
HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE – 21ST SEPTEMBER 2006.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES

RESETTLEMENT OF RIDGE HILL HOSPITAL

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update Health and Adult Care Select Committee on progress with the resettlement of Ridge Hill Hospital.
2. Good Health Select Committee has previously received regular updates on the resettlement project; the last report was received in November 2005.

BACKGROUND

3. Dudley MBC is working with the PCT in Dudley on the resettlement of 34 residents with a learning disability from the Ridge Hill hospital. The re-settlement flows from the White Paper 'Valuing People' in 2001, which announced the closure of all long-stay hospitals for people with a learning disability.
4. Most of the residents have lived at the hospital for many years. Most have a severe learning disability and in some cases profound physical disability or challenging behaviour. The residents require a high level of support when they move from the hospital into the community. Most have relatives who take a keen interest in their welfare and in the plans for the resettlement.
5. The residents are being resettled in groups to accommodation in seven different locations in the Dudley Borough, where they will share houses as tenants. The Council is contracting with a number of Housing Associations as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) for the provision of accommodation for the residents, some of which will be new builds. In addition, a small number of individual placements have been made
6. Most of the residents are moving into supported living in the community, where they will receive individual care from one of two independent sector providers – Lifeways and Trident - who have been selected through a tendering process. Lifeways will provide domiciliary care for 21 people spread over four schemes, and Trident will look after the other three groups comprising 11 people.
7. So far, 15 people have left the hospital; the remaining 19 will have moved by the end of March 2007.

Progress with each of these seven schemes is set out below:

Cot Lane

8. This bungalow was purchased by DMBC in July 2005 with money provided by the Department of Health from the Learning Disability Development Fund. Three men in their early-mid fifties, who had chosen to share a house, moved there in November 2005. The three men are happily settled and there have been no problems with neighbours.

Eaves Lodge

9. Eaves Lodge comprises a house and flat in Wall Heath, which were formerly used as a home for people with a learning disability and have recently been refurbished. The property is owned by Harden Housing Association. One client has moved into the flat at Eaves Lodge, and the other four moved into the house in March 2006. This placement is also going well.

Kempton Way, Stourbridge

10. This scheme has been developed in partnership with CHADD, who have constructed two bungalows for four elderly residents of the hospital, which are situated adjacent to the Glebelands residential home in Stourbridge. The bungalows were completed in March 2006 and the residents moved at the beginning of May. They have settled well in their new home.

Vicarage Road, Amblecote

11. A private bungalow has been purchased by Accord Housing for four women residents, who are in their fifties and have moderate challenging behaviour. The bungalow requires a garage conversion to create an additional room, and this work is nearing completion. The residents are expected to move in October.

Attwood Street, Halesowen

12. Two bungalows are being constructed by CHADD close to a residential home for people with a learning disability in Halesowen owned by CHADD. The flats will provide a home for two people with severe learning disability. The builders started on site in July 2006 and the residents should be able to move in January next year.

Ridge Hill

13. A High Support unit for people with challenging behaviour is being built on the Ridge Hill site in partnership with Bromford Housing Association. It comprises six individual flats with gardens. Work began on 3rd July and the units will be ready for occupation by January 2007.

Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities

14. This group of seven people all have profound and multiple disabilities and are confined to a wheel-chair. Several sites for a new build were explored without success, and the PCT agreed instead to release more land on the Ridge Hill site to enable two bungalows to be constructed for this group.

15. The Council has tendered for a housing provider and the contract has been awarded to Stonham Housing Association. Building work is expected to begin on 18th September, and the bungalows will be completed by March.
16. This last group of residents will then leave the hospital by the end of March thus enabling the hospital to be closed at the end of the financial year 2006-07.

Timescale

17. The original Department of Health target date of March 2006 for closure of the hospital has not been met for some groups of residents. Senior officers from the PCT and the Council have been concerned to ensure that the resettlement is carried out in a way, which meets the needs of this very vulnerable group of patients and is based on robust financial and legal arrangements.
18. Good progress is now being made and we are confident that the resettlement will be completed satisfactorily by March 2007. The Department of Health and the Strategic Health Authority are content with our progress and the revised timescale for closure.
19. In the meantime, care is being delivered by Lifeways and Trident to the remaining residents in their hospital setting as a transitional arrangement. This has enabled residents to get to know their new care team (which usually includes members of the NHS staff team whose employment has transferred to the care provider) and will ensure continuity of care when residents leave the hospital. A detailed protocol has been developed between the Council, the PCT and the care providers to govern these temporary arrangements, which are working well

Residents and Relatives

20. As stated above, the groups which have left the hospital are all doing very well, and relatives appear satisfied with the care arrangements. The only concern which has been raised relates to transport. Residents have had the use of a minibus while living at the hospital, and this facility is not available in the community. Residents are however now able to claim the full range of disability benefits, including mobility allowance, which enables them to arrange their own transport where necessary with the assistance of the care provider.

FINANCE

21. The contract for the care of the residents is funded by the PCT and the money transferred to Dudley MBC by an agreement under S31 of the Health Act 1999. The total value of the contract in 2006-07 is £3.5M to which DMBC will make an agreed contribution of £225K.
22. This sum will reduce on the death of each individual until it reaches £2.96M and this sum will then continue to fund learning disability placements on an ongoing basis with annual uplifts for inflation.
23. The care contracts with Lifeways and Trident were signed on 1st November 2005, together with the S31 Partnership Agreement between the Council and the PCT effective from 1st April 2006.

24. A Joint Co-ordinating Group including the Assistant Director from Social Services and the Director of Finance in the PCT oversees the operation of these Agreements.
25. Approximately £1.4M will transfer from the PCT to Housing Associations via DMBC for the accommodation schemes. Each of these schemes requires two legal agreements – an agreement between the PCT and the Council under S28A of the 1977 NHS Act for the transfer of capital funds, and a contract between DMBC and the Housing Association for the grant funding of the development of the housing scheme. These Agreements must as far as possible contain the same provisions to minimise any risks to the Council, and have proved complex and time-consuming to negotiate.
26. Legal agreements have now been concluded for each of the schemes except Attwood Street (with CHADD) and Profound and Multiple Disabilities (with Stonham). Both are expected to be signed by mid September.

LAW

27. The main legislation governing this project is contained in sections 21, 26 and 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; S28A of the National Health Service Act 1977; and Section 9 of the Housing Act 1985 and Section 22 of the Housing Act 1996
28. Contract Standing Orders are made under section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972.

EQUALITY

29. The resettlement of people with a learning disability into the community is consistent with the Equal Opportunities policy of the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

30. Health and Adult Care Social Care Select Committee is asked to consider and comment on this progress report.
31. Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee is asked to agree to receive a final report on the completion of the Resettlement in March 2007.



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