

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Acting Director of Social Work Services

Health Improvement & Social Justice Partnership:

9 August 2006

Subject: Interim Single Shared Assessment and Care Management Policy.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership the Social Work Department's Interim Single Shared Assessment and Care Management Policy and to advise the Partnership of the need to develop and implement clear eligibility criteria for community care services.

2. Background

- 2.1 The revised Scottish Executive "Guidance on Care Management in Community Care" (2004) provides Local Authorities and NHS Boards with updated guidance on Care Management.

- 2.1.1 This guidance supplements, but does not supersede, existing guidance issued in 1991 and 1998.

- 2.1.2 The original 1991 guidance on Care Management and Assessment emphasises adapting services to meet needs rather than fitting people into existing services, and dealing with the needs of individuals holistically rather than assessing needs separately for different services. This remains relevant to today's practice.

The 1991 guidance identified seven core tasks that constitute the business of assessment and care management: -

- Publishing information
- Determining the level of assessment (following referral)
- Assessing need
- Care Planning
- Implementing the Care Plan
- Monitoring
- Reviewing.

- 2.1.3 The Scottish Executive guidance sets care management within the wider Joint Future agenda of improving outcomes for service users and carers through

better joint working, and is therefore linked to evolving practice and developments within Single Shared Assessment (SSA).

2.1.4 In particular, it refocuses care management roles and responsibilities on people with complex, frequently or rapidly changing needs, and on extending the range of professionals across local partnerships undertaking care management roles. The core tasks however remain the same. It therefore brings care management up to date in both its context and application, and allows us to build on our local joint future partnership's existing investment in a Single Shared Assessment framework.

2.1.5 Within West Dunbartonshire Council, high level care management describes the intensive and targeted approach used for delivering programmed and managed care that is subject to a system of continuous review for complex cases in community care.

Properly programmed care should sustain levels of function as well as reduce the need for unplanned hospital admissions. Managed care is essential to ensure peoples' stability and optimum quality of life.

A care management model should therefore operate within the context of a positive ethos to support people to remain in their own homes wherever possible.

2.1.6 What degree of care management is appropriate in individual cases will be a matter for professional judgement, although applying eligibility criteria should offer a standard operational baseline for consideration of assessment, care management and service provision.

The Scottish Executive Joint Future Unit has recently launched its National Training Framework for Care Management. The framework was developed in 2005/06 in collaboration with local partnerships and is designed to underpin a seamless approach to the management of health and social care needs across local authority and NHS primary, secondary and acute care services. The National Training Framework guidance offers scope for developing local protocols for the transfer of care management responsibilities to the most appropriate workers as the person's needs change. It also provides a range of training materials and mediums which can be tailored to meet local partnership requirements.

2.1.7 The Interim Single Shared Assessment and Care Management Policy was presented to the Social Justice Committee on 12 April 2006 and is appended to this report.

2.1.8 The Social Justice Committee recommended that all partners progressed the implementation and the policy and requested that reports on progress be presented to Committee.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The starting point for effective intervention is assessment of a person's need

and ready access to the appropriate services. This requires a needs led assessment process, appropriately targeted intervention and services backed up by efficient care management.

- 3.1.1** Progress in implementing Single Shared Assessment has been varied. The SSA Development and Implementation Group has, over the past year, revised SSA documentation in line with the Scottish Executive National minimum Standards.

The revised paperwork has now been validated by the Joint Future Unit and work is under way to implement it.

On the whole progress on SSA has been good but further work is required to ensure consistent implementation across specialist jointly delivered services, such as Learning Disability, Health and Addiction and in the NHS Acute Sector.

A lack of progress in these areas would impact on the partnership's ability to deliver a seamless assessment and care management service.

- 3.2** Implementation of Care Management therefore requires:-

Agreed eligibility criteria for the prioritisation of assessment and care management services and access to community care services.

The interim policy has clearly defined priorities for assessment and care management services. Within West Dunbartonshire we have also developed a guide for accessing community care services. The guide whilst referring to the targeting of services to those in greatest need, does not explicitly define eligibility. This will require further work and political endorsement.

Clarity about the range of staff in different settings across the local joint future partnership, who can be care managers and in what circumstances.

Work is currently ongoing with the NHS and other partners to clearly define who will care manage and in what circumstances.

Training Needs Analysis backed up by innovative training solutions.

The Scottish Executive launched its care management policy on 23 May 2006. The launch was followed by a series of seminars for those directly involved in the implementation process. The Training Framework and associated training materials was issued to Local Partnerships. It was emphasised that local training should be linked to the national care management modular training programme and competency framework and focus on agreed outcomes. This will allow staff to evidence improvement in their performance and skills. The framework can be adapted to reflect our local joint future partnership's perspective and includes an e-learning option.

Agreed performance standards.

The standards are linked to each step in the SSA and Care Management business process and specify expected benchmarks for performance linked to agreed national outcomes. These are detailed in the policy and include areas such as readily available information about services, appropriate levels of assessment and efficient care planning and service delivery.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** In order to progress a modern approach to care management and in line with the 21st Century Review Report “Changing Lives”, we will require to consider issues such as the structural and organisational implications of the staff and skills mix within teams as well as changing roles and work practices. The Council has committed £250,000 to address the pay, career paths and management arrangements within Social Work.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The Council investment of £250,000 provides the necessary resources to address personnel issues within Social Work Services. Training costs will require to be met from existing budgets and all HISJ Partners will have to identify resources to deliver the agreed plan for training and organisational development.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** The ongoing development of this policy across West Dunbartonshire joint future partnership alongside the development of clear eligibility criteria across all partners will lead to:
- those in greatest need getting faster access to better services;
 - minimum intervention strategies resulting in promoting peoples’ maximum independence;
 - cost effective multi-disciplinary arrangements through the sharing of assessment and care management services;
 - higher professional, organisational and practice standards.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1** The Partnership is asked to note the contents of this report and request that:

1. All partners progress the implementation of this policy in line with the National Framework, through the Joint Strategy Group.
2. Further eligibility criteria for community care services are developed.
3. Progress is reported to the Partnership on a regular basis.

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Background Papers: Interim Assessment and Care Management Policy

Wards Affected: All wards will be covered by this policy development. -