

Richmond Adult Social Care

Winter Plan

2022-23



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Introduction

The purpose of this Adult Social Care Winter Plan is to set out how we will respond to increased demand for services during winter 2022-23. This plan sits alongside NHS Winter Planning and the Local Outbreak Control Plan for Richmond, which sets out the approach to responding to future outbreaks of COVID-19 in the borough to keep residents safe.

Winter planning is a necessary and a critical part of service planning to ensure business continuity and managing risks during what is typically, a pressured time of the year. Following the additional challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, effective planning is now more important than ever. Richmond Adult Social Care is working closely with partners across the South West London Integrated Care Partnership to ensure that plans are in place to meet demand pressures over the coming months.

As we head into this winter, we build on the tireless effort and resilience of the adult social care workforce over the last two winters, which puts us in a good position to meet these demands.

This Winter Plan sets out the approach to managing capacity and demand to meet the anticipated challenges during the winter period from November 2022 to March 2023 and will:

- provide a strategic approach to demand and capacity management to meet high levels of demand including harnessing digital technology solutions
- ensure that adult social care teams have sufficient staff and access to care capacity to continue to support people to live independently in their own homes wherever possible in line with Care Act 2014 principles
- ensure a home first approach is followed from hospital wherever possible, building on learning from the Discharge to Assess model
- ensure continued collaboration and integrated working with the NHS, adult social care providers, the voluntary and community sector, people with care and support needs, their families, and carers
- manage winter pressures and monitor the impact of winter on local people and the social care workforce and take appropriate action in line with the latest government guidance where pressures in the health and care system impact on service delivery.

Provider capacity and demand management

Adult social care services are commissioned from a range of providers to ensure residents can access safe, effective, high quality and good value services. The increases in demand on adult social care services arising from the pandemic has placed additional pressures on care providers.

We have worked closely and in collaboration with care providers to secure sufficient capacity to meet care and support needs of vulnerable residents. This includes spot providers that can be commissioned during periods of higher demand. Robust contingency plans are in place and provider capacity is managed through frequent tracker calls and meetings.

Summary actions

- Richmond Adult Social Care commission a range of CQC regulated care services, residential care and home support, and non-regulated services, such as supported living, day care, employment and voluntary sector support and services for carers. The Council has a key role in **ensuring the availability and continuity of good quality services** and managing provider failure.
- A **multi-agency Care Home Oversight Group** led by Adult Social Care and with representatives from South West London Integrated Care Board, Public Health and GPs continues to meet on a monthly basis to maintain oversight of the local market and target support
- A **Quality and Risk Assessment Framework** for ongoing management of provider performance and quality of services is in place.
- Commissioners maintain in close contact with contracted and spot providers as part of **contingency planning to maintain relationships and oversight of capacity**.
- A **Market Viability Tool** has been completed for regulated care provision and this is kept under review.
- As part of the **Social Care Fundings Reforms**, Councils are required to work with Older People's care homes and domiciliary care providers in the borough to establish the real costs of delivering care. The output from this exercise will

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establish a median cost of care for the council area for Older People's care homes and for domiciliary care which is classified as the '**Fair Cost of Care**'.

- Once the Fair Cost of Care has been established, this will be used alongside other intelligence to produce a **Market Sustainability Plan (MSP)**, which focus on how the Council can ensure a sustainable market considering the anticipated impact of funding reforms from October 2023. The MSP will build on the existing [Market Position Statement](#) and the recently published [Accommodation Statement](#).
- The draft MSP identifies a number of actions to address sustainability issues in the borough including:
 - continuing to work with ICS partners to consolidate position on local nursing rates and negotiating with PFI provider to reduce residential beds and increase nursing and dementia beds
 - better understanding the challenges of the market and how we can work in partnership to improve the situation and to inform our future planning
 - continuing to work with SWL Partnership on a workforce strategy and plan
 - reducing reliance on the longer-term care home market by providing more short-term rehabilitation beds.

Social care assessment capacity

It is well documented that many people were reluctant to seek support from health and social care during the height of the pandemic to reduce the risk of infection. We are continuing to see increases in demand for social work and occupational therapy assessments, increased numbers of safeguarding concerns and increased mental health crisis presentations. These pressures are exasperated by the cost of living crisis, which is likely to present additional pressures on social care services during this winter, and a very challenging recruitment climate with a shortage of qualified occupational therapists and social workers.

Social care staff continue to work 7 days a week to facilitate timely hospital discharge and support flow through the system.

Summary social care offer

- Richmond Adult Social Care services supports hospital discharge **through 7-day working** and active involvement in multidisciplinary meetings, calls and plans.
- Following a service redesign, the **new Adult Social Care Front Door** service uses strength-based and preventative approaches to support residents to stay independent for as long as possible and to take a proactive approach to exploring community-based resources to build resilience and avoid unnecessary use of statutory services. The service will play a key role in managing demand this winter and easing pressure on locality and specialist teams.
- In light of the ongoing high demand for adult social care, managers are carefully **balancing risk and urgency of need** to meet the increase in demand.
- **Prevention, early intervention and considered information and advice** are at the heart of our response at the first point of contact with Adult Social Care. Our intention is to identify people's strengths and capabilities and what support might be available from their wider network or within the community to help, other than the provision statutory services. At First Contact with the Council, staff will provide one or a combination of the following:

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- personalised information and advice and onward referral to a range of preventative services in the community
 - small pieces of equipment and minor adaptations
 - assistive and care technology
 - reablement
 - sensory assessments and support.
- For those with more complex needs, **holistic assessments** are carried out in a timely way and further opportunities for prevention and reablement will be considered to improve quality of life and reduce reliance on formal care and support.
 - **Specialist occupational therapy assessments** consider a person's functional ability, assessing their physical, communication, interaction and cognitive skills and plan resulting in recommendations on what would support the person to maximise their independence. Where major adaptations to people's living environments are required, staff work with colleagues in Housing who manage the Home Improvement Agency and administer disabled facilities grants.
 - **Supporting people to return home safely after a period of stay in hospital** continues to be delivered in partnership with our colleagues in the NHS through our integrated **Richmond Response and Rehabilitation Team (RRRT)** provided by Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare (HRCH). The service continues to demonstrate the benefits of true integrated working for local residents.
 - We have a **duty to act where adults with care and support needs are experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect** and because of those needs are unable to protect themselves. We lead enquiries with key local partners such as the Police, NHS, Housing and providers, work closely with the resident to achieve their outcomes and remove or reduce the risk and support them to be and feel safer.
 - **24 Hour Approved Mental Health Act Professional services** continue to be delivered through AMHP team during the day and the Adult Emergency Duty Team out of hours. The service is made up of specially trained Social Workers who act as Approved Mental Health Act professionals and work in partnership with Southwest London and St. George's Hospital clinicians, London Ambulance Service, and the Police and to meet our statutory duties.

Summary actions to support winter pressures

- An **Adult Social Care Recruitment and Retention Strategy** is in place, which supports managers to respond quickly to staff turnover and to recruit locum staff pending recruitment of permanent staff to meet increased demand.

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- Focused work is ongoing to **improve staff retention**, including a review of pay and grading, looking at retention payments for qualified staff, developing our Social Care Academy and new career opportunities.
- The Council has launched a **Great Employer pilot programme** with aim of providing more flexible and hybrid ways of working for that suits all members of staff and improving staff wellbeing.
- A focussed action plan is in place to help **reduce waiting times for Occupational Therapy assessments** and this includes **additional capacity during winter** as referrals are significantly up on last year.
- Staff and managers are supported by extensive, up-to-date **staff guidance, policies, and procedures** and timely internal communications to keep staff updated.
- **Contingency plans** are in place and up to date to respond to emergency situations and future local COVID-19 outbreaks.
- We continue to collaborate with acute and community NHS partners (ICB and ICS) to develop very clear **Winter Pressure escalation plans to support hospital discharge**.

Voluntary sector capacity

Richmond has a vibrant and diverse voluntary sector that supports residents, local employers and businesses. The Department of Adult Social Care and Public Health commissions a range of preventative services and activities from voluntary organisations to support adults in the borough. These are a mix of open access and specialist services.

Unique to Richmond is the **Community Independent Living Service (CILS)**. CILS is a partnership of 20 local charities and neighbourhood groups, supporting adults of all ages to live independently, improve wellbeing and to stay connected with their local community.

Summary voluntary sector offer

- **Outreach and health and wellbeing support** for vulnerable adults and older people provided through CILS partnership
- **Support for unpaid carers** including training, advice, emotional support, and short breaks through a lead provider model through the Richmond Carer's Hub
- **Digital inclusion services** and training provided through Connect to Tech service
- **Disability and Social Care related advice** and signposting through the CILS partnership
- **Specialist Welfare and benefits advice** service for adults with disabilities and older adults
- **Specialist mental health welfare and benefits advice**
- **Low level mental health and welfare support and floating support**
- **Specialist drug and alcohol services** and mental health support
- The **Nightingale service** continues to support older people to return home safely after a stay in hospital.

Supporting unpaid carers

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased the number of people who have found themselves supporting vulnerable family or friends, placing immense physical and mental pressure on unpaid carers. [Carers UK](#) estimate 1 in 8 adults are unpaid carers and highlights concerns that unpaid carers are facing unprecedented financial challenges during the cost of living crisis.

Richmond Adult Social Care is committed to supporting unpaid carers in their caring role and commission a range of services from the voluntary sector to ensure unpaid carers get the advice, guidance and support they need.

Summary offer for unpaid carers

- Supporting unpaid carers is a core part of Adult Social Care service delivery.
- Carer's assessments aim to **understand the impact caring is having on the unpaid carer's life** and will consider the carer's own strengths and capabilities, and the support friends and family can provide. Staff will identify opportunities for improving the carer's wellbeing and preventing them from developing their own needs for care and support through universal and preventative services in the community
- **Support provided to unpaid carers** may range from advice with financial concerns, exercise referrals, practical help in the home, and discussing any worries about the future.
- **Formal support** is usually provided directly to the person they care for including respite care.
- Richmond Adult Social Care works closely with and commissions **Richmond Carer's Centre** to provide a range of support to carers such as support groups, help with planning for an emergency and providing complementary therapies and counselling support.
- Continue to **increase the number of unpaid carers with a carer's emergency card**, which ensure there is emergency cover in place in case something unexpected happens to the unpaid carer that leaves them unable to provide care.

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- Our **online carers self-assessment** allows carers to complete the assessment and develop an emergency plan online at a time that suits them.
- **Supporting unpaid carers to stay healthy and well** through promoting the flu jab and COVID-19 vaccinations for carers.
- Provide a **confidential space for unpaid carers** to access support virtually through our Digital Pod
- Continuously **improving staff skills and knowledge** including through increasing the number of staff trained as **Carer Champions** to ensure that the needs of carers are considered at every level of social work practice.
- Using national awareness days as a platform for **raising the profile of unpaid carers and the support available to them** in the borough.
- Continuing to **work in close partnership with carers services in the voluntary sector and the ICB** to increase the number of carers accessing support including those who are digitally excluded.
- Giving access to **free social care online training** for carers.
- Continue to **provide engagement opportunities for unpaid carers** to have their say in local services through co-production.

Using digital technology to enhance care and support

Technology provides us with a unique opportunity to revolutionise how we deliver services to residents. It has the potential to support many people to be more independent and help us address some of the challenges we face across the health and care system.

Our [Adult Social Care Digital Strategy](#) sets out how we will embed technology as a core part of the way we deliver services and our priorities for increasing the use of technology.

While technology alone will not always be the right solution, it is a vital enabler and presents a unique opportunity to help us address some of the challenges facing adult social care, including increased demand on services, budgetary pressures and increased isolation and loneliness arising from the pandemic.

Summary care technology offer

- Building on the deployment of video carephones during the pandemic to decrease the effects of social isolation and negative impacts on health and wellbeing, Richmond Adult Social Care has developed a **full care technology offer that can support people's independence, improve self-management, and promote remote monitoring.**
- Care Technology is now offered to residents as a preventative service or as part of an ongoing package of care to allow people to live a full and independent life including:
 - Smart home technology, such as smart plugs, doorbells, and home hubs
 - Movement sensors and home monitoring systems
 - Smartphones and wearables, such as activity trackers
 - Video devices and tablets, such as iPad, Facebook portal, or a video carephone.

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- Continuing to **work with the local voluntary sector to reduce digital exclusion** and support people to access technology which will enable them to remain independent, maintain relationships and reduce isolation. Richmond Adult Social Care has commissioned the **Connect to Tech Service** from the voluntary sector.
- **Connect to Tech** is a group of local organisations who can support adults to get online and help increase their confidence in using technology.
- **Supporting providers to increase their use of technology** to change the way services are delivered, improve efficiencies, and increase resilience.
- **Continuing to work with NHS partners** across South West London ICS **to share learning and encourage joint working** and ensure services are better connected.

Cost of living support

The Council created a £3million Emergency Fund to fund urgent support packages which will help residents and businesses struggling as a result of the cost of living crisis.

The Council has launched a [Cost of Living Hub](#), to signpost residents to both national and local support. The Hub includes information about money, bills, food, housing and home improvements, employment, family and childcare, mental health and general advice. It also features a special calculator to help residents work out exactly what financial help they may be entitled to. All Richmond residents have received a leaflet through their letterbox outlining this support.

Support available to residents

- Warm spaces, such as libraries, are being identified which residents can access to reduce their electric, gas and water usage as well as commuting costs.
- The Council is in the process of issuing a **grants programme for local food banks and warm spaces**
- A number of different [mental health services](#) can be accessed such a national 24/7 helpline or local services such as Richmond Borough Mind and Richmond Wellbeing Services.
- Richmond's **Winter Warmth** provider, Thinking Works to offers home visits, practical advice and solutions on energy saving for vulnerable adults and families.
- Specialist service providers are in place offering **information and advice** on a range of issues such as claiming benefits, employment issues, housing, social care, mobility, transport, education, and training.
- **Richmond Food Bank** has four food distribution points in the borough: Castenau Community Centre, YMCA White House, The Vineyard, Richmond, Whitton Community Centre. A food voucher can be obtained by completing the [self-referral form](#).

Supporting the social care workforce

The social care workforce has been at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic and had to find new ways of working and delivering services for the local population, as well as maintaining their own safety and mental well-being. In recognition of this, the Great Employer Workspace programme has been launched to support staff in post pandemic ways of working. This includes dedicated and flexible workspaces for individuals and collaborative team working which will also have a positive impact on mental well-being.

Support available to Adult Social Care staff

- **Staff resources for social care staff** – dedicated intranet page with varied support options that are available to support all staff. This includes those available within the Council and useful external links and resources.
- **Support from line managers** - staff are being supported by their managers through Teams, Skype, phone calls and emails and they all receive regular supervision. Teams are also meeting virtually for a social chat and catch ups.
- **Team Away Days and Wellbeing sessions** - led by the Principal Social Worker on a team-by-team basis.
- **Teams Wellbeing and Self-Care sessions** - led by the Principal Social Worker on a team-by-team basis.
- **Adult Social Care and Public Health Staff News** – live weekly newscast and weekly email newsletter sent to all departmental staff, which highlights key priority messages including useful tools and support available.
- **Social Care Staff Training** – all training and development opportunities are online and well received. In addition, there is a management development offer for staff with bite sized management training via Institute of Leadership and Management.
- **Research in Practice (RiP)** – through our membership with RiP staff can access a range of materials around wellbeing and emotional resilience.
- **ILM** – Institute of Leadership and Management resource for managers
- **“CARE” App** for the Adult Social Care Workforce supports staff with advice on a number of subjects including wellbeing through SilverCloud.

- **Recruitment microsite** - is being developed to raise the profile of adult social care and promote qualified and unqualified social care vacant posts in the borough.
- **Social Care Reforms** – using current available data and information modelling work is underway to understand future workforce requirements.

Support available for Care Provider staff

The Council and partners are continuing to support providers and especially care home staff by sharing resources on how to maintain their mental health and wellbeing. This includes:

- Skills for Care **support for registered care home managers** including a series of webinars and a dedicated advice line.
- **Free counselling sessions** for frontline staff offered from [Southern Association for Psychotherapy and Counselling](#).
- **Government guidance** on ways health and wellbeing of the adult social care workforce can be supported through the pandemic.
- Referring care homes to borough specific initiatives offered by the NHS.
- [London Care and Support Forum](#) is a network for registered managers working across all sectors of adult social care offering useful information and events for registered managers.
- Developed an online directory which includes references to **mental health and wellbeing support for care home staff** via the NHS.