

Date: 13 September 2016

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Report on Adults Services Complaints and Representations, April 2015 – March 2016.

REPORT OF: Sheila Lock, Interim Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning.

Summary

Cabinet considered the attached report on 13 September 2016.

Cabinet approved the referral of the report to a meeting of the Care, Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in line with procedure.

It is a statutory requirement that the report is considered by a formal committee to ensure the Council has an effective complaints procedure that follows the legislation set out in The Local Authorities Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

Background

1. The Health & Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 requires that Councils with Social Services responsibilities produce an annual report of their Statutory Adults Services Complaints Procedure. This annual report sets out details of the complaints and representations made during the period April 2015 – March 2016, (Appendix 2).
2. Information contained in the report provides a summary of the statistical information of all representations received, together with a review of the effectiveness of the procedure. Some examples of service improvement are also included.

Annual Report Complaints and Representations

3. The report is consistent with the Sustainable Community Strategy – Vision 2030 and the Council's Corporate Plan. In particular the report supports the Corporate Priority for serving our customers by continuously improving services and targeting areas of under achievement.
4. The report covers the period from 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016.

The complaints procedure derives from The Health and Social Care (Community Health & Standards Act) 2003 and The Local Authorities Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. These acts set down the procedures that councils and social services have a legal responsibility to follow when a complaint is made.

5. The report focuses primarily on statutory complaints for Adults Social Care Services, with information on complaint related queries and compliments that are received about staff or services.

Operation of the Procedure

6. The Adults Care Complaints Process procedure has two stages:
- Local Resolution by a Team or Service Manager
 - External Consideration by the Local Government Ombudsman.

Statistical Analysis

7. In 2015/16 the number of complaints dealt with was as follows:
- 62 statutory complaints.
 - 4 complaints were graded as green complaints - low level issues, small risk either to the service user or the Council.
 - 57 complaints were graded as amber complaints - moderate issues with medium risk to the service user or the Council.
 - 1 complaint was graded as a red complaint - serious issues which are high risk for either the service user or the Council.

Points of Interest

8. The following points may be of interest:
- 53%, (33) of complaints were around the quality of services received and remains the greatest cause for complaint.
 - Quality of service involves alleged failure of service delivery, for example:
 - ♦ Home carers not turning up;
 - ♦ Non return of telephone calls;
 - ♦ Late or missed social work visits;
 - ♦ Lack of timely response after a request for service.
 - 34% (10) of complaints were not upheld after investigation.
 - 41% (12) of complaints were partially upheld.
 - 20% (6) were fully upheld after investigation.
 - Complaints decreased by 3% compared to the number received during 2014/15, (64).
 - There has been a 11% increase in formal recorded contacts since 2014/15.
 - However this increase is due to the number of compliments received regarding individual members of staff or services, (1074).

Learning from representations: Examples of Service Improvements

9. 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 us to improve services where we can. Changes can include policy, procedure or employee development.

Some examples of improvements identified during 2015/16:

- On admission to a Promoting Independence Centre where multi-agency involvement is required, all professionals will be expected to meet with service users and their families to explain roles and responsibilities. This will ensure well-defined goal plans and outcomes and guarantee a positive experience within the Centre.

- Appropriate documentation has been developed by the Promoting Independence Centres for multi-agency use. This will ensure that case records demonstrate seamless and chronological recordings of the input and actions of professionals' involvement within a service user's care journey.
 - Regular planning and review meetings are now held with service users/families to update on progress. It will also gather views about service user's experiences during their stay within a Promoting Independence Centre.
 - The Rapid Response Team have developed a contingency plan as part of their Standard Operating Procedures, which is now followed in times of increased pressure on the service. This will ensure that staff are aware of the procedure and give them confidence to accept all appropriate referrals with the knowledge they will be able to respond within their target time of 2 hours.
 - All workers have been reminded of the need to include close family members, (or any others significant in the care of the service user), in the assessment and care planning process. This requirement will be regularly discussed and recorded on personal supervision documents.
10. Compliments continue to be received about the quality of the Adult Care Services provided by Gateshead Council. Some compliments are about individual members of staff or about whole teams and services. Compliments reflect the high regard in which our customers have for employees and the services provided to them. Information is always fed into operational services, including the Commissioning Team, to highlight good practice and possible improvements to services.
- There has been a 17% increase in compliments compared to the amount received during 2014/15.
 - 32%, (347), of compliments, received in 2015/16 focused on the care provided by the Councils Promoting Independence Centres.
 - 30%, (327) were regarding Council provided Domiciliary Care.
 - 55%, (181), of Council Domiciliary Care compliments were about the START service. The START Service is a short term reablement team who concentrate on providing service users with the skills to remain at home. This service can help prevent the need for larger or more long term packages of care.
 - 14%, (154), of compliments were regarding Services provided by Assessment & Personalisation.
 - 58%, (89), of compliments about Assessment & Personalisation were about the Physical Disability Teams.
 - 5%, (56), of all compliments were regarding Health & Housing Support.
 - **Compliments accounted for 85% of all representations made about Adult Social Care Services during 2015/16.**

Recommendation

11. The committee is asked to consider and comment on the effectiveness of the Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Procedures and the details of all complaints and representations received during 2015/16.