

Connecting Directly To Service Users – Streamlined Assessment And Delivery

Achievements

Direct contact, earlier intervention and more streamlined approaches to housing issues and adaptations

A structured conversation script provides a triage process to filter out and respond quickly to straightforward requests.

A wider range of professionals commissioning minor adaptations

Occupational Therapists (OTs) can now order minor adaptations for local authority tenants up to a value of £1,000 directly from building services without a recommendation back to the Housing Service.

A partnership approach to complex/extensive adaptations

A group set up within the Health and Social Care Partnership considers complex cases and those potentially requiring expensive solutions.

Improved hospital discharge process

Hospital based Occupational Therapists can commission adaptations without referral to the social work team. Hospital discharge has also been improved by providing housing information and advice to people in hospital.

Fife has **streamlined assessment and delivery and connected directly with service users**, and **extended the housing contribution** to deliver more integrated and effective adaptation services

How they did it

Direct Contact and Earlier Intervention

A triage approach has been designed to improve the service to customers, reduce waiting times and make the best use of the OT resources. The approach has been tested at the Cowdenbeath area office where calls are now routed direct to a duty social worker from the contact centre. The triage process has developed a 'good conversation' script incorporating the question format from SmartLife in Fife's telephone assessment:

- This helps to identify needs and signpost the customer to the appropriate services at first point of contact.
- Minor adaptations can be processed straight away without a full social work assessment, reducing the time on waiting lists and providing much earlier interventions.
- Triage identifies service users who do not require any type of provision from the OT Service.
- Triage identifies those with non-complex needs that can be met by direct provision which would otherwise have been progressed to the Cowdenbeath waiting list to wait for assessment.
- People placed on the waiting list are appropriate and will have been given accurate information regarding potential waiting times and the assessment process.

Service users are satisfied with the outcome of direct provision. They do not require to make further contact with the OT service to follow up on the issues discussed at the triage conversation or the direct provision unless circumstances have changed. Data required for performance and planning reporting is gathered and recorded.

This approach has been tested at Cowdenbeath office. Early indications are that it is providing a faster end to end outcome for the service user with 99% of callers being contacted within 24 hours compared to 70/80% call backs within 24 hours. Around 36% of callers were dealt with immediately either with information and advice or direct provision. Extending this approach across Fife is now being considered.

Complex/Extensive Adaptations

An ad hoc decision-making group has been set up within the Health and Social Care Partnership to streamline the consideration of complex cases and those potentially requiring expensive solutions. This is providing a better connection between housing and partners in health and social care in developing solutions at a much earlier stage of a need being identified. The panel meets on a regular basis to review cases and make a decision based on the customer's needs. A feedback process has also been implemented so that the customer and referring officer are updated.

Streamlined Commissioning and Delivery

Social Work Occupational Therapists (OTs) can now order minor adaptations for local authority tenants up to a value of £1,000 directly from building services without a recommendation back to the Housing Service. Social Work OTs are now requesting small adaptations via the housing management system. This means that all the adaptations (major and minor) are now recorded on the same system. In addition, it means that Building Services are able to schedule the work in the same way as a normal repair, meaning quicker turn around with pre-determined timescales.

The Occupational Therapists have also been provided with access to the housing management database for local authority properties and allocations to be better able to check works carried out, to raise works orders for minor adaptations, and to better match clients and the properties available. The closer integration and joint working is helping both services to achieve better reporting, greater consistency and better outcomes for clients.

How they did it

Improving Hospital Discharge

Hospital based Occupational Therapists can now commission adaptations works without the need for an additional referral to the social work team. This has created a more streamlined process and helped people to return home sooner.

Hospital discharge has also been improved through developing services which mean that the housing needs of people ready to leave hospital can be identified and considered at an earlier stage

- The co-location of two Specific Needs Officers (as part of a project with Shelter) at the Queen Margaret Hospital.
- Extending the Disabled Persons Housing Service (DPHS) to provide weekly advice services within the Victoria Hospital.
- Providing a DPHS contact point for people in a vascular ward at hospital to help assess their options before they are ready to leave, ensuring that they are registered for social housing if they need it at an early stage.
- Housing Professionals (Specific Needs) liaise closely with Hospital Discharge Co-ordinators, attend delayed hospital discharge meetings, act as point of contact for NHS and Social Work staff, attend discharge planning meetings when requested, and liaise closely with Disabled Persons Housing Service.

Mini Bites

- Process now in place with Building Services for faster turnaround on adaptations for hospital discharge cases
- Agreement with Asbestos Team for quicker turnaround on asbestos surveys relating to critical/urgent cases
- Newly established process with Local Area Teams for sharing information
- Ongoing development of a Fife wide adaptations register

Next Steps

- Co-location and integrated service approaches at a one-stop shop location
- Availability of equipment on permanent display for drop-in advice
- Broader range of professionals (including allied health partners) are able to order adaptations.
- Front line staff (Customer Service) will receive briefings to make them much more aware of the potential for adaptations to help people remain at home safely.



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Useful Documents and Links

- One Year On Review (Fife 2016)
- Fife Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2016-19
- Digital 'Postcards' for people with dementia – www.livingwithdementiainfife.scot.nhs.uk
- Link to Smart Life in Fife – www.smartlifeinfife.org
- End to end process – Customer Pathway End to End (Fife 2017)
- Customer Pathway for Local Authority Adaptations (Fife 2017)

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