

March 2009

Introduction

In North Somerset a community wide approach to securing Dignity in Care has been agreed across all agencies and partners, inclusive of older people, those with mental ill health and learning disability.

The vision of the Dignity in Care project in North Somerset is to ensure Dignity in Care for all adults receiving health and social care services irrespective of the setting and service provider.

Progress on Dignity in Care is being overseen by the Older People's Strategy Group (OPSG) the Mental Health Local Implementation Team (MH LIT), the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB) and the Physical and Sensory Impairment Board (PSIB).

The aim of the North Somerset Dignity in Care project was to embed Dignity in Care Standards in everyday practice by 31st March 2009, through the implementation of the North Somerset Health and Social Care Community Dignity in Care Action Plan. The North Somerset Health and Social Care Community Dignity in Care Steering Group was formed to oversee, monitor and support delivery of the Action Plan and act as a forum for Dignity. The purpose of the Dignity in Care Steering Group was to act as a catalyst for all health and social care organisations to embed Dignity in Care standards into everyday practice. Three Dignity in Care Working Groups are in place at Weston Area Health Trust (WAHT), Clevedon Hospital and NHS North Somerset Provider Services, which will continue to work to ensure that high Dignity in Care standards are maintained.

The Steering Group meetings have been well attended. The Steering Group includes representatives from Care Homes, NHS North Somerset, North Somerset Council, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust, WAHT and community and voluntary sector organisations. The North Somerset Health and Social Care Community Dignity in Care Steering Group also liaised with North Bristol NHS Trust and University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust in order to keep up to date about the work the main Provider Trusts were doing around meeting the Dignity Challenge.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress made by way of an end of year report for 2008/09 and to provide information about plans for the future in order to ensure Dignity in Care standards are maintained after March 2009.

Progress on the National Dignity in Care Initiative

There are now over 4,800 Dignity Champions nationally. Unfortunately it is not possible to quantify the number of Dignity Champions in North Somerset.

The Minister for Care Services, Phil Hope, visited a further 4 regions on the National Dignity Tour seeing a range of initiatives in different care settings that promote an individuals dignity.

The People's Award for Dignity in care was launched in November with the aim of recognising health and social care workers who the public think have gone above and beyond the call of duty and in so doing, have improved patient dignity and service experience.

Progress made in North Somerset

Much of the work of the North Somerset Dignity in Care project to date has focussed on the implementation of the Action Plan in order to secure the ambition that Dignity in Care standards are embedded in mainstream practice. The action plan, complete with the progress made, is attached. It was noted in the North Somerset Dignity in Care Steering Group meeting in March 2009 that the North Somerset Dignity in Care Steering Group had completed all the overarching community wide actions. The Dignity in Care Working Group at Weston Area Health Trust (WAHT) is working to ensure that that all contractual agreements and service user information complies with Dignity Challenge and Dignity Tests. WAHT also identified in their update on the Action Plan that further training for staff about safeguarding adults was required. The 3 Dignity in Care Working Groups at WAHT, Clevedon Hospital and NHS North Somerset Provider Services will continue to meet and ensure that high Dignity in Care standards as maintained.

Members of the Dignity in Care Steering Group have gained service user input to the Dignity in Care work and have also raised both awareness and service user expectations through attending events such as 'Your North Somerset', the 'Life Festival', the NHS North Somerset Annual Public Event and the Care and Support West Annual General Meeting.

Working with Care Home representatives, who are also members of the Dignity in Care Steering Group, NHS North Somerset developed a Dignity in Care Audit Self Assessment Tool for use by all the Care Homes in North Somerset for two purposes;

1. In order to assess Dignity in Care in the home as set out in the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) Older People Performance Assessment Framework, and
2. To become an action plan for Care Homes who wish to improve their performance and be able to measure their improvement in preparation for Commission for Social Care Inspections.

A copy of this self assessment tool was sent to all the Care Homes in North Somerset. The Dignity in Care Steering Group discussed how Care Homes could be encouraged to complete the audit. Following this discussion the Regulation Manager for the South West Regional Office for the Commission for Social Care Inspection was contacted. All the inspectors may now enquire, upon inspection of a care home in North Somerset, if this self assessment has been completed and suggest to those who have not completed it that they should do so. The Self Assessment Tool has been shared through the national Dignity Champions newsletter. The completed Self Assessments also highlighted areas which represented an opportunity to improve standards, which has been taken forward through the Steering Group. An example of this in practice is translation and interpretation services. Completed Self Assessments by Care Homes highlighted a gap in relation to ambition 3B of the Self Assessment Audit: there is access to translation/ interpretation as this was rated as red (ambition not achieved or high level of risk of not achieving by your target date) by 6 Care Homes. A useful information sheet about translation and interpretation was produced and shared across health and social care organisations in order to improve Dignity in Care standards.

The North Somerset Dignity in Care project was offered a small amount of non-recurring funding to support its ongoing work by the South West Care Service Improvement Partnership (CSIP). The funding was offered in recognition that North Somerset was doing good work around Dignity and respect. Further to discussions, the Steering Group decided to use the funding for the provision of nutritional care workshops. This option for the use of the funding was chosen as it would bring benefits to the majority of organisations within the North Somerset Health and Social Care Community. Food, nutrition and mealtimes are a consistent feature in the research and 'have been raised repeatedly... as an opportunity to respect residents' dignity, or undermine it'. Meals and mealtimes affect the quality of life for older people and are indeed 'the highlight of the day' for many people in residential care. The first of the nutritional care workshops took place in March 2009, delivered by the North Somerset dietetic team. The workshop was very well

attended, by delegates from a broad range of health and social care organisations. Delegates learnt about how and when to screen using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST), interventions following screening, food fortification and supplements. The workshop was an interactive session with delegates being asked to explain to the group how nutritional care impacts upon Dignity and completing case studies in order to practice using MUST. All delegates received a nutritional care resource pack, which included information to enable the learning to be shared within the delegates team or organisation. The provision of this workshop improved skills within health and social care and thus improves care for service users. The delegate evaluations will be reviewed. The provision of the workshop did not use the full allocation of funding and a proposal for the use of the remaining funding was required. Options for the use of the remainder of the funding were discussed by members of the Dignity in Care Steering Group, specifically around the provision of targeted nutritional care training for groups who have not previously received this type of training and the production of a Dignity in Care information and reference pack. The two options will be explored and if relevant taken forward as pieces of work.

The North Somerset Health and Social Care Community submitted an application for the People's Award for Dignity in Care. The award forms part of the 2009 Health and Social Care Awards and aims to recognise individuals or groups who have gone the extra mile to provide outstanding care which respects Dignity. The North Somerset application contained information about the community wide approach taken to securing Dignity in Care, which allows best practice to be shared across North Somerset, driving up Dignity in Care standards. Examples of this approach were included in the application. One example of this approach is around communication with people with sensory loss. Through the results of the Dignity in Care Audit Self Assessment Tool for Care Homes a gap in staff knowledge in communication with people with sensory loss was identified. Celia Henshall, Chief Executive of Vision North Somerset (formerly Woodspring Association for Blind People) a member of the Dignity in Care Steering Group produced an information sheet about this subject and the training available for staff. This information has been shared across health and social care organisations in North Somerset in order to drive up Dignity in Care standards.

Options for the future to ensure Dignity in Care standards are maintained in North Somerset

The aim of the Dignity in Care initiative work was to embed Dignity in Care standards in everyday practice, through the implementation of the North Somerset Health and Social Care Community Dignity in Care Action Plan, by 31st March 2009. The North Somerset Health and Social Care Community Dignity in Care Steering Group was formed to oversee, monitor and support the delivery of the Action Plan.

The North Somerset Dignity in Care Steering Group discussed several options for the future of the North Somerset Dignity in Care project. The following options appraisal outlines some of the options for the future of the North Somerset Dignity in Care project which were considered by the Steering Group;

1. Virtual reference group

The Steering Group could continue as a virtual group enabling best practice to be shared via email correspondence. The maintenance of Dignity in Care Standards could be ensured through systematic updates being provided by Dignity Champions using the Care Home Self Assessment Tool or the Action Plan, as appropriate.

2. Continuation of North Somerset Dignity in Care Steering Group – 6 monthly meetings

The Steering Group could continue with physical systematic meetings. The role of the Steering Group could be to act as a forum for dignity and could play a role in ensuring that Dignity in Care standards are maintained.

3. Establishment of further Dignity in Care working groups within the North Somerset Health and Social Care Community

The Health and Social Care Community Dignity in Care Steering Group could disperse. Further Dignity in Care Working Groups could be established, for example for Care Homes to provide a forum for sharing best practice. The maintenance of Dignity in Care standards would be monitored by NHS North Somerset and by the Care Quality Commission.

4. Dignity Champions Core Group

Dignity Champions, nominated as points of contact for health and social care staff in North Somerset, facilitated and supported by NHS North Somerset Dignity in Care lead. A small number of nominated Dignity Champions could provide a point of reference for Dignity. This small group could represent health and social care and could co-ordinate the sharing of best practice across care providers. RNHA and Care and Support West could nominate representatives. The core group could continue to raise awareness, through attending events for example.

5. Dignity in Care Steering Group – annual meetings and Dignity Champions Core group

The Core Group could continue to raise awareness and share best practice on a continual basis with the wider community Dignity in Care Steering Group coming together on an annual basis. Part of the role of the Steering Group could be to review Dignity in Care standards. Email correspondence could take place to share learning and information with the Steering Group.

The Steering Group discussed how Dignity in Care standards would be monitored and managed following the achievement of the action plan. It was concluded that there are comprehensive mechanisms in place to secure feedback from service users about their experience in care settings and in particular in regard to Dignity in Care standards. The North Somerset Dignity in Care Action Plan included 'all organisations checking their processes for monitoring the quality of care, to ensure they include checking that people are being treated with Dignity and respect'. It

was noted that that Dignity in Care standards within acute trusts can be monitored and managed by NHS North Somerset through the Clinical Quality Review Groups.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) (soon become part of the Care Quality Commission) randomly assesses Dignity in Care standards as part of inspections and will continue to promote the use of the North Somerset Dignity in Care Audit Self Assessment Tool by Care Homes.

The group concluded that the best option was to hold an annual North Somerset Dignity in Care event in order to;

- ensure that Dignity in Care stays on the agenda across health and social care in North Somerset
- continue to raise awareness of the Dignity in Care campaign and the North Somerset Dignity in Care project
- enable best practice to be shared across health and social care.

It was decided that the annual events will include; an update on the national Dignity in Care campaign, the sharing of information between Dignity Champions, sharing of best practice across health and social care and a dedicated training/workshop/keynote speaker session. It was decided that the annual Dignity in Care event will be combined with a virtual reference group to allow members of the Steering Group to share information and best practice throughout the year. The group discussed holding the first annual North Somerset Dignity in Care event between November 2009 and February 2010. The Steering Group also discussed the possibility of setting up an online Dignity in Care networking site and the possibility of doing this will be explored.