

Social Work Matters Newsletter

Issue 8 – January 2021

Service User Feedback

It's fair to say that everyone is pushed to the limits currently, once again managing a further lockdown and the increased pressures this brings. That's why it's more important than ever that we look to capture feedback on our interactions with service users. If we're feeling the pinch it's certain that they are too and we need to consider their experiences of their interactions with social care in order to maintain service standards.



Our [Service User Feedback forms](#), situated on the Adult Social Care Policy Library, can be used, where appropriate, at initial stages of assessment or following a gap in contact e.g. annual review.

They form part of our Care Act duties to consult with service users and gauge their views on the accessibility of adult social care.

They also provide an opportunity for individual workers to reflect on their own practice skills, knowledge and competence.

The questions asked cover just a single page in its written format and a pictorial 'easy read' version is also available. Service users can alternatively opt to complete the questions online and the data is captured and reported back to management team on a quarterly basis.

If anyone is having difficulty in fulfilling this process please speak to your line manager in the first instance.

Management and Employee Module Series

The corporate Organisational Development team are running a series of learning modules to support people's continued training needs during the pandemic.

Titles include:

- Remote Change Management during COVID 19 Pandemic
- Conflict Resolution in a Remote Working Environment
- Ensuring High Performance Remotely
- Behavioural Science and How it Can Support Remote Working

Each title involves a series of 90-minute modules held on-line over consecutive week.

To find out more visit:

<http://intranet/EventsinHalton/Organisational%20Development%20%20Management%20and%20Employee%20Module%20Series.aspx>

Community DoLS – Lessons Learned

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, as enshrined into the Mental Capacity Act in 2007, apply to those adults under the care of a 'Managing Authority' – a residential or nursing care home or hospital setting. However, case law in 2014 broadened the need to scrutinise other care settings where adults receiving care and treatment, including those living in the community.

'Community DoLS' has become an additional and aligned requirement of mental capacity and deprivation of liberty considerations and Halton has a [Deprivation of Liberty – Community Settings](#) policy to look at this.

In the wake of increased numbers of Community DoLS the Integrated Adult Safeguarding Unit have been gathering 'lessons learned' information on their application and the care planning processes that sit around this.



DoLS in a community setting.docx

To find out more click into the document:

This information needs to be reflected in current practice but of course this will all change once the Mental Capacity (Amendments) Act 2019 comes into force and the new Liberty Protection Safeguards are rolled out. With the amended timeline for this taking account of the pandemic it is anticipated that this will apply from April 2022. Halton has a working group looking at the change management requirements around these variations.

Professional Curiosity in Safeguarding Adults

RiPFA's latest strategic briefing centres on professional curiosity in safeguarding adults.

The concept of professional curiosity has been recognised as important in the area of safeguarding children for many years. More recently, Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) have highlighted a similar need for professional curiosity in safeguarding adults with care and support needs. Curiosity is required to support practitioners to question and challenge the information they receive, identify concerns and make connections to enable a greater understanding of the person's situation.



This Strategic Briefing draws from research and Safeguarding Adults Reviews to examine the nature of professional curiosity, some of the barriers that inhibit professionally curious practice, and the enablers that can put in place to create the conditions for a culture of curiosity in their organisations. It offers an opportunity to consider actions required to embed the approach and asks reflective questions throughout the resource.

ASC Workforce Development Strategy

The new [Halton Adult Social Care Workforce Development Strategy 2021-23](#) sets out the Council's continued commitment to learning and development across adult social care.

At a time when staff face amplified challenges and changes on a daily basis it's more important than ever to pledge the Council's steadfast position in investing time and resource in its staffing body in order for them to deliver against their role and remit.

The new strategy replaces the one covering the period 2016-18, looks at the achievements (Section 5) since this point. It gives a new set of deliverables which will be monitored through the quarterly ASC Workforce Development Group, chaired by Marie Lynch.

A particular area of interest for social work teams is the diagram in Section 3.1 which looks at what constitutes learning and development. This recognises that this is now widely regarded as a much broader endeavour than simply buying-in training provision. It give scope to consider continued professional development needs through an extensive breadth of opportunities which can be further discussed as part of supervision processes.



Principal Social Worker's across England give their views

Skills for Care have recently published a report following responses to a Principal Social Workers annual survey and the results show that the role is having a positive impact on the profession.

The [Survey of Principal Social Workers 2020](#) sets out how the role works, how it has been embedded into organisational structures, what difference it has made, and specifically how social work has been shaped by recent global events.

As well as the full report an infographic overview of key findings of the survey has been produced: [PSW Annual Report 2020](#).



Social Work Week 2021

Social Work England has launched a major new event on the social work calendar.

Social Work Week, which will take place from 8-12 March 2021, will encourage social workers and those with an interest in social work, including people with lived experience, to reflect on the significant events, challenges and successes of the profession in 2020.



Social Work England are encouraging people to put the date in their diaries now and start considering their own responses to the initiative.

The social work week aims to complement the annual World Social Work Day which takes place on 16 March 2021.

Social Work Week in Halton Borough Council

While we had planned to have a virtual Forum to start planning towards this the current lockdown has taken precedence. Marie Lynch, as Principal Social Worker for Adult Social Care in Halton, is keen to mark the occasion and requests that ideas are sent to her for further discussion.

Cheshire and Merseyside Teaching Partnership

Halton's Social Workers can access the activities being put on for Social Work Week by Cheshire and Merseyside Teaching Partnership. Please see the attached flyer for more details:



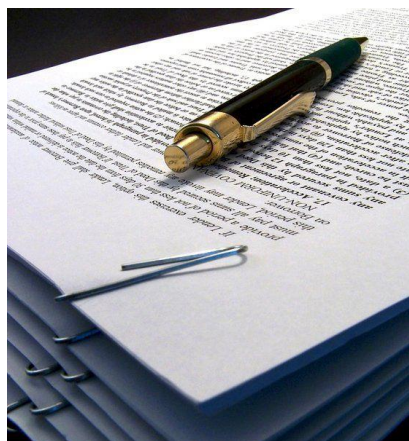
SW week Flyer .docx

New domestic abuse codeword scheme

The Home Office has launched a [domestic abuse codeword scheme](#) in thousands of pharmacies across the UK. The Ask for ANI codeword scheme allows those at risk or suffering from domestic abuse to discreetly signal to pharmacy staff that they need help accessing support.

In response to an alert trained pharmacy workers will offer a private space where they can understand if the victim needs to speak to the police or would like help to access support services, such as a national or local domestic abuse helpline.

Social Work England CPD Sampling



Following professional re-registration at the back end of last year, and our first with Social Work England, a programme of Continued Professional Development (CPD) sampling is taking place.

A number of social workers in adults' services have been identified in the sample and it is our understanding is that no action is required at this time but feedback will be given on CPD submissions that don't fulfil the criteria. Where this is the case social worker will be re-sampled next time around to check they have met the standards.

If you have any queries about your submission, registration or have received additional notice from Social Work England please discuss this with your line manager in the first instance.

Skills for Care – Covid-19 Updates for Social Workers

Continued refresh of the [Covid-19 Updates for Social Workers](#) is being made to support practice during the current lockdown.

The materials offer practical help, such as '[getting the most out of video calling applications](#)', through the legal guidance on the '[Care Act Easements](#)'. There is information on the site for supporting '[student placements](#)' at this time as well as looking at how to manage your own '[emotional resilience and wellbeing](#)' needs.

Please do take a look and reflect on what you need right now to support your work. Where that's not covered in these pages please speak to your line manager in the first instance.

-ENDS-