

Arrangements for Governance, Quality Assurance and Risk Management in Adult Care

The attached illustration outlines the accountability arrangements which are in place in Adult Care Services.

The illustration supports the premise that robust political and managerial oversight of Adult Care is in place. In addition external checks on the veracity of these arrangements have been and will continue to be undertaken by internal Audit and through the national approach to peer reviews of Adult Care – what is termed 'Sector Led Improvement'. Bespoke reviews of key areas of activity are planned in on an ongoing or ad hoc basis – such as data protection or our approach to Court of Protection cases (by the Office of the Public Guardian).

Adult Care also has a small dedicated Quality Assurance Unit that reviews areas of service (eg. home care) and related activity (eg. the transfer of services from one provider to another/new service provider) on an ongoing basis.

The recent Audit report of Adult Safeguarding is provided here.



Safeguarding
Internal Audit Final Di

Members will be aware of the increasingly challenging financial environment within which the service is operating and that there has been and continues to be considerable transformation of Adult Care. Notwithstanding these pressures our internal and external arrangements provide assurance that effective governance arrangements are in place.

A Quality and Safeguarding Board attended by all DMT Members and chaired by the DASS with representatives from the Commercial Team provides regular oversight of these key activities and a clear focus uncluttered by the day to day business of running Adult Care. Regular Performance reports, monthly quality audits of fieldworkers case files organised by the dedicated 'Lead Professional' provides assurance that individual workers are operating safe, effective assessments, support plans and reviews.

Probity, financial sustainability and ensuring a supply of quality services are equally high profile matters for Adult Care in an environment where 92% of the total Adult Care budget is externally commissioned activity supporting 23,000 of the most vulnerable adults in the County. Accordingly these are identified as significant risks. The health of the 'social care market' is reviewed on an almost daily basis through our brokerage function, the corporate Commercial Unit, quality assurance and safeguarding teams. These activities are co-ordinated to ensure a whole picture is reported regularly on market supply and quality which includes the CQC (the national regulator), infection control nurses (employed by Public Health colleagues) and quality nurses employed by the 4 CCGs.

Additionally, NHS England Chairs a Quality Surveillance Board (QSB) which monthly meets to consider both health and social care provision in Lincolnshire that both the DASS and DPH attend on behalf of the Council. A web-based software programme brings all these information sources together to form a complete and comprehensive picture that also provides predictive capacity to identify providers that may not be sustainable.

The most significant issue of risk which the service is facing is the budget reductions facing local government. Although Adult Safeguarding and quality of services are Council Priorities having seen a level of financial protection in the last 2 years, the service is demand led and there is increasing demand arising primarily from demographic pressures. Maintaining preventative service – 'demand management' is essential to reduce future pressures on statutory services, but this is a challenge in an environment of reducing budgets.

In summary, Adult Care is confident that there are robust arrangements in place so risk is managed appropriately and governance is effective. This does not mean further improvements will not be needed or identified and this process is underway given the changing and challenging context in which we operate. One example of further improvements is the work to create a Lincolnshire safeguarding hub across health, children's, adults and the police which will strengthen information exchange and support co-ordinated responses.

So, a strong base but one that will never be finished.

Glen Garrod

DASS Leadership and Accountability Structure



