

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Acting Director of Social Work Services

Social Justice Committee: 12 April 2006

Subject: Interim Single Shared Assessment and Care Management Policy.

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report presents to Committee the Social Work Department's Interim Single Shared Assessment and Care Management Policy (attached as Appendix I) and advises Committee of the need to develop and implement clear eligibility criteria for community care services.

2. Background

- 2.1** The new 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** The 2004 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 new 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.

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 and care services provision.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The starting point for effective interventions 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.

3.2 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 NHS partners to clearly define who will care manage and in what circumstances.

- **Training Needs Analysis backed up by innovative training solutions.**
The Scottish Executive will launch its care management policy on 23 May. The launch will be followed by a series of seminars and training material will be made available to Local Authorities and partners. Local training will be linked to the national care management modular training programme and competency framework and will focus on 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. Training costs will require to be met from existing Social Work resources.

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 organisational structures through the sharing of assessment and care management services;
- higher professional, organisational and practice standards.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1** The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and:

1. Request that the Acting Director of Social Work progresses the implementation of this policy.
2. Develops further eligibility criteria for community care services.
3. Provides regular reports to Committee on progress made.

William W Clark
Acting Director of Social Work and Housing Services

Person to Contact: Moira Swanson, Research & Information Manager,
Department of Social Work Services, 7 Bruce Street, Clydebank, G81 1TT.
Telephone 0141 951 6124.

Background Papers: Interim Assessment and Care Management Policy

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