

TITLE:	Adult Social Care and Public Health - Annual Report on Services Complaints, Compliments and Representations - April 2022 to March 2023
REPORT OF:	Alison Routledge, Complaints Manager
SERVICE:	Quality Assurance and Commissioning, Integrated Adults and Social Care Services

SUMMARY

The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 came into force on 1 April 2009. This legislation sets down the procedures that Adult Social Care Services and National Health Services, (NHS), must follow when complaints or representations are made.

As part of the responsibilities set out in the Act, local authorities must produce an annual report on all complaints and representations received. This report fulfils Gateshead Council's obligations and provides information on all representations received about the Council's Adult Social Care Services between 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023.

1.0 The Statutory Complaints Process

1.1 There are two steps to the Statutory Complaints Process.

Step 1 - Informal (Local) resolution by the Council.

Step 2 - Independent consideration by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, (LG&SCO).

1.2 Once received, all complaints are assessed and graded. Categories of complaint are:

- Green, which are low-level or minimal risk for either the service user or the Council.
- Amber, which are assessed as a moderate or medium risk.
- Red, a serious complaint which are assessed as high risk.

1.3 There are no prescribed timescales for resolution of Adult Social Care complaints as the quality of the investigation and response is significantly more important than attempting to adhere to a strict timescale for completion. However, it is very important that all investigation timescales negotiated with the complainant are proportionate to the issues raised and that the complainant is kept up to date on the progress of the investigation.

1.4 All written responses, irrespective of the type of representation, are subject to organisational sign off by the Adult Social Care Service Director.

2.0 Publicity and Information

2.1 Publicity on how to complain can be provided in several formats, encouraging, and facilitating easy access to the complaints process. All new service users receive a complaints leaflet in their information pack. A leaflet is also provided when a service user receives the outcome to an assessment / reassessment of need. Adult Social Care feedback cards are also provided to service users and their carers after an assessment or review of social care needs.

3.0 Independent Element

3.1 The Council operates an internal investigation procedure. Therefore, it is important that complaints administration is fully independent of any form of Adult Social Care service delivery to ensure fairness and impartiality and to prevent any conflicts of interest.

4.0 Advocacy and Special Needs

4.1 Vulnerable people receiving an Adult Social Care service are encouraged and supported to express their views and to access the complaints procedure if they wish. An easy read complaints leaflet is also available for people with a learning disability / difficulty.

4.2 In all cases advocacy is offered if it is felt that the complainant would benefit from this service.

5.0 Training and Employee Development

5.1 Training for Investigating Officers is provided on a regular basis. All Adult Social Care Team Managers / Service Managers are expected to have undergone investigating skills training.

5.2 The Investigating Skills Training Course is facilitated by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, (LG&SCO). The training concentrates on defining, investigating, and resolving complex complaints. It also emphasises the need to identify any improvements that may be necessary as a direct result of individual complaints.

5.3 All managers appointed to investigate complaints are offered one to one support when required and advice is routinely given throughout the investigation process.

6.0 All Adults Services Representations Received over the Past Three Years

All Formal Contacts	2020 2021		2021 2022		2022 2023	
Statutory Adult Services Complaints	47.13%	41	57.14%	55	54.21%	56
ASC Comments	4.60%	4	1.02%	1	0.00%	0
Complaint Related Queries	17.24%	15	16.33%	16	20.56%	22
Commissioned Service Response	0.00%	0	8.16%	8	7.48%	8
Data Breach	0.00%	0	1.02%	1	0.00%	0
Insurance Claim	1.15%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Inter-Agency Concerns	4.60%	4	2.04%	2	1.87%	2
Joint Health & Social Care Complaints	6.90%	6	3.06%	3	8.41%	9
LG&SCO Referrals	6.90%	6	4.08%	4	6.54%	7
MCA/DoLs Responses	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
MP / Councillor Responses	8.05%	7	7.14%	7	0.93%	1
Safeguarding Alerts	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Whistle Blow	1.15%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
All Dissatisfaction		85		97		105
Compliments		482		274		363
Total of All Representations		567		371		468
Trend				-34.62%		26.15%

6.1 Categories of all Statutory Complaints Received over the Past Three Years

Complaint Categories	2020 2021	2021 2022	2022 2023
Green	3	4	0
Amber	37	51	56
Red	1	0	0
All	41	55	56

6.2 Key Points of Interest

- During 2022/23, 56 complaints were received regarding Adult Social Care Services.
- This is almost a 2% increase on complaints received during 2021/22, (55).
- A number of formal complaints did include issues around Commissioned Care Providers. In these cases, the Investigating Officer liaise with Commissioning colleagues to ensure a full and robust response to all areas complained about.
- The number of complaint related queries (CRQs) has also increased compared to the number of low-level issues received during 2021/22, (22 from 16).
- Complaint related queries are low-level representations that must be resolved within one working day after receipt. However, the increase does evidence that the services are actively resolving potential complaints at source.
- Amber complaints, which are medium risk to the Council or the service user, accounted for all 56 complaints received.
- Amber complaints often include several issues which are deemed as moderate risk to either the service user or the Council.
- Almost 29% (16) of all complaints received involved disputes to care charges levied for care and support.
- Compared with the number of formal complaints received (56), 87% of representations during 2022/23 were compliments.

6.3 Specific Areas of Complaint

Service Area	2020 2021		2021 2022		2022 2023	
Assessment & Personalisation	68.29%	28	67.27%	37	78.57%	44
Care Call	2.44%	1	7.27%	4	0.00%	0
Commissioning	7.32%	3	3.64%	2	8.93%	5
Provider Services	21.95%	9	21.82%	12	12.50%	7
Total		41		55		56

- During 2022/23, almost 79% (44) of complaints were about the Assessment & Personalisation service.
- This is a 19% increase on the number received during 2021/22, (37).
- Assessment & Personalisation is often the first service to become involved with those requesting support from Adult Social Care, so dissatisfaction can often be anticipated due to disputes about decisions made following assessments.
- After investigation, 29% (10) of complaints about Assessment & Personalisation were found to be unjustified. 31% (11) were found to be partially justified and 29% (10) were fully justified.
- Seven complaints were received by the Council's Provider Services.
- After investigation, four complaints about Provider Services were partially justified and three remain outstanding.

6.4 Issues linked to the complaint

Issues of Complaint	2020 2021		2021 2022		2022 2023	
Delay	9.76%	4	3.64%	2	8.93%	5
Lack of Service	29.27%	12	40.00%	22	25.00%	14
Quality of Service	48.78%	20	38.18%	21	51.79%	29
Refusal of Service	4.88%	2	9.09%	5	0.00%	0
Staff Issues	7.32%	3	9.09%	5	14.29%	8
Total		41		55		56

- During 2022/23, quality of service accounted for 52% (29) of all complaints received.
- Quality of service can include straightforward issues, such as,
 - Missed or delayed social work visits / appointments
 - Non-return of telephone calls
 - Poor communication
 - Poor or no response after a request for service.

However, quality of service can also include service failure issues, for example, failure to safeguard the welfare or finances of a vulnerable adult.

- After investigation, 44% (8) of complaints about quality were not upheld, 22% (4) were upheld, 17% were partially upheld and 17% (3) were withdrawn or informally resolved by the service.
- All recommendations from upheld / partially upheld complaints are detailed within this report.
- 25% (14) of all complaints were regarding lack of service. Complaints about lack of service may often be linked to high expectations about what Adult Services can offer to a client / service user or their families. However, it was found that 37% (5) complaints received about lack of service, were about lack of information about care charges.
- After investigation, 79%, (11) of all complaints about charges were either fully or partially upheld. Three complaints were not upheld and two complaints about charges remain outstanding.
- 14% (8) of complaints received were regarding the conduct of individual workers. This is a 60% increase on the number received during 2021/22 (5).
- Following investigation, 60% (3) of all complaints about staff behaviour were partially justified, 20% was fully justified and 20% (1) was not justified. Three complaints about staff behaviour remain outstanding.
- In all cases, should there be repeated complaints regarding an individual worker, the Council will always undertake an internal review to ensure that any unmet professional development needs are addressed where appropriate. Any serious issues will be dealt with via employment procedures.

6.5 Themes of Complaints Received

There were two main themes of complaints received during 2022/23:

6.6.1 Disputes around Charging for Care

29% (16) complaints received were in respect of disputes to care charges.

After consideration of the complaints received regarding charges, it was found that all sixteen complaints related to teams within the Assessment & Personalisation Service. However, it was found that in some cases, there was also insufficient information provided by PRIME when the service transferred to long term care where commissioned care packages were temporarily unavailable, resulting in PRIME staying involved.

It was agreed that Assessing Officers should always alert the client or their representative that should long term care be recommended, that assessed charges would commence and be determined following a Financial Assessment. This action is now being taken forward.

After investigation, it was identified that almost 78% (11) of the complaints about charging for care were found to be either fully or partially justified. In some cases, where there had been a lack of information about care charges, the Council do offer to either waive or part waive a proportion of the care fees incurred.

In addition to this, the Council's Adult Social Care is currently undertaking developmental work on how to improve the current charging information and processes to ensure that clients and their representatives are fully informed regarding potential charges for care, including charges post discharge from hospital and charges levied by Extra Care Living Facilities. This work is currently ongoing.

After consideration of the complaints around charging for care, it appears that the movement of people from hospital to step down care and onto planned care, and the fact that

there were sometimes delays in accessing the planned care, appears to have contributed to a few complaints about this subject. However, the Council has ensured that this matter will be fully considered within the Adult Social Care Development Group.

6.5.2 Dispute Decisions Made by Service

14% (8) of complaints were regarding disputes to actions or decisions made by Adult Social Care.

Three complaints were regarding the Council’s decision to provide care packages rather than to fund long term care within a care facility following a hospital stay. However, when responding to complaints of this nature, the complainants were advised on the Government guidance, Discharge Procedures regarding hospital discharges, which promotes a “home first” approach with other pathways being considered where required.

[Hospital discharge and community support guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/hospital-discharge-and-community-support-guidance).

One complaint was disputing the decision to recommend 24 hour care and wanted the client to return home. The complaint was not upheld as the decision was appropriately made after liaison with the client who had capacity to consent to the arrangement.

One complaint was regarding the decision not to fund an out of borough care home at a higher rate than Council commissioned rates within Gateshead. This complaint was found to be partially justified and an agreement reached with the care home in question.

One complaint was of an historic nature. However, as there was sufficient access to information and staff involved at the time, the Council agreed to consider the issues. The complainant felt that an OT had prevented the client from accessing his home at the time by preventing them using the stairs. This complaint was not upheld as the OT decision was supported by medical professionals.

Two complaints about disputes to decisions made were subsequently closed. One of the complaints was later withdrawn and one complaint was regarding medical decisions by the QE Hospital.

After investigation, 67% (4) of complaints about decisions made were not upheld and 33% (2) were withdrawn.

6.6 Outcomes

Outcomes of complaints	2020 2021		2021 2022		2022 2023	
Outstanding		6		8		13
Not upheld	45.71%	16	17.02%	8	27.91%	12
Partially upheld	25.71%	9	34.04%	16	39.53%	17
Upheld	28.57%	10	34.04%	16	23.26%	10
Other Resolution / Withdrawn	0.00%	0	14.89%	7	9.30%	4
Total Completed		41		55		56

- 28%, (12) of all complaints were found to be unjustified after investigation.
- 39% (17) of complaints were found to be partially justified.
- 23% (10) of complaints were found to be fully justified.
- 9% (4) of complaints were either informally resolved by the service concerned or withdrawn by the complainant.
- All improvements identified a result of complaints that were either partially or fully justified are included within this report

6.7 Timescales

- When a complaint is passed to an Investigating Officer, the Investigating Officer is requested to consider the detail of the complaint along with the issues raised and to identify an achievable

timescale for response. This timescale should then be discussed with the complainant and their agreement sought.

- This negotiation then ensures that investigations and timescales for response are proportionate to the issues raised.
- Adult Social Care complaints often include several areas of concern, some may also include issues about other agencies, such as health or housing. Any liaison with outside agencies that may be necessary to fully investigate the complaint should always be factored into any negotiated timescale for response.
- In all cases, the Investigating Officer is requested to keep the complainant updated on the progress of the investigation and to advise them of any delays that may be anticipated.
- The Council consider that 20 working days is an achievable timescale to respond to most Adult Social Care complaints. However, this timescale does not consider the complexity of some complaints. Therefore, the investigation timescale should always be negotiated with the complainant.
- During 2022/23, 31 working days was the average time to investigate and respond to a complaint.

6.8 How complaints were received

Method of Complaint	2020 2021		2021 2022		2022 2023	
Service Feedback Form	0.00%	0	1.82%	1	0.00%	0
Complaints Form	2.44%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Email	51.22%	21	63.64%	35	82.14%	46
In Person	0.00%	0	1.82%	1	0.00%	0
Letter	17.07%	7	14.55%	8	8.93%	5
Telephone	29.27%	12	18.18%	10	8.93%	5
		41		55		56

- Email is now the main method of referral accounting for 82%, (46), of all complaints received.
- Email is popular as it is accessible and allows the complainant to retain a copy of the complaint that has been submitted.
- Letters accounted for almost 9% (5) of complaint referrals.
- 9% (5) complaints were received via telephone.
- Complaints received by telephone are generally in response to immediate issues, such as missed care visits or disputes regarding invoices for care.
- Relatives continue to make the most representations, and accounted for 79%, (44) of complaints made.
- Almost 4% (2) complaints were received direct from service users.
- Ten complaints were referred to the Council by others acting on behalf of the service user, such as carers, advocates or external agencies.

7.0 Equalities Monitoring

- Gateshead Council recognises that equality monitoring of service delivery is crucial for effective planning and scrutiny of the services that it provides. This monitoring can identify which groups are using services and gauge their level of satisfaction. The information can then be used to highlight possible inequalities, investigate their underlying causes, and address any unfairness or disadvantage. However, as complainants tend to be from relatives, it is not possible to collect this information with any accuracy as diversity forms sent out were not routinely returned despite the forms being made simpler to complete in 2022/23.
- During 2022/2023, there were no complaints where it was able to be identified that the complainant was a member of the BAME community.
- Information about the complaints process can be made available in key languages and formats. Information for customers with sight, hearing or learning difficulties can also be provided.

- Following an independent report by the EHRC, several recommendations were identified following consultation with Local Authorities across England. After considering the detail of recommendation 3 (complaints) in relation to Gateshead Council, it was found that these were already standard practice within the Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure.

The full report can be found here.

[Challenging adult social care decisions in England and Wales | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://equalityhumanrights.com)

8.0 Commissioned Care Services – All issues received

Commissioned Services	2020 2021	2021 2022	2022 2023
Formal Statutory Complaints	3	2	6
Commissioned Service - Own Response	0	8	5
Complaint Related Queries	2	5	2
Joint H&SC Complaints	0	0	1
LG&SCO	0	0	2
MP/Councillor Referral	1	3	0
Whistle Blows	1	0	0
Total	10	18	16

- During 2022/23, representations highlighting dissatisfaction about commissioned services decreased by 11%, (16 from 18).
- However, it must be noted that within several complaints regarding services provided by Adult Social Care, there were issues raised about commissioned care providers. As the main body of complaint, were regarding Adult Social Care, the Investigating Officer did liaise with the Council's Commissioning Team to ensure a full and complete response to all issues raised.
- Six complaints were investigated by the Council. Two were regarding the support provided by care homes and four were regarding commissioned home care. One complaint about commissioned home care also included issues about the QE Hospital and the Council's Social Care involvement.
- After investigation, one complaint was found to be unjustified, one complaint was partially justified, and one complaint was transferred to the Adults Safeguarding Procedure. Three complaints remain outstanding.
- In line with procedure, five complaints were subsequently shared with the Commissioned Service direct with a request that they undertake a complaint investigation under their own complaints procedure.
- Following investigation by a commissioned care provider, the complainant has the option to refer any dissatisfaction direct to the Council. However, only one complainant remained dissatisfied. The Council subsequently reviewed the investigation carried out and provided a further response to the complainant.
- Two CRQ's (Complaint related queries, which are low level issues) about commissioned services were received during 2022/23. One was in relation to commissioned home care service. Due to the issues highlighted, this matter was subsequently raised as a safeguarding adults concern. One CRQ was about the charges for a short term service. This matter was considered by the Commissioning Officer and the Council's Finance Team and subsequently resolved informally.
- Again, low level issues about Adult Social Care also include elements relating to Commissioned Care Providers where joint resolution is required by working with Commissioning colleagues.
- Two LG&SCO referrals were received about commissioned care providers. One referral was about a commissioned care home in relation to personal belongings. The LG&SCO did find fault with the care home but found no fault by the Council.

- One referral was in relation to a complaint, which was investigated by the care home themselves. The LG&SCO did find fault and injustice and, as the Council commissioned the care home, it is ultimately responsible for the care being provided to Council funded clients. The LG&SCO requested the Council to make a time and trouble payment to the complainant for the injustice caused. This was accepted and completed by the Council.
- Following any referral highlighting dissatisfaction, Contract Management or Commissioning Officers always ensure that any improvements to service are taken forward with the care service concerned and monitored in line with contractual obligations.

9.0. Health & Social Care Joint Investigations

- The statutory complaints process covers NHS and Social Care Services. All complaints that are received which are about services provided by both Health and Social Care are co-ordinated by either the Council's Complaints Manager or the Complaints Manager responsible for the Health Service subject to the complaint. The organisation responsible for the largest area of the complaint will take the lead in the investigation and will ensure that a combined response letter is sent to the complainant within the agreed timescales.
- During 2022/23, nine complaints were jointly investigated by managers at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, with assistance from managers within the Council's Adult Social Care.
- All nine complaint investigations were led by colleagues at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and comments from Adult Social Care were invited. Issues relating to Adult Social Care mainly focused on involvement of the Hospital Social Work Discharge Team. Adult Social Care responded to all requests for information with timescales set out by Health.

10.0 Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

- During 2022/23, seven complaints were considered by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, (LG&SCO).
- This means that 83% (34) of the complaints responded to were successfully resolved by the Council.
- Six complaints considered by the LG&SCO had been previously considered through the statutory adults complaints procedure. One complaint had been investigated by a commissioned care provider direct.
- Three LG&SCO referrals were about the Assessment & Personalisation Service and one referral was regarding the Council's Provider Services. Two referrals were about Council's Commissioned Services.
- After consideration, four of the referrals were closed by the LG&SCO who considered that no further action was necessary or that the Council's remedy was appropriate. One referral found fault by a commissioned provider, but that there was no fault by the Council. One referral about a commissioned care home did find fault and injustice and requested the Council to pay a time and trouble payment to the complainant. One referral was closed as a premature complaint.
- Issues relating to commissioned providers were taken forward with the providers direct and following recommendations identified by the LG&SCO, the providers complied with these and provided evidence that the recommendations had been implemented.
- Whilst the number of LG&SCO referrals have increased during 2022/23, 73% (5) were not investigated following initial enquiries. In addition to this, one outcome identified no fault by the Council in relation to a Commissioned Care Home. This evidence the quality of complaint investigation and responses carried out Adult Social Care Managers.

11.0 Learning from Complaints: Examples of Service Improvements

- Learning from complaints is critical to prevent recurrence of the cause(s) of the original complaint. It is important that we make sure that people's experiences help the Council to

improve services where possible. Changes can include policy, procedure, or employee development.

- Complaints about individual practice or failure to follow procedures are dealt with by reinforcement of processes and reiterating customer care standards through service / team meetings or individual supervision sessions.
- In all cases, any justified issues regarding attitude or conduct of staff are dealt with in line with the Council's internal employment procedures.

Improvements after a complaint

Assessment & Personalisation

- 1 **Action:** Following a complaint where a client was in the process of moving into full time care from Housing 21 accommodation, it was found that several key tasks to facilitate this move had not been undertaken or evidenced by the allocated worker. This had meant that the client was then required to pay rent for the notice period on their home, alongside the care facility charges.

Improvement: Clear procedures were put in place to enable Adult Social Care workers to follow the standard process when a client, living in Housing 21 accommodation, enters full-time 24-hour care. It is also a requirement that all discussions are evidenced in relation to assessment / review of a client's needs and is then documented into the client's record.

These recommendations have since been implemented.

- 2 **Action:** A complaint was received raising disputes to information shared. It was found that there were several family members involved, all who all had differing views on what was best for the client.

Improvement: It was agreed that in future, all workers will identify a lead family member who will then be responsible for disseminating updates, decisions taken and other information to all family members. This will then minimise the risk of disputes or misunderstandings about the information shared.

- 3 **Action:** A complaint was received regarding the transfer from Council provided care to a commissioned care provider where information had not been shared with the client, their family, or the commissioned service which had impacted on the client's care.

Improvement: The matter was discussed directly with the worker concerned to reiterate personal responsibility to share key information. This was also taken forward across the service as a general recommendation.

This improvement will then ensure ongoing and timely communication with the family, which will allow them to be aware of decisions that had been taken. It will also allow the care provider to raise any questions about the care that is to be provided before the package commences.

- 4 **Action:** Following a complaint where charges had been disputed, it was found that the client's next of kin did not have a legal right to access the client's finances and was unable to pay care fees.

Improvement: The investigation highlighted the need to review the process to ensure that legal powers for representatives have been checked and arrangements put in place to allow care charges to be paid during the financial assessment process. This process is currently being updated.

- 5 **Action:** A complaint was investigated where it was identified that the worker involved had not amended a care package on the client's record when the service changed to long term provision.

Improvement: As an outcome to this, the matter was added to the Team Manager's regular meetings where managers were instructed that they reiterate to all their staff the importance of updating case records so that charges for care packages can be correctly applied

Provider Services - Promoting Independence Centres, (PIC)

- 6 **Action:** After a complaint, which highlighted issues around the use of the nurse call buzzer whilst a service user was resident in a PIC it was agreed that changes to the process were required.

Improvements:

- The nurse call system has been upgraded to enable buzzer activation information to be recorded, so that there is a history of events that can be accessed in the future.
- All PIC Staff have been reminded and tutored about the importance of recording relevant information when service users mention something of concern, especially about the actions of staff on duty.

- 7 **Action:** Following a complaint about communication by a PIC with family members in respect of sharing updates and other information about the resident's wellbeing, the service made improvements to the communication process within PICs.

Improvement: During periods in which family members are deprived from seeing their relatives within a PIC, (due to infections etc) the Service must (with Service User's consent) be conscious of providing regular updates on the service user's well-being and the general progress they are making during their stay. This communication will be recorded as part of the Service Users support plan. This has now been incorporated into the Provider Services Quality Assurance Procedures.

Commissioned Services – Care Home

- 1 **Action:** Following an investigation by the LG&SCO about allegations that a commissioned care home had not safeguarded a resident's personal belongings, it was found that the care home did not follow their own procedures in respect of personal belongings. This had then caused uncertainty for the resident's family in respect of determining what may or may not have been brought into the home on admission. The LG&SCO investigation found that there was fault by the care home, but not by the Council.

Improvement: As a recommendation to this complaint the LG&SCO identified that the care home should review its procedures in respect of personal belongings. The care home should also provide a written apology to the family for the uncertainty caused to them. The care home carried out the recommendations and provided evidence that the personal belongings procedure had been updated. The Council's Commissioning Team now monitor this recommendation during contractual visits.

13.0 Compliments

- 13.1 Information about compliments is always fed into all Adult Social Care Services to highlight good practice and to identify opportunities for improvements to services.

- 13.2 During 2022/23, Adult Social Care received 363 compliments, which accounted for 78% of all representations received, (468).

- 38%, (139), of compliments were regarding Assessment & Personalisation.
- 59%, (213) of compliments were about Provider Services.
- 2% (7) of compliments were about the Care Call Service.
- 30%, (108) of all compliments were about the Single Point of Access Team.
- 9% (33) were about the Council's Shared Lives Service.
- 23% (83) were regarding the Council's PRIME Service.

- 9% (33) of compliments were about day services.
- 10%, (36) were about the Promoting Independence Centres.
- 2% (4) of compliments were about the Council's ACT Team.

13.3 Examples of compliments received

ACT

"I would just like to say thank you very much for all your help and support with my sister. You have been very helpful with everything to meet her needs. From now on we will be so happy for you to be my sister social worker. S.... is very happy when you are around, she thinks that you are one of the family members. Thank you for all you team also."

Adult Social Care Direct

"I have always received a courteous assistance from anyone who I've spoken with. All staff had answered and helped with any queries."

"Hi H...,I have spoken to Mrs P... and arranged collection of the walker as to was too big for her car. She spoke very highly of you and said you were very polite and helpful"

Asset

"You have recently closed an Adult Concern for S.. and you have spoken to S...’s mother. S... contacted ASCD to discuss his request to be rehoused and S...wanted to pass on a compliment - He advised that his mother was very happy and appreciative to receive your recent call as felt that someone was trying to help her and was listening to her. S... wanted to pass on his thanks."

Council Domiciliary Care / PRIME

"VR would like to thank all the staff who have been supporting her over the past few weeks. V's husband been in hospital, and she was feeling very lonely, with them not having any family. V stated that you have all been lovely and very supportive and can't thank you enough, she said you all do a fantastic job and should be very proud of yourselves."

"They are gentle and caring, Very considerate of my needs before it has happened. They have all knowledge of the medication I have and support me to take it myself. Very helpful. They even help make sure my lights are left that I cannot reach. They are just so pleasant and always chatty. The first thing staff always ask is how I am feeling. The staff just understand what I am able of and what I can do. They ensure I am safe and have helped whilst my stairlift has been broken. I was left with no service from a different company and PRIME came straight away to put services in."

"I'm very grateful for the help I have been given they were very polite and respectful and very helpful. I wouldn't have managed without them; they were all lovely."

"The PRIME team stepped in with very little notice to care for my elderly mother with memory issues. The team were immediately effective, Mum's well-being was always their first priority, and they quickly established a good rapport, focusing on several specific problem areas such as regular meals and maintenance of fresh food in fridges etc. Now swapping for a long-term private solution and the PRIME team have also been invaluable in that transition."

Care Call

"Positive feedback about U... from Telecare. She came out to install equipment this morning at short notice. She was very patient and lovely to deal with. Please let the Chief Executive know she's doing a great job! Thank you to A McP for arranging the visit at short notice too. from C..."

"The client had a problem with her telephone line, which was also affecting the lifeline. Despite trying to contact her provider on several occasions during the previous few days, she was unable to get the matter resolved. Following a home visit, D... contacted the provider on her behalf and not only managed to get a satisfactory resolution but also obtained financial compensation for the client. Mrs O was absolutely delighted and said D... had been amazing."

Day Services

"A big Thank you to all staff at Blaydon Resource Centre. D... articulated that she was very happy and grateful that G... her husband has been looked after so well, she commented that she was appreciative of keeping G... entertained and tiring him out, he was so tired that he spent most afternoon sleeping. Which means that she can get some respite which she will be eternally grateful for as this means she has a little time for herself as it can be hard managing both her husband and daily tasks.

"C...’s mum said she was absolutely thrilled with the service her daughter was receiving from the enterprises. She said she's over the moon C... has been going to the music café on a Wednesday afternoon and says C... is excited every Wednesday morning as she knows we are coming to get her and take her out for the day.

"...I just wanted you to know the extra lengths D... and his team go to - they show passion and commitment to our son and no doubt all other service users. Its rare that we've ever had this level of support and would like to bring it to your attention. We really appreciate it in times when L is troubled, and this fortnight has rocked his boat at the unexpected change in his routine. Yours C... and S..."

"S... loves Marquisway (lives for it) nothing else matters to him, he loves his team, and they update me often about S... which helps us all. He listens to M... and now asks to help at home. Good Teamwork."

EDT – Adult Services

"I am writing this email to you after the help I received tonight from PB (apologies if I did not spell it correctly). She tirelessly pursued Dale Care in order to get two carers to come and support my father. I am sorry that I cannot say more but I do know that she rang them repeatedly and outlined that it was a safeguarding issue regarding my father GS.. She was the only person who was able to assist us in a very stressful time and I am incredibly appreciative of this. Kind regards, CS."

GATES

"I am really happy about getting a paid job at IKEA through GATES. C... helped me to travel there by myself and L... has been a great support to me to help me learn my job. I could not have got this job without the help from GATES."

Harvest and Help

"Thank you for a wonderful job you have done on my garden I love looking out at it from my window."

Hospital Social Work Team

"Many thanks C... for all your help in sorting out my mam. I know its a big change for her but its also a relief that she is to be cared for and that makes it easier on the family too. I didn't realise how much of a strain we had been under until Southernwood stepped in. Once again, Thanks. Best Wishes S..., K... & R..."

Independent Supported Living

"I want HW and KH to know that I am absolutely delighted, chuffed and pleased that I'm here at Fell Close and for all that I have accomplished over my 2 years living here. I have been the happiest I've ever been since living at Fell Close and would like to say an extremely big thank you to all the Fell Close staff for working closely with myself and the Learning disability & psychology team to help me achieve positive outcomes with my behaviour."

"On behalf of the residents of Spoor Street Dunston I would like to commend JH and her co-workers for organising our Platinum Street party. J... pulled out all stops to ensure that the party was a success. Which it was and a great day was had by all thanks to her organisational skills. A BIG thank you from one and all."

Learning Disability Team

"I received these beautiful flowers and card yesterday from JC's sister M..., following the review we had on Tuesday. They are to say thank you for my hard work and support and for finding a suitable shared placement. She said she now has her happy cheeky brother back as he was very withdrawn at his previous placement which caused the family great distress and concern."

Locality Teams

"Apologies for my delay in responding - I wanted to say a massive thank you for your invaluable help in arranging for my Mam to secure a room at Hadrian House. As you'll be aware, she moves there tomorrow. I will be eternally grateful to you for arranging this - I know that C... pulled a few strings and that's extremely appreciated. Best wishes A...."

"I rang HF's daughter to give her some feedback. She was very keen to point out that the support from your team, M... especially, had been brilliant and they as a family felt that social care was there to support them whenever they needed it."

Mental Health Team

'...I really just want to say that S O'S, who was assigned to me is a complete star. S... has not only gone above-and-beyond but she has that rare quality that she not only 'listens but hears'. It is because of S... that I am living here with support, and I want it to be not only logged on her paperwork but she needs to be acknowledged for she is a true star. I would be most appreciative if you would reply to this email and let me know that S... deserves the recognition and that it is listed on her record. .Regards. DP.'

Occupational Therapy Team

"I have had a call from a lady who has had workman in to complete shower adaptations. She actively wants to let everyone who has been involved including the workmen know how excellent they have been. She advised that they have been so thoughtful, kind and nothing was too much trouble for them. She was very very happy and felt that recognition needed to be shown."

"Hi N... when i met you I was at my lowest and the help and support you gave me has been nothing short of amazing you are so lovely and kind and thoughtful and made my life so much better thank you good luck in your new journey and placement you really are one of a kind and made my life so much better thank you again and hope to see you when i am fit and well thanks flower lots of love L... xxx."

Promoting Independence Centres

"The staff here are very good i couldn't fault them. All the staff are excellent but there are too many names to go through them all, I would rate it higher if I could. I will miss you all."

"A huge thank you to you all carers, nurses, OT, and catering (especially J...) for the kindness and support you're given my mam. You're appreciated so much we wish you all the very best from O... and G... C..."

"Thank you for looking after MB at such short notice, love to all, DB."

"Thanks to everyone at Eastwood for looking after and caring for our mam/nana M.... She was very happy here. Love the C... family."

Shared Lives Service

"I have lovely carers I really like them; they are simply the best, I am grateful for the support and help the carers give me."

"I would be lost without Shared Lives as it is a struggle at times with D..., he enjoys his time with ... out in the community doing activities and being away from me. This puts my mind at rest. A... deserves a medal for the work he is doing with D..., he always caters to D...'s needs and does

things at D...’s pace, he doesn't push him to do things he doesn't want to do. A... encourages and suggests activities he thinks D... will like, he plants the seed and lets D... think about it.”

Short Breaks

“Every time N... returns from the Lodge, he's in a lovely mood, he talks about all the staff and the places he has been. He's always full of smiles. When he knows he is coming into the Lodge he never stops talking, he never shuts up about it. His social life has improved, his own doctor has commented on his progress and the change in N... due to the care he is being given. I have never seen N... as happy, and he has done things that I never thought he could or would ever achieve. I always feel relaxed and can have a break whilst he is in the Lodge due to the care he is given and the reassurance I have been given from staff and from N... when he returns. I love all the photos you send home of him, and he puts them all on his room wall. He is already looking forward to his next stay.”

“D... pet, you're the one that deserves a medal as big as a frying pan with having to juggle so many balls in the air and things changing by the minute and staff coming and going, I just stand back with amazement at the remarkable way you always find an answer, you're like a "bloody magician" Please take care of YOU!!! because you and your work ethos is why we are still able to cope. YOU lead by example every time and are the most caring individual I have ever come across. These were made for you because you are a King among men and a shining example to us all. Love and hugs and keep your chin up xxx The G...’s.”

Single Point of Access Team

“I am ecstatic to know that things are moving on since you took over my situation. it would be a great help having a television sound improvement via earphones or whatever and shower access bars to steady me.”

“Hello, I just want to send an email to the appropriate people regarding my dad’s (TR’s) care and support received by the adult care team and OTs I want to express my gratitude for your staff seeing and treating my dad as a human with needs and providing equipment necessary to benefit his life quality. I am writing this a day after he has had his stairlift installed and on the day for the first time in 8 months he has been able to get upstairs and have bath/shower I supported him where needs be but the bath seat stairlift and everything else that has been given has really helped his self-esteem his well-being and his personal hygiene. I contacted you with my concerns with my dad’s quality of life and hygiene And since then I / he has received nothing but a fast process to get him the needed accessories in his home. My dad has been discriminated against spoke down to, treated different by every service we have used because of his past /lifestyle /choices. I am his voice his fighter. THANK YOU AND ALL YOUR TEAM for treating him like everyone else that deserves help and providing it so quick Today I seen him with clean clothes smelling nice and with a smile on his face. For that I have you to thank Miss LA, T’s daughter.”

“M...’s sister D... contacted me this afternoon they are absolutely overwhelmed and delighted with the service and help from your department, his equipment arrived this morning.”

“S... - lovely young man with a very pleasant attitude who has made the move from Dovecote to Rosewood plain sailing on what could have been a traumatic experience for her Mum has gone without any problems. S... kept the family informed of what was happening and they are forever grateful for his help in arranging the transfer.”

“A very pleasant man came to see what i was having trouble with when i explained he sorted it out in no time. Job well done, Thank you.”

Contact Officer: Alison Routledge, X2408