



Case Study

Review of Continuing Care

Continuing Care: Case Review

Continuing care is a term for long-term health and social care for elderly and disabled people. The funding of, and eligibility for, continuing care has created both conflict and confusion over the last few years. Citizen's Advice reported that *"decision making around eligibility for continuing care continues to be one of the least satisfactory areas of NHS practise."*

To promote a consistent approach in determining eligibility; with a common process and national tools to support decision makers, the government has released and updated guidance over a number of years. As a result many continuing care 'clients' have had their cases reviewed which has raised questions around what constitutes a 'primary health need' - which would be NHS funded - or an 'incidental health requirement' that local authorities (and not PCTs) should be expected to provide

Neither the PCT nor the LA can unilaterally dictate what the other agency should provide. They must work in partnership and agree who is to fund what care package. The Consultancy Company's Health Team are experienced at working in partnership with different PCTs and LAs to reach amicable agreement on responsibility for clients with non-nursing needs.



"With little more than a robustly delivered desk review and a good deal of tact & diplomacy, PCTs may be able to save quite large sums of money by reviewing their Continuing Care client load against government criteria."

Tim Richardson
Managing Director
The Consultancy
Company

The Client

Hounslow Primary Health Care Trust (PCT) stated in their 2007/8 financial recovery plan that savings might be achieved from Continuing Care budgets.

It was anticipated that savings might be made by improved care planning and appropriate delivery. Delivery of Continuing Care would be reviewed against government guidelines to establish if all clients had a primary health need or largely required other services.

A desktop review of continuing care decisions was carried out on 183 clients within three care groups:

- Learning disabilities
- Physical disabilities
- Adult mental health

The Challenge

The Consultancy Company was asked to provide two experienced clinical and social care professionals to carry out the 183 client reviews against government guidelines for Continuing Care.

As well as carrying out the reviews our consultants - as independent professionals - were able to bring objectivity to a sensitive review process and help Hounslow PCT approach the Local Authority for amicable discussions on the appropriateness of PCT non-continuing care client funding and the agreement of *some* subsequent transfer of funding responsibility.



Method

All cases were reviewed against the North West London Continuing Care Assessment Tool (May 2005).

Subsequently cases that were not 'clear cut' were reviewed against the newly published 2006 government guidelines.

The breakdown of the cases was as follows:

- 160 people with learning disabilities
- 3 adults with complex mental health problems
- 26 people with physical disabilities.

The outcome of the case reviews was to address each of the following:

- Did the client meet the continuing care criteria?
- Was the placement appropriate?

Panel documentation was completed for each review and access made to the appropriate member of the Hounslow PCT Review Team, as well as Community Nursing Teams where further client information was required.

For more information please contact:

Tim Richardson

07786 961716

tim.richardson@the-consultancy.co.uk

www.the-consultancy.co.uk

Results

All clients in the mental health and physical disabilities group met the continuing care criteria.

Of the 160 client in the learning disabilities group 29 clients (who were not Old Long Stay patients) did not meet the criteria for NHS funded continuing care. The total figure around which there was the possibility for negotiation was £1.4 million per annum.

It was recommended that the 29 clients needed a more detailed multidisciplinary team assessment using a process agreed with the London Borough of Hounslow before a final decision regarding funding was made.

Benefits

- A robust review against approved criteria revealed a potential savings of £1.4 million for Hounslow PCT.
- Independent specialist consultants used to carry out the review.
- Initial discussions now underway with the Local Authority to review the 29 clients and agree a possible revision of current funding arrangements.
- A measured and professional approach to work in a sensitive area in order to maintain a good working relationship between Hounslow PCT and the London Borough of Hounslow (and ultimately the full involvement of patients and their families and carers).

The Kidlington Centre
High Street
Kidlington
Oxford OX5 2DL
T 01865 841177
F 01865 841155

The Genesis Centre
Science Park South
Birchwood
Warrington
WA3 7BH
T +44 (0) 1925 661715
F +44 (0) 1925 661800

info@the-consultancy.co.uk
www.the-consultancy.co.uk

REGISTERED ADDRESS
15-19 CAVENDISH PLACE, LONDON W1M 0DD
REGISTERED NUMBER 2861227