

Relatives & Friends Meeting

25th March 2017

Attending: Paula Braynion, Managing Director
Andy Alcock, Director of Operations
Sharon Costello, Director of Finance
Paul Lord, Learning & Development Manager
John Wasilwa, Trafford Network Manager
Lorraine Chapman-Linnett, Warrington Network Manager
Melanie Howard, Lancashire Network Manager
Jill Simpson-Price, Manchester & Spennithorne Network Manager
Mrs Harvey, Lancashire Family
Mr & Mrs Harrison, Manchester Family
Mrs B Hammond, Trafford Family
Mrs V Costi, Trafford Family
Mr & Mrs Barbour, Trafford Family
Mr J Lee, Trustee, Stanley Grange
Mrs C Wood, Stanley Grange Family
Mrs M O'Toole, Stanley Grange Family
Mr & Mrs Leng, Stanley Grange Family
Mr & Mrs Bell, Stanley Grange Family
Mrs Lee, Stanley Grange Family
Mrs J Edmundson, Lancashire Family
Mr J Edmundson, Lancashire Family
Mrs Chard, Lancashire Family

Apologies: Alan Jefferson, Sammy-Jo Scarbrough-Lang, Alison Robinson, Mr & Mrs Lee, Mr Brierley, Mrs Johnson, Mrs Glaiser, Mrs Palmer, Mr & Mrs Satterthwaite, Mr & Mrs Morris, Mrs Johnson, Mrs Simcock, Mrs Allwright, Mrs Maquilli, Mrs Francis, Mr & Mrs Kostenko, Mrs Spencer-Palmer.

Previous Minutes: Discussed and amended where necessary.

CQC Inspection Update

Paula Braynion:

CQC came in to inspect all Supported living properties in January this year. This comprises the majority of the supports provided by the organisation with the exception of Stanley Grange, Spennithorne and Grange Avenue. We have been given notice for the pre inspection forms to be completed prior to an inspection of Stanley Grange so we are expecting the inspection to take place in the next few weeks.

The inspection in January included visits to eleven properties and was completed by two inspectors and two experts by experience. The results of the inspection was an overall rating of good with a rating of outstanding for well-led. Copies of the CQC report were provided for attendees to read and take away.

In a competitive market the results are excellent with only 1% of organisations gaining ratings as outstanding. The inspectors commented on how well our values are embedded in the organisation at all levels. They said it is hard to get consistency across all areas but they can see that we are very person centred and that is a major reason as to why we have been awarded outstanding for well-led.

Of course, there are always things to improve on and it can take a while for new services that we take on to get up to scratch but we are achieving what we have set out to achieve and that is to improve people's lives.

Andy Alcock:

The outcome of the inspection is really pleasing and our staff deserve credit for their efforts. The inspection was thorough and as well as visiting eleven properties the views of seventeen families was sought via telephone communications. Andy noted that some of the questions that he answered to the lead inspector were then asked of other managers and team members.

It is important that we now build on the high standards that are in place. Staff at all support locations were ready for the inspection and determined to showcase their support. The inspectors were keen to check that the values of the organisation were present at all levels. Feedback noted that the inspectors had found staff members to be open, relaxed and that the atmosphere within the support locations was relaxed.

We have an inspection coming up at Stanley Grange soon that we are currently preparing for. Lorraine Chapman and Joanne Brockway are working with the workforce to prepare for this inspection.

In support the excellent CQC rating it is noted that our long term sickness figures are at the lowest for three years. Recruitment is positive and we have another 33 permanent staff and 11 bank staff starting in April/May. Our use of agency is decreasing.

Questions

How far in advance do you know about the inspections?

We are told the inspectors are coming 48 hours in advance. We have limited control on the places they visit but can advise if visiting somewhere isn't appropriate at the present time, e.g. if someone is on an end of life plan. We let Network Managers know when the inspectors are heading to their area but we don't know exactly where they will be going so they find things more or less as they are. Network Managers do turn up out of hours unannounced as part of their checks anyway so we do make sure that houses are running properly and rely on their strong leadership.

Were there any recommendation for improvement from the inspection?

No, there weren't any suggested improvements. There are a few things we need to get into place. We are looking at getting a consistent staff team in place across all our properties as we want to reduce use of agency staff. We are working to reduce our sickness and turnover figures, they have already dropped to a very low level for the North West. Turnover is around 1-2% per month, 11-12% over 125 months. The average for the North West is around 20% - 30%. We are looking at trying to get it below 3%. Work is continuing at Stanley Grange and the new houses in Trafford. It is part of our Annual Plan to work on vacancies and sickness. Without using agency staff, we could get an outstanding rating for caring at our next inspection.

Sharon Costello added that her background isn't in social care and she has recently been to visit some of our properties in Trafford and Stockport with Jill Simpson-Price so see what we do. She said she met some really dedicated staff and it made her very proud to work for Future Directions. Mrs Costi and Mrs Hammond said that the staff team at Spennithorne are really committed and they have contact from them and Jill and can always speak to her to sort out any problems. Paula Braynion said that the stronger the local leadership, the better the support will be.

Stanley Grange families commented that without the commitment of the staff at Stanley Grange, it wouldn't exist. Work is always needed on transferring contracts to get them where you want them to be. SG families commented that staff turnover was 7% back in 2006 when everything was going well. PB said we are aiming to get it back to there and better, we are currently working with the staff teams.

How is the transfer of Stables at Stanley Grange to Supported Living going?

AA said it is progressing, he is currently 2/3rds of the way through. It is difficult to get a response from some people when you ring.

AA is leading on the work so if people want an update on this, they can get in touch with him. They have unsuccessfully tried to strip funding from people's package as part of the process.

At Stanley Grange we have recruited 22 new staff in the last month to support existing and new supports. Induction is taking place at Stanley Grange and we are looking at how to engage new staff so that they have the same commitment and share skills with the more experienced staff. We are hoping to create a wider staff team so that staff understand the whole site and we can fill any gaps with familiar staff.

LC shared that at an event about Transforming Care. One of the people we support has made a video showing how his life has improved since leaving hospital and moving to Stanley Grange. He says he feels safe there and the video captures him greeting other people around the site. The film will be on our website next week. Mr Harrison said it is all about choice. Some people want to live in the countryside whereas others want to be back in local towns.

Making It Real Survey

We send this survey out to the people we support, families and commissioners every year and use the information to make improvements to the service each year. In previous years we have found that some staff weren't treating the people we support houses as their homes and were doing things like charging their mobile phones without asking permission or making what they wanted for meals without consulting the people who lived there. We created a training DVD with some managers and people we support role-playing these situations to make staff think about their behaviour. We found that the next year, the results on this part of the survey were much improved.

Family members were asked to complete a survey if they haven't received one and let RW know their details so we can add them to our database.

Leadership – Paul Lord

We have very focused aims that we are working on in our annual plan. One of these is to grow our support staff into managers and we are looking at how we identify which staff would make good managers. Currently the drive comes from the staff member themselves.

PL shared the example of Mike Madden, who moved from being a really good support worker into a manager. Skills for care use him as an example of celebrating Successes in social care and he has been interviewed for publication "The Guardian"

We have recognised that there is a huge leap between the support worker and Team Manager roles as we had a few staff move up to Team Manager but then move back down again as the gap was too much. We have reintroduced the Deputy Team Manager role and have a few people established in these posts who can then move up to Team Manager.

We are working with a new provider of NVQs and Diplomas called DH Associates and are doing our level 2s, 3s and 5s through them. There will be a huge change to how diplomas are funded from April 2017. They are currently free but from April 2017, we will have to pay a percentage of our wages budget into a pot kept by the government and then we use this to pay for our courses. The money has to be used within 2 years. We want to focus on Team Managers completing their Level 4 or 5 diplomas in Health and Social Care.

As part of the Organisational Development Strategy, we are looking at talent management. We are launching a new leadership framework that identifies the behaviours that managers should display.

We have a series of Manager Support sessions running this year. The first one is on the 18th May and will be an update on where the company is and where we are going to moving forward.

Once we have identified some support staff who aspire to be managers, we will go through the training pack on Management Standards with them from Skills for Care as a pilot to see if this helps them to develop.

Care Certificate

We are looking at training staff in Level 2 and Level 3 Skills for Care Diplomas. Anyone we recruit who is completely new to social care has to do the Care Certificate, which is a Level 1 qualification. If they have 6 months experience, they don't need to do this.

There are 15 standards they need to work through on the Care Certificate. Most of the theory is covered on induction and is on the Skills for Care website. Observations take place in the workplace and until staff have a section signed off, they can't do the tasks in that section unsupervised. Team Managers sign these off.

We use a Skills for Care Questions and Answers Assessment for staff that have over 6 months experience to test their knowledge and identify an action plan for any areas of weakness.

Mr Harrison asked whether agency staff go through the same process.

PL said we have checked with the 2 agencies we use to find out what they do. One agency said that they put all staff that register with them into a nursing home when they first start so they can do their observations and be assessed. The other said they don't do the assessments. This is why it is important to check people's knowledge when they start, even if they have the Care Certificate.

We have a blended approach to training with e-learning, workbooks and face to face training to ensure that what is being learnt is being applied to staff's day to date work.

Mrs Wood raised an issue with Stanley Grange recruitment in that applicants who seemed to be caring and perfect for the job failed the literacy and numeracy test and so were not recruited. PL said that Social Care has changed so much and there is now so much paperwork, record keeping and finances to complete that it would take too much support from managers to take on people who don't already have these skills. PB said that the person's values are the most important thing. On recruitment days, we used to do the numeracy and literacy test first and if people didn't pass it, we wouldn't continue the process. Now we interview them first and then do the test. If they fail, we use discretion as to whether they are taken on or not. We would work through an action plan with them to get them up to the required level.

We used to give applicants advice on how to improve if they failed the test in the past. Skills for Care have brought out some different work related scenarios that we

will look at using as part of the recruitment process. We are trying to recruit people who already have the right values. Mrs Hammond raised the issue of not being able to understand what people are saying. PB said this would be picked up at interview.

One of the Stanley Grange families raised that an important skill to have would be the ability to cook from scratch. It would be good to be able to put on courses where the people we support and staff learn how to do this together.

Contract Updates

Warrington retendered – We will find out if we keep the services we have, gain any more or lose any on 10th April. We will let family members know once we have been told the result.

Lancashire – The Stockport Houses will go out to tender soon. We should know what is happening in the next few months and will let people know.

Stockport – this is a rolling yearly contract, we have had no notice of intentions to retender.

Trafford – The original contract is for 2 years with a one year extension. It still has quite a while to run.

Oldham – 2 new services transferred to FD in September. Poppyfields is due to go out for tender next year.

Rochdale – The people we support in Rochdale are on Individual Service Fund contracts so they would only change if the person is not happy with the service.

Any Other Business

RW made families aware that reviews of deaths of people with Learning Disabilities will start to take place for anyone aged 4 – 74 who died in hospital. This is due to previous reports identifying poor care received by people with Learning Disabilities in hospitals. Medical Professionals will talk to staff and family members about the circumstances surrounding the death to try to identify good practice and areas of improvement. There is a specialist team in place in Oldham to lead on the reviews but we don't yet know what provision is being made in other areas. We just wanted to make everyone aware that there is likely to be an independent local review of deaths in hospital and a medical professional may come to speak to you.

PB asked if anyone had any topics they would like up to cover in future meetings. Mrs Harrison said that compliance and incidents used to be included as regular agenda items and asked if we could start to include these again.

Meeting Closed.