



Paper No. SET/27/19	
	Tick One ✓
For discussion	
For approval	✓
For information/noting	

Date of Trust Board Meeting: 28th May 2019

Confidential or Public Agenda: Public

Agenda item: Annual Delegated Statutory Functions and Corporate Parenting Report, 2018-19

1.0 Annual Delegated Statutory Functions & Corporate Parenting Report 2018/19.
The report is presented for consideration for approval by Trust Board.

2.0 Background information

This is an annual I report on the discharge of delegated statutory functions in respect of services undertaken by the social work and social care workforce within the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (The Trust) covering the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

The scheme provides an overarching assurance framework for the discharge of statutory social care functions. The scheme requires the Trust to produce a biannual report addressing how it has discharged those statutory functions pertaining to social care issues.

3.0 Brief summary of key points contained in the paper/s

During this reporting period the Executive Director of Social Work is reporting significant compliance with delegated statutory functions. Some of the ongoing challenges in relation to the provision of care across social care and social work are not new during the reporting period and steps are being taken to progress work in order to meet these challenges as follows:-

Childrens Services

Unallocated Cases

As highlighted for a number of years, the Trust continues to be unable to allocate services to children in need. During this reporting period the Trust has reduced the number of children waiting for services from 272 at 31st March 2018 to 151 at 31st March 2019.

Fostercare Provision for Children in Care

During this reporting period the Trust has continued to respond to increased demand

for fostering placements, (increase of 89 children in care) resulting in an increased reliance on independent agency placements at significant additional cost to the Trust. To address such challenges the Trust has been working locally and regionally to support an increase in the recruitment of foster carers, and 30 new families have now been recruited, however in this year 24 foster carers also left the service. An increase in the number of children received into care increases the demand for placements exceeding the Trusts capacity to offer placement choice and meet the needs of some children in care – 19 children are deemed to be residing in inappropriate placements given their assessed needs.

Leaving Care

The Trust continues to find it difficult to allocate personal advisors (PA) to all young people leaving care who require the support of a personal advisor. This is due to recruitment issues and also the increase in the number of young people requiring a PA. Presently 20 young people do not have personal adviser and 12 young people do not have a pathway plan.

There are significant challenges faced by the 16+ service in relation to accommodation, mental health and drugs and alcohol.

Kinship Assessments/ Unregulated Placements

Increased demand for kinship fostering assessments has impacted on the fostering service's capacity to meet statutory responsibility to complete assessments within a 12 week timescale. This has been an influencing factor on the increased number of unregulated placements within the Trust which have increased from 32 at 31st March 2018 to 61 at 31st March 2019. The Trust is establishing systems across safeguarding and cared for services to monitor and ensure appropriate reporting to HSCB of unregulated placements, in recognition that the Trust has not been compliant with this expectation to date.

Adult Mental Health Services

Whilst the mental health directorate has discharged its statutory duties satisfactorily in the last year, it has experienced challenges relating to the recruitment and retention of social work team leaders. The impact of not having team leaders in post for medium to long periods of time (even with some temporary arrangements) is considerable on the supervision and professional guidance to social workers and teams.

During this reporting period the mental health directorate has experienced considerable difficulties in ensuring the provision of a seamless Approved Social Work (ASW) service. This has occurred due to significant staffing issues linked to sick leave and other absences across the directorate. A Trust ASW strategy has been agreed to address some of the workforce challenges for this professional staff group. The forthcoming Capacity legislation will place additional pressures on this area of practice

The Trust has also been experiencing considerable mental health inpatient pressures including delayed discharges and increased demand for beds following ASW assessment, resulting in patients experiencing delays in accessing treatment. The Trust has sought to put processes in place to manage the demand on service by

introducing the appointment of bed-flow manager to enhance the interface between the inpatient and community settings, preventing and reducing delayed discharges.

Adult Learning Disability Services

The lack of availability of supported people funding reported since 2016/17 continues to impact on the adult disability services approach to planning and developing independent living options for people with a learning disability to hold individual tenancies. This challenge is now impacting on service users who are delayed in hospital or in the community facing a breakdown in their current living arrangements.

In this reporting year, the Trust has further reduced delayed discharges from Muckamore Hospital. At the end of March 2019 the Trust had a total Muckamore population of 10 as follows: 3 Resettlement; 3 Delayed Discharge; 4 in treatment. Delayed discharges are attributed to the complexity of meeting individual needs within a community setting. Discharge plans are advanced for 8 of these patients. The Trust are working collectively with the Belfast and Northern Trusts to identify suitable placement for people with forensic histories which includes the remaining 2 Trust patients.

There continues to be a lack of dedicated community based options for service users with a forensic history. This challenge is currently being explored on a regional basis which includes the consideration of the development of a community based low secure facility.

Primary Care and Older People

Domiciliary Care Services

As reported in last year's report the Trust continue to experience an increase and demand in the pressures emerging from the lack of capacity within domiciliary care services leading to increasing levels of unmet need. The Trust is presently a project site for the regional reform of care and support at home intended to address some of the challenges experienced in providing this service.

Independent Sector Governance

The Trust continues to experience significant challenges in addressing the increase in complaints, whistleblowing and quality issues within the independent care home sector.

Approved Social Work

Within older people and primary care services there are a limited number of social workers which impacts on the directorate's ability to discharge the delegated statutory functions. Consideration is being given to increasing the number of social work posts in this area. It is anticipated that embedding the Mental Health/Dementia Care Pathways and an ongoing review of skill mix should towards address this challenge.

4.0 Recommendation/s for the Trust Board (please state if the paper/s is for information/noting or for approval by Board members)

For approval.

Lead Director: Bria Mongan

Designation: Director of Children's Service and Executive Director of Social Work

Date: 20 May 2019