

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 7 NOVEMBER 2002

HOME CARE REVIEW : FINAL STAGE COMMUNITY ALARM AND OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

Report by the Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Home Care Review Stage 1 – presented to Social Work Committee on 9 April 2002 advised that future proposals would be brought in respect of out of hours services.
- 1.2 This report provides details of proposed improvements to East Ayrshire Out of Hours Home Care Services. These improvements will strengthen frontline services by delivering a significant increase in the level of flexible personal care supports that can be provided to service users in the evenings, overnight and at weekends.
- 1.3 To advise members of proposed developments within the Community Alarm Service that will:
 - ? enable this service to participate fully in the delivery of direct care to the most vulnerable outwith normal working hours;
 - ? modernise the operation of the Control Centre function in providing non-personal care services including the Council's Helpline.
- 1.4 To advise members of initiatives proposed through Delayed Hospital Discharge Funding.
- 1.5 To seek approval to implement changes to the delivery of services.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 Members were previously advised of the changing nature of home care services delivered in East Ayrshire (Home Care Review Stage 1 - Social Work Committee 9 April 2002, Home Care Review Stage 2 - Social Work Committee 23 May 2002). In summary we are increasingly providing more intensive care packages to service users with a wider range of needs.
- 2.2 The profile of visits to service users particularly out of hours has also changed for some people, (e.g. people with dementia, families in need of support) short evening "check visits" are becoming more prevalent, than the traditional blocks of hourly visits. These visits form an essential part of such support packages helping both community care and child care service users remain at home safely.

- 2.3 With the increased evening activity and more complex work undertaken by home care staff the Council as an employer has a responsibility under Health and Safety legislation to address issues of lone working and out of hours working.
- 2.4 Delayed Hospital Discharge initiatives developed by the three Ayrshire Local Authorities and Ayrshire and Arran NHS Trust have identified the co-ordination and enhancement of out of hours services as a key element of preventing inappropriate admissions and facilitating early discharge.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 In East Ayrshire “out of hours” supports are provided through direct Home Care provision, Community Alarms Service and Sheltered Housing. These services are complementary, to existing daytime Social Work services and community health provision
- 3.2 Increasingly Community Alarm employees are involved in carrying out regular care visits as described above. This function is becoming an integral part of their activity and is likely to increase in the future. This cannot be achieved with current arrangements whilst ensuring an appropriate response can be provided to emergency community alarm calls.
- 3.3 Recent experience has demonstrated that independent service providers have not been able to provide, at short notice, a robust response to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable people arising out of hours. Consequently we are reviewing our direct and indirect care arrangements at this time.

4. PROPOSALS FOR CONTROL CENTRE OPERATION

- 4.1 The Control Centre is responsible for handling calls from the Community Alarm Service and the Council Helpline Services.

- 4.2 The Control Centre is staffed as follows:

Control Operators - 8 staff operating a 24-hour shift pattern.

The Control Operators both direct the Mobile Community Alarm teams in providing personal care supports in response to calls through the system and provide an out of hours contact service for all Council Departments through the Helpline.

- 4.3 The Control Centre receives an average of 4112 calls per month. Of these an average of 550 are of an emergency nature that require personal care supports. Typical examples of this range from a service user falling to sudden illness.
- 4.4 The Control Centre has recently taken on the following additional community care services.

- **Appropriate Adult Scheme**

Through this service Strathclyde Police contact the Control Centre if they are going to interview a person (as an accused person, victim or witness) who the Police consider may not have the capacity to understand the implications of the interview process. The Control Centre hold a list of trained people "Appropriate Adults" who assist the individual and the Police during the interview.

- **Integrated Working**

Providing Home Care Services out of hours for General Practitioners.

- 4.5 Existing employees have demonstrated flexible and dedicated work practices over recent years. They have adapted well to the introduction of new services. To maintain the current operation of the service employees are required to work excessive unsocial hours including 12 hour shifts at weekends and up to 2 weeks without a rest day.
- 4.6 It is proposed that to improve work/life balance, a new rota is introduced. This will reduce hours worked at weekends and the frequency to 3 out of 8.
- 4.7 To achieve the changes to control centre operation additional posts will be required to support weekend working. The new role of "Control Centre Assistant" at GS3 grade will be introduced. These staff will work at the weekends to support the Control Operators and under their instruction.

5. PROPOSALS FOR MOBILE WARDEN SERVICE

- 5.1 Over recent years the role of mobile warden role has developed to increasingly include provision of personal care and practical support to service users. It is proposed that all current mobile warden posts are redesignated Personal Carers to reflect the changing nature of work undertaken.
- 5.2 In addition to emergency calls mobile wardens carry out an average of 506 routine visits per month.
- 5.3 The mobile warden service is staffed as follows:

Mobile Wardens 12 staff (6 at Ross Court and 6 at Affleck House) with only one on duty at any particular time in each location.
- 5.4 It is recognised that there are significant issues related to lone working in the current mobile warden role. It is proposed that at evening and weekends in the new arrangements 2 personal carers will be present in each vehicle. This will address the issue of lone working and also enable development of the role as part of our commitment to front line services.
- 5.5 The present overnight service will be enhanced by the addition of 2 personal carers who will be paid a stand-by allowance to be able to respond when required. This is in response to increasing requests, from Ayrshire Doctors on Call and out of hours nursing services, who at short notice require us to provide social care supports to service users to prevent admission to hospital.

6. SHELTERED HOUSING

- 6.1 The 15 sheltered housing complexes in East Ayrshire provide services to 437 vulnerable tenants. The sheltered housing wardens predominantly work “out of office hours”. It is proposed that the management control of Sheltered Housing is transferred to the Control Centre Manager. This is consistent with the type of service provided and it fits with the close relationship both services have with Homes and Technical Services
- 6.2 There are no implications at this time for Sheltered Housing Wardens. The Resource Worker responsible for sheltered housing services will transfer to Community Alarms and be managed by the Control Centre Manager.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

- 7.1 The changes in structure result in increased responsibility for the management of out of hours care staff and sheltered housing services. It is proposed that to reflect this increased responsibility and in line with similar posts within the department the post of Control Centre Manager is regraded from SO2 to SO5.
- 7.2 The changes to control Center Operation will result in improved conditions of service for employees with no financial detriment whilst maintaining the quality of service provided.
- 7.3 Existing mobile wardens will in the transfer to Personal Carer maintain their current conditions on a personal basis. New employees will have the standard pay and conditions of Personal Carer.
- 7.4 Employees and Trade Unions have been consulted on the proposed changes and are in agreement with the development of the service. They particularly welcome the improved conditions both in terms of worklife balance and health and safety.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The proposal to change control centre operations and introduce “Call Centre Assistant” posts can be introduced within the existing costs of the service through agreement with the workforce to improve shift arrangements.
- 8.2 Enhancements in direct service provision through the change from mobile warden to personal carers will be funded through monies provided for “free personal care” and “delayed discharge initiatives”.
- 8.3 The limited changes to Sheltered Housing service are within existing budgets.
- 8.4 The change in grade of Control Centre Manager from SO2 to SO5 can be met through the existing budgets.

9. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATION

- 9.1 The proposed changes aim to support the council initiatives in addressing National and Local Policy.
- 9.2 The changes to operation of mobile units will address Health and Safety concerns re lone working.
- 9.3 The proposed changes will strengthen frontline service delivery.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 It is recommended committee
- (i) approve the proposal to modernise the out of hours home care service;
 - (ii) refer staffing implications to the Corporate Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration; and
 - (iii) otherwise note the content of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services
7 October 2002
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Community Care: A Joint Future, Report by the Joint Future Group – November 2000
2. Ayrshire & Arran Delayed Discharge Action Plan
3. Fair Care for Older People – Care Development Group Report – September 2001

For further information on this report please contact Eddie Fraser, Service Unit Manager, telephone: 01563 554825.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY

AGENDA