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Bwrdd Iechyd
Cwm Taf
Health Board

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Corporate Services

Contribution to the Health & Social Care Committee: Inquiry into Residential Care for Older People

Name: Cwm Taf Health Board

Role Profile: Cwm Taf Health Board was established on 1 October 2009 and is responsible for the provision of health care services to over 325, 000 people principally covering the Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Authority areas.

Our Vision is to '*Create Altogether Healthier Communities*' by aiming to prevent ill health, protect good health and promote better health' through working with partners to provide services as locally as possible and reducing the need for hospital inpatient care wherever feasible. Acute, intermediate, community and mental health services are delivered across a network of Community Clinics, Health Centres and Community Hospitals supported by two District General Hospitals.

Older people would usually enter the residential care setting following a crisis either at home or following a hospital admission. This would mostly be with a multi-disciplinary multi-agency assessment of need.

The current process can be disjointed, and whilst tremendous work was undertaken a few years ago on unified assessment, this has not significantly progressed between agencies at a local operational level. We have been advised that there are plans to revisit this at a Welsh Government policy level, and as a partner organisation we would welcome this, and an opportunity to participate.

It would be vital for this strategic work to include a single assessment process for all possible outcomes for the individual (e.g. social care, at home, health and social care joint package and continuing health care). The earlier work identified barriers, the most significant of which was the need for connective IT systems between health and social care.

The ability to give personal information only once and for it to be shared appropriately between organisations would be significant to the individual being assessed and to those working with the person.

There has been significant progress in the development of alternatives to residential care across the community, these are often on a multi-agency basis e.g. reablement services and medication projects but they are often linked to certain geographical areas. The ability to roll these schemes out further is often limited to resources both financial and staffing.

The residential care sector manage a range of provision for individuals with often complex needs, there appears to be good support networks for trawling through the Local Authorities social workforce development programmes. Within the Health Board area there appears to be sufficient residential care provision to meet demand, however this is often tempered by the availability of the more desirable homes and the consequential impact than hospital discharges as individuals await their home of choice.

The availability of new and emerging models of care delivery, based in community following the policy direction of 'Setting the Direction' will possible effect the residential care home sector, and Health Boards will need to work with Local Authority partners and the sector to consider the opportunities this presents

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Lynda Williams
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