



Housing with Care and/or Support

Supported Living

3rd October 2013

Healthwatch Devon

Experts Panel

c/o Community Council of Devon

3 & 4 Cranmere Court, Lustleigh Close

Matford Business Park, Exeter EX2 8PW

Contact: Greg Davies - greg@devonrcc.org.uk - 01392 248919 x 181

What is the Experts Panel?

The Experts Panel is a group of people representative of the general public who have expertise by virtue of their 'lived experience' of using health and social care services in Devon. They are recruited from a range of organisations that are part of the Healthwatch Devon partnership.

What are the aims of the Experts Panel?

The Expert Panel aims to:

- Have a voice in improving current services and shaping services for the future
- Provide expert challenge and support to service commissioners and providers.
- Have input in any future changes within Devon County Council and NHS Devon by providing views which will be heard at a strategic level
- Give feedback on the work of the Panel to the Joint Engagement Board

What does the Experts Panel do?

The Expert Panel provides an opportunity for people who use services and their carers to share their lived experience with project officers with particular focus on changes in health and social care by Devon County Council and NHS Devon. People are experts because they are at the receiving end of services and give a different but essential view of proposals to any change in services.

Issue:

The Supported Living Task and Finish Group have the following aims:

- To agree key values and principles and a shared vision around accommodation and support that can be used so it becomes a reality.
- To support and inform a market analysis around accommodation options. This should encourage the use of the full range of housing options.
- To agree a procurement method that separates the support required to help the person find appropriate accommodation from the support they require once in the accommodation.
- To agree appropriate processes and practice to achieve supported living arrangements.
- Identification of issues and risks within the accommodation and support sector eg. registration/lack of housing options/ mental capacity/personal brokerage/ direct payments/ accommodation

A member of the task and finish group attended the October Experts Panel to have service user and carer input on 'The vision' for supported living arrangements.

Response:

The Supported Living Task and Finish Group presented draft Key Principles and Key Values as shown in the following 2 tables. Members of the Experts Panel commented on these principles and values as shown in the comments columns.

In addition the members made the following general observations / suggestions:

- The Assessment procedure is very complicated. It would be helpful to make the procedure as simple as possible and to ensure that users fully understand the procedure. The process and the criteria need to be transparent.
- Are these proposals viable? Devon County Council has to find £110million in budget cuts. Is this consultation a pointless exercise with the economies that will have to be made?
- Good building (house) design in the first place needs to be encouraged. Perhaps the Government could offer a prize for a 'universal design' of a home suitable to meet a variety of needs.
- The principle about having 'choice' is very welcome. But what can be done to ensure there is a genuine 'choice' of providers?
- Flexibility is a key aspiration. Some providers are not very flexible at the moment. For users flexibility does not mean 5 days a week for particular hours.
- The Hospital at Home model should be seen as an example of good practice and copied / replicated in other service areas.

Key Principles	Comments
Individuals can live as independently as possible within their own home in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is assuming that people actually want to live independently. • Adapted to their needs if necessary?
A range of housing with care and support options are readily available for individuals to choose from (mix of tenure, type, size)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistically what choices will be available? • Can people choose anything? • Can people remain in a suitable home which has 'spare bedrooms' without incurring extra costs?
Individuals can take their current support package with them, with the same provider, to any accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But where provision is re-tendered a provider who has been giving a great service for years may no longer be able to compete due to a reduction in support hours. • You can only keep the current support package if someone considers it is affordable.
Offers of accommodation from providers should not be conditional upon them providing the support package to the individual	
Access to both the housing, and the care/support, is co-ordinated with simple, separate pathways that are understood by individuals, their families/carers and professionals alike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As long as this is not about finding the lowest common denominator.
Good information and awareness of the options available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information needs to be made available to each individual. • Independent advice and advocacy is a must.
Expectation of customers - affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by affordability?

Key Values	Comments
Individuals are in control of planning their accommodation and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In reality it will depend on what people can afford
Individuals can decide the kind of support they need and how, when and where they receive it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility of support is very important. • It depends which area you are in as to what choice of care providers there are. • Sometimes your support can't be changed if your support worker is going on to support another person. • Sometimes support workers don't turn up. The person has to phone to find out where they are. • Individuals should be encouraged to say what they CAN do as well as what support is required. • Need to be up front about the choice limitations.
Individuals have care/support that is directed by them and responsible to their needs	
Individuals can live in good quality, safe accommodation that suits their needs and are able to freely move home if they wish	
Individuals feel safe, are able to live the life they want and are supported to manage any risks	
Individuals have access to a range of support that helps them to live the life they want and remain a contributing member of their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people may never have had the opportunity to be contributing members of society. This should not be seen as just getting back to where you were before. People could be given the opportunities they have not previously had ie to 'become' a contributing member rather than 'remain'. • It should not be seen as people having to contribute to community. It sounds a bit like a pay back for their care. Which it shouldn't be. It's about making it possible and giving opportunities.
Individuals have systems in place to get help at an early stage to avoid a crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important - needs clear agreements how this happens. • Needs to be easily accessible • Support based on premises means more accessible

<p>Individuals can choose if they want to live with someone, and if they do, who they want to live with.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It must be about choice. It is very difficult to live with someone not of your choice. • Sharing bathrooms and kitchens with someone you don't want to share with is not acceptable. • Having to share with someone inappropriate is very isolating.
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The Experts Panel were also invited to comment on the draft Vision:

DRAFT Strategic Vision (V2)

Our joint strategic vision for supported living is that we will ensure the effective coordination of cost effective housing and high quality care and support services for individuals.

By working in partnership with each person we will enable people to have an enriched, fulfilling and healthy life where personal choice and control is promoted.

Supported living provides individualised and flexible support to help each person to develop the natural relationships and skills that in turn helps them to maximise their independence.

Supported living ensures that each person is respected and uses their abilities and attributes to contribute to society, and meet their realistic aspirations in life.

Comments:

- The Vision sets out an expectation. What is the current reality? Can aspirations actually be fulfilled?
- For some people the vision is not written in what might be seen as 'accessible language'.
- In the second paragraph it talks about a 'fulfilling and healthy life'. The 'healthy' aspect is very important. There is a lot of concern that support providers let people eat lots of junk food and say it is 'choice' - but it leads to obesity and health problems.
- Generally very good in concept - in the last paragraph:
 - Yes it is right and important that each person is respected.
 - However the rest of the paragraph might be seen as 'forcing' people to contribute to society. Do people have to contribute? Sounds like an obligation, feels coercive. Should be about having the opportunity to contribute 'as far as possible'.
 - What is the understanding of 'realistic aspirations'? Who decides what is realistic?