WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Social Work and Health

Social Work and Health Improvement Committee: 23 January 2008

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Subject: Update on Telecare Development Programme – Scottish Government

1.   Purpose of Report

1.1   To provide Members with an update on the Council's Telecare Development
        Programme.

2.   Background

2.1   The Scottish Government invited Local Authority Partnerships to place a bid for
        Telecare Development Funding to be used to support people living in the West
        Dunbartonshire area.

2.2   The funding available to West Dunbartonshire Council is £142,429 during this
        financial year.

2.3   Telecare has been in use within the West Dunbartonshire area since 2005. There
        were 10 people within the community using various forms of Telecare i.e.
        pressure mat, smoke detectors, heat detectors. Telecare was also introduced
        during 2006 into eight of the nine Sheltered Housing Complexes owned and
        operated by West Dunbartonshire Council. All tenants within these complexes
        were provided with smoke and heat detectors and there is access to fall and
        flood detectors if required. At that time Telecare was not extended to
        Westbridgend Sheltered Housing complex because of technical difficulties due to
        the layout within multi-storey blocks.

3.   Main Issues

3.1   The Council was notified in February 2007 that their bid for Telecare funding had
        been successful and to date have received two thirds of the full funding.

3.2   The final tranche will be allocated to West Dunbartonshire Council in January
        2008 subject to monitoring and evaluation returns being completed. York Health
        Economics Consortium (YHEC) has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating
        the Telecare Development Programme throughout Scotland.

3.3   The programme of work undertaken to date is as follows:

- All tenants within Westbridgend Sheltered Housing Complex who agreed to participate in the scheme (56 out of 73) have had smoke and heat detectors fitted. Some of these houses were void at the time of installation and arrangements are currently being made to contact the new tenants regarding installation.

- An inventory of purchased stock has been established which includes equipment such as smoke detectors, heat detectors, fall and flood detectors, gas sensors, pressure mats, door alerts, ruggedised alarms, bed and chair sensors and enuresis sensors. A variety of sensors are now being utilised within the community.

- A system designed to support carers is currently being piloted with two carers and their family members.

- Mobile assessment kits have been purchased to enable short-term assessment of people living at home.

- The five step-up-step-down flats have been equipped with assessment packages consisting of smoke and heat detectors, bed and chair sensors, enuresis sensors and movement detectors.

- The majority of assessment staff (social work and health professionals) have now received briefing sessions. Staff have been provided with information booklets regarding Telecare sensors to aid them during assessments. The Home Care Organiser is currently attending staff team meetings to ensure that all staff are kept up to date with the Telecare Development Programme.

- A referral pathway has been established for all assessing staff. Referral, consent and protocol forms have been created and distributed.

- Liaison has taken place with the Fire and Rescue Services providing a clear pathway of referral between Social Work and the Fire and Rescue Service regarding service users and the use of Telecare in preventing fires.

- A training day took place which allowed the community alarm team to update their knowledge on the installation and programming of Telecare sensors. All staff who attended this training received an 80% plus mark on the exam taken at the end of the session.

- Regular meetings take place with the Emergency call centre Community Alarm staff housed in East Dunbartonshire and the providers of Telecare sensors.

3.4 The purpose of the project is to assist with the provision of services to people in the community, and it is envisaged that it will address a number of areas:

- Unnecessary hospital admissions and delayed discharges;

- Opportunities for people to remain at home in the community;

- More comprehensive assessments for people;

- Impacting on outcomes and targets set via the Joint Performance; and

- Information Assessment Framework and Local Improvement Targets.

3.5 The monitoring and evaluation return for the first and second quarters were submitted to YHEC in August and November 2007 respectively. The figures from the first half of the year evidence that 74 people have benefited from the introduction of Telecare. It is estimated that 350 people will benefit from this period of Telecare funding.

Due to the success of the first quarterly return in August 2007 and the evidence submitted which shows that the Council has embraced the Telecare Development Programme, YHEC has invited the Authority to participate in a specialised research study that they are undertaking. Five Authorities, of the 30 which are participating in the Telecare Development Programme, have been invited to participate in this research study. During October 2007, the Executive Director of Social Work and Health, Manager of Resources, Section Head (Home Care) and the Home Care Organiser took part in telephone interviews with the research staff from YHEC.   It is anticipated that YHEC will visit West Dunbartonshire Council during April 2008 to complete the study.

3.6 The Home Care Organiser with responsibility for managing the Telecare Development Programme is a member of the Telecare Learning Consortium, which meets quarterly.

3.7 Local research, being undertaken by the Home Care Organiser, will be commencing in January 2008.

4. **Personnel Issues**

4.1 The additional Telecare in the community may have an impact on the current staffing of the Community Alarm Service with increased call outs. The recent introduction of sensors in the step up step down facilities has shown a significant increase in both emergency and false calls. As the programme is rolled out into the community monitoring will be required to evaluate whether the increased calls has any impact on response times to emergency calls. Revenue funding may have to be sought to appropriately staff the response service for Telecare.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no immediate financial implications. However, it is hoped that the expansion of Telecare into the community will assist in supporting people to remain independent while continuing to live within the community. It is anticipated that this should have a positive effect on the numbers of people who need to be accommodated in care settings. The effects of this are unlikely to be evident for some time, though the progress of people who receive this assistance will be monitored.

5.2 If call-outs to the Community Alarm Service increase significantly there may be a requirement to increase staffing levels, however it is expected that any such need will be offset by a lower cost of care as a higher proportion of people remain supported at home.

5.3 It is expected that more people being discharged from hospital will be able to be supported at home rather than in a care setting. This should be a less expensive model of care. In order to assess the effectiveness of this funding, the progress of people being discharged from hospital will need to be monitored to assess whether a Telecare package has participated in supporting people to be cared for at home, rather than being placed in care. The financial costs of both models of care will be monitored.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 There is a risk that the use of this new technology increases demand for the Community Alarm Service as more people use community alarms and the Telecare sensors. This may result in a need to expand that service. Offsetting this risk is the potential for reduced demand for care in residential settings together with the potential that people coming out of hospital may be more able to be supported at home with this equipment, rather than require to be placed in care.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The Scottish Government funding of Telecare provides us with the opportunity to pilot this service to a wider proportion of the people within West Dunbartonshire.

7.2 It is expected that the provision of this new technology to a large number of people will allow more people to remain supported in their own home for longer.

7.3 It is expected that the use of this new technology will also be of benefit to carers, as the use of the equipment may provide reassurance that their family member/friend has additional monitoring in place.

7.4 The effects of Telecare will continue to be monitored and assessed at regular intervals. Reports on this monitoring and assessment will be presented to future meetings of this Committee.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Committee is asked to:

a) note the progress report on the use of the Telecare funding; and

b) instruct the Executive Director of Social Work and Health to provide further reports on the use of Telecare equipment and its effect on service provision.

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Background papers: Social Justice Committee 14 March 2007.

Appendices: None

Wards Affected: All wards