCFT Community Services

- 5.1 During the assessment period, the transition period and when new support is in place, MCFT's Community Learning Disability Team will remain on hand to provide any specialist support the adults may require.

6. Impact on MCFT SLS staff

- 6.1 There will be no redundancies for MCFT staff as MCFT have stated they are able to absorb all of the staff and offer them comparable employment.