



Mr Jon Wilson
Leicestershire County Council
By Email

Team People Services
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Dear Jon,

Re: Leicestershire Peer Review

Can I start by thanking you for the excellent organisation and hosting of the recent peer review team. As you know as a DASS whilst challenging because we're all so busy it is always a pleasure and a privilege to be able to take time out to step into another council to look at their practice. The team were all impressed with the level of commitment, enthusiasm and honesty of your teams and I know they have all taken back learning into their own organisations.

As you know this is only the second of our revised regional process and whilst we have expanded our time on site and enhanced our pre site work we still do recognise that it is a point in time in your journey of improvement. I do hope that you find our insights useful, and they can assist in your thinking about the further development and progress around transition and pathways to adulthood particularly as it seems to be a key area of focus in CQC assessment.

I have enclosed copies of our presentation from the day, which includes more detailed feedback on the case audit and the team to team sessions and a short report highlighting the most prominent findings; hopefully this will assist in the preparation of your subsequent action plan and I look forward to hearing how things are progressing in a few months' time when we meet up again for our reflection session.

All the best,

Andy Smith
Strategic Director of People Services
Derby City Council

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Leicestershire Peer Challenge Review May 2023

The review was undertaken by a team led by Andy Smith Strategic Director People Services from Derby.

Review Team

- Andy Smith – Lead DASS Derby City Council
- Amy Brock – Assistant Director, West Northamptonshire Council
- Iris Peel – Group Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Liz Sagi – Moving into adults development manager, West Northamptonshire Council
- Margot Summerbridge – PSW, Derby City Council
- Oliver Bolam – Head of MH and Whole Life Disability, Nottingham City Council
- Sharon Buckby – Director of Learning Inclusion and Skills, Derby City Council
- Sue Wilson – Support role, EM ADASS

Background

The Peer Review process is one of the cornerstones of the East Midlands Branch approach to the Sector Lead Improvement and support offer to both support members to prepare for CQC assessment and review their existing offer. As a Branch we strongly believe that Local Authorities should work together to take collective responsibility for the performance of the sector with a focus on improving the experiences and outcomes of the people we serve.

This peer review is one of 10 reviews being carried out in the East Midlands over a 2-year cycle. Following the evaluation of the previous round we have decided to retain our simplified approach focusing on the 3 key questions:

- What is working well
- What is not work well
- Areas for Development

EAST MIDLANDS PEER CHALLENGE PROCESS

Following our evaluation of the previous cycle and ongoing learning from the CQC assessment process we have maintained our 3-stage approach but have strengthened our case audit through adding feedback from the person and/ or their family and allocated more time on site for the team to triangulate the information received before offering their formal feedback presentation.

The Key Line of Enquiry was agreed between the Host and Reviewing Directors and the review team was chosen based on their skills, experience and interest in the chosen area. Relevant key background information, policies and data were requested and submitted in advance for the review team to consider.

Frontline Teams from the Host and Review Local Authority met and had the opportunity to look at the Key Line of Enquiry from an operational perspective.

A number of individuals who draw on care and support were identified where the review team focused on the persons journey and the outcomes that were achieved via conversations and case file audits.

The onsite review consisted of a number of meetings with key relevant stakeholders identified jointly by the host and review teams.

Evidence was triangulated and the formal feedback presentation was prepared and delivered on day 2 of the review.

KEY AREAS OF ENQUIRY

To review the effectiveness of the current pathway to adulthood for young people within Leicestershire to ensure timely independent outcomes for young people and Best Value for the authority are achieved.

Consideration for part of the review to focus on the current methodology for identifying the cohort of young people that will require an intervention?

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

I think the first area to highlight is the focus of the review and information we received. Whilst we were asked to review the current pathway into adulthood most of our information and contacts related to the younger adults with disabilities team (YAD) and it became apparent quite early on day one that the YAD is only one of the pathways for young people to transition into support in their adult lives which meant we were unable to comment on the whole process.

The YAD Team

The team members we met both in the team to team and the interviews were passionate, highly motivated, and clearly focused on delivering good outcomes for the young people they worked with, many had been with the team for several years which shows the level of commitment and satisfaction in their roles. There was a strong sense of team, and they are highly regarded by the other stakeholders and both internal and external partners that we met. Caseloads were kept low and there was a focus on progression supervision and tracking which was evident in case records. There were some examples of great practice, joint working and flexibility and the reablement offer is clearly highly valued particularly by the young people and families we spoke to.

Whilst the team was well connected within their own patch and with identified special schools they linked with it was less evident beyond that e.g. SEND, welfare rights/benefits, virtual and mainstream schools. The review team felt that there were real opportunities to strengthen their relationships in particular with the EHCP team and virtual schools.

Practice and Process

There is a clear process in place for identification of young people who meet the criteria of YAD, and the team manager meets regularly with their counterparts in children's services to discuss upcoming young people. There is an agreed prioritisation tool, but the reviewing team questioned its effectiveness particularly for those young people who were identified as "medium" risk as during the case audit work it was noted that the young people had very different levels of need.

If a young person didn't meet the criteria for the YAD the young person's journey was less clear to both children's workers and parents, we heard of multiple pathways and staff spoke of it feeling like a "two tier" service; combine this with parents talking about a lack

of signposting or understanding of the pathways it did lead us to reflect on the equity of experience for young people between those who move through the YAD and those who don't which may be something to reflect on prior to CQC assessment.

Whilst there is clear process in place which included pre assessment and a journey to adulthood plan there wasn't much evidence of them being used and workers reported they were often missed, and they had some clear ideas and views on simplifying the process pathway by combining aspects of assessment and support planning.

We did see a couple of examples of more strength-based assessments and support plans but the majority we viewed were still quite deficit based; this may be addressed as part of the roll out of three conversations as it requires a different strength-based approach.

One of the areas we heard most about in the team to team was the application of the Target Operating Model (TOM) with its clear processes and timescales, whilst it has driven up performance it clearly is bringing some challenges and unintended consequences for the YAD staff. There was a sense that it had reduced professional autonomy and creativity and the dashboard was being perceived as a management tool that was creating additional anxiety and stress that clearly wasn't its intended purpose.

Other observations

Moving to a joint adults and children's OT team has had a significant impact around improving the waiting times for assessment for young people which is impressive.

There was a collective view that the Transforming Care Pathways was clear and working well and the arrangements with health around joint funding sounded value for money.

Whilst there is a clear systematic flow of information between children's services and the YAD this doesn't appear to be happening for those young people on other pathways for example between CYP, ASC and Health. This lack of visibility in both numbers and costs will impact on the local authority's ability to commission strategically.

Recommended areas for Improvement

Within the context of a future CQC assessment our key recommendations centre around taking the opportunity to take stock and reflect on the areas that with some focus could be clarified and/or strengthened. It was noted that the Council has scheduled a corporate review of adult social care and the reflections from this peer review could potentially assist this review in the following ways:

- Developing a shared understanding and definition of transition and preparing for adulthood (because transitions and PFA are related but also distinctively two different concepts and processes) which can be clearly articulated by all those involved from the young people and their families to the professionals around them. Working together to co-produce this will assist with strengthening the interface between teams and services around the young person.
- Reviewing the information already held within children's services to ensure you can take a strategic overview of all those young people who might transition into adult services identifying numbers, costs, current pathways and processes to ensure you can take a more strategic approach to meeting their needs. This might also inform single or joint strategic commissioning priorities.
- Reviewing the YAD to make sure you are making the best use of their considerable skills and experience of supporting young people on their journey to adulthood.
- Supporting gaining a better understanding of the experiences of those young people who move into adult services outside YAD to understanding their experiences of transition planning possibly through a joint PSW led thematic review.

In summary reviewing the KLOE we were asked to look at:

To review the effectiveness of the current pathway to adulthood for young people within Leicestershire to ensure timely independent outcomes for young people and Best Value for the authority are achieved.

- We can only comment on the YAD pathway which appears effective but this is only a limited proportion of the young people who are moving through services
- Evidence that the YAD team are striving to maximise independence but as this is only a proportion of the young people and they do not have costs prior to YAD we cannot comment on best value aspect.

Consideration for part of the review to focus on the current methodology for identifying the cohort of young people that will require an intervention?

- Methodology and criteria for YAD is clear but this is not effectively and consistently picking up all young people transitioning into adult services. The suggested areas for consideration above would help with this.

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