

TITLE OF REPORT: CQC Assurance Update

REPORT OF: Steph Downey, Service Director, Integrated Adults and Social Care Services.

Summary

The following report describes the current national position on CQC Assurance and the preparation being undertaken by Integrated Adults and Social Care Services to prepare for CQC inspection.

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee regarding the work undertaken to prepare for CQC assurance and the current position as reported by CQC regarding their role out of the assurance framework nationally.

Background

2. Further to previous updates to Committee, the Integrated Adults and Social Care Services department has continued to prepare for CQC assurance.
3. New colleagues have been appointed to support the development of our assurance activities; the department has developed an overarching strategy to identify and progress our transformation priorities; we are working with the National Development Team for Inclusion to redesign our care pathway; and we have requested a Peer Review by the Local Government Association to help us become inspection ready.
4. CQC nationally continue to announce further Local Authorities for inspection, with Durham and Northumberland having been announced in the North East so far.
5. CQC have published findings in respect of the five pilot inspections undertaken:
[Evaluation of CQC's local authority pilot assessments - Care Quality Commission](#)
[Local authority assessment reports - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](#)
6. They have identified the following themes from the assessments undertaken so far:

- **Integrated working has enabled pilot LAs to address challenges in hospital discharge**
- **Waiting lists** for assessments existed mainly **due to lack of capacity** in the social work assessment workforce, but LAs were **managing this by prioritising risk**
- **Partnership working** was key for improving outcomes for people
- **Transition pathways from children to adult services did not always work well**
- **More work is needed** for LAs to understand how to reach people whose voices are seldom heard
- **Social care workforce capacity issues persist**, and **LAs are using a range of incentives** to address recruitment and retention issues, as well as supporting the professional development of the workforce to meet local needs
- Overall, **LAs had developed learning cultures** to help them identify where things were not working well and take steps to improve

Current Position

7. A self assessment and information return have been completed and shared with the Local Government Association ahead of the Peer Review.
8. The Departments Peer Review will take place from 19th – 21st March 2024, with Case File audits having been completed by a Principle Social Worker from Stockton Borough Council on 4th March 2024.
9. The learning from the Peer Review will be developed into an action plan for any areas where we currently do not have an active action plan, and the implementation of this will be monitored via the Departments governance arrangements.

Recommendations

10. Committee are asked to note the content of the report and provide scrutiny in respect of the preparatory work being undertaken by the Department.

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