

Supported Accommodation Provider Engagement event – Monday 7th August

Breakout session discussion

Social care practitioners use a strengths-based approach to support people with care and support needs to maximise their independence. Supported accommodation can be a stepping-stone to independence (for some people) - what do we need to do to enable people to move on to greater independence?

Current Challenges:

Process:

- There is not a huge amount of difference between Supported Accommodation and Support to Access the Community.
- Many individuals within Supported Accommodation services are placed there as there is no alternative due to lack of housing and this affects the ability to move individuals on.
- The council does not set out where individuals can go following their time in Supported Accommodation services, often there is not an end goal or suitable location that a provider can work towards.
- Outreach can be difficult to get agreed.
- Providers must understand the discrepancy between health and social care and try to plug the gaps.
- What level of comfort should individuals be living in/ what is suitable for an individual upon leaving supported accommodation is challenging with little support. A provider deciding this is quite different to a council deciding this. The only time a social worker gets involved again is when the individual wants or needs to move to a different placement.
- Concerns were raised about pushing someone further than they feel comfortable (into independent living)

Communication:

- Previously brokerage used to complete daily calls to discuss individuals with providers, now there is the sharing of the support plan. Key understanding of and insight into individuals is lost and this can mean providers are less willing to accept individuals with more complex behaviours or needs. Vital communication has been lost due to this.
- Communication with social work teams is an ongoing issue– they can assess someone, but it can take months to get any feedback resulting in a void.
- Social worker support/review is needed to help move people to another service or general needs housing.

Cohorts:

- Individuals who were previously being placed within residential services are now being directed towards supported accommodation services which offer different services and support.
- Several individuals have been in a system all their lives, there is an expectation people progress and move through the system but many of these individuals have had these opportunities throughout their lives but have had trauma/ life experience which makes it more difficult for them to move on.
- Employment and college are vital goals but there must be the understanding that there are some individuals who this may not be realistic for.

- There can be a lack of understanding around Supported Accommodation and who these services support. Supported Accommodation can be the end goal for many complex individuals or individuals with learning disabilities.
- Expectations are different for different cohorts e.g., older v. younger. Younger people want places of their own and to be independent whereas older people can feel settled where they are and might not want to move on, were used to more restrictive environments in their younger years.
- Complexity increases, expectation increases, and legislation/ laws change, and providers must understand this and put this into practise. Providers must work to best support individuals whilst also surviving as a business.
- A more consistently changing cohort can tip balance and change the dynamic within a service.

Estates:

- Location assessments must be considered, not every area is suitable for all individuals.
- Supported Accommodation have the issue of neighbours and estates which may not apply to a care home setting.
- Estates and accommodation can be a significant blocker. Community based support is more lucrative for providers and has no change in legislation around housing.
- A shared environment is not always good for individuals and the housing benefit cap affects where someone can rent.

Trusted Review/Assessment:

- Use of PAMMS – some providers have done pilots with other Local Authorities. Providing evidence was very time consuming.
- A Trusted Review trial was completed in domiciliary care that could be used to inform this work going forwards.
- Issue thought that there may be unconscious bias around individuals that staff know well.
- Social workers do not have the capacity to get to know the person. There needs to be more flexibility for changing needs, but that is not available now.

Opportunities for change:

Process:

- A monthly or quarterly touch base with a social worker to identify gaps, pressure points, issues ongoing & upcoming would be helpful for providers.
- Dedicated social worker support allocated to a provider/ group of providers or area of Bristol would save considerable time, funding, and resource.
- Providers do not want a void and for their current status quo to be disrupted. However, if they know that there is a constant flow in, then it will be easier to try and support people moving out.
- Guaranteed provision would support providers to improve numbers of individuals moving through services. Providers would have a pipeline of clients that they can support coming into Supported Accommodation with clear exits and a system in place that allows safe transition to housing with limited support going in if required. We would need to get the long-term modelling right to support this i.e., investing in Bristol in sufficient supply in services for individuals to be supported into work etc.
- There are several individuals currently within services that have not been reviewed due to constraints on social workers, the introduction of dedicated posts to complete outstanding reviews would help relieve pressure and make processes more efficient.

Specification/ Framework:

- Need to make it clear at the beginning of the placement and within the specification that the placement is for building independence and base outcomes on this within a set time.
- Could placements be set for a year or 2 years?
- Sessions to help model the Supported Accommodation system and processes following the outputs of the Single Framework would be useful.

Training and Support:

- Consistency of support in the same location would be helpful. E.g., provide outreach to maintain support through same provider or support staff.
- The only way to create change is collaboration with all stakeholders. The responsibility cannot be all on the provider. Response from partners is limited including health and police and will only get worse over time as pressures increase.
- A whole system response is needed rather than just one element, partners are not talking on the ground and the wrap around element is vital.
- Strong feedback loops and understanding need to be implemented. This will allow the council to understand reasons why providers are unable to support an individual / allow room to identify areas that can be made more flexible.
- A resource bank around Support Accommodation for all partners to have access to would be useful including what it is, who can be supported, expected outcomes, pathways etc.

Trusted Reviews/ Assessment:

- A Trusted Review/Assessment model would be welcomed if created in a collaborative way.
- Work could be completed to agree a set format that covers the fundamental principles required by providers and the Local Authority that could be applied across services in Bristol.
- Who trains the individuals carrying out the reviews?
- Difficulty in doing joint assessments is that everyone does things quite differently, work would need to be completed to ensure consistency and to agree a uniform approach.
- Resources! Are you asking support workers and team leaders to spend time doing reviews?
- What will the requirements be for providing evidence?
- A lot of the questions are asked by CQC (Care Quality Commission) already – would these be being duplicated?