

RICHMOND AND WANDSWORTH
ADULT SOCIAL CARE
AND PUBLIC HEALTH
PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER
ANNUAL REPORT
2020 - 2021



ADULT SOCIAL CARE ACADEMY
Growing, nurturing, supporting and inspiring

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1 Executive summary

- 1.1** Welcome to the fourth annual Principal Social Work (PSW) report for Richmond and Wandsworth Adults Social Care and Public Health. This report highlights the role of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) in promoting excellence in social work and the achievements of the PSW for 2020/21 in an extraordinary year.
- 1.2** The PSW annual report is an opportunity to reflect and look back over the past 12 months. This report details the work of the PSW over the past 12 months during the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular this report highlights the work of the PSW this year in the context of Covid-19. As Principal Social Worker I have been privileged to work in partnership with colleagues across social care and seen the incredible compassion, resilience and responsiveness of all our staff working across social care as we manage the effects on us personally and professionally during the pandemic. The Coronavirus Act 2020 and Care Act Easements and the Ethical framework for Social Care have provided additional legal and policy frameworks to support our work this year and are detailed below.

1.3 Easements

The Care Act Easements were introduced as part of the Coronavirus Act 2020 as a temporary measure during local Covid-19 responses. As PSW in partnership with colleagues in particular the Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Public Health, Heads of Service and Service Managers and colleagues Kat Van der Praagh and Linda Thompson and their team we developed at speed revised Care Act compliant forms and processes which stream-lined our work to ensure our assessment work and provision of services to support residents continued at pace with clear decision making and management oversight. We ensured that guidance was produced to support the changes and the feedback has been very positive about the new forms and processes allowing staff to focus on strengths-based assessment and support planning with residents.

1.4 Ethical framework

The Ethical Framework for Social Care to support the national and local response planning and decision making throughout the pandemic was developed and distributed to staff.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care/responding-to-covid-19-the-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care>

The framework introduces a set of core ethical values and principles, which provide a structure to ensure rights and strengths-based social work values are embedded when organising and delivering adult social care. This document provided a strong basis for our work in partnership with health colleagues and across the sector to ensure social work values have been upheld during the pandemic. We will be looking to review how this document has been used during the pandemic and whether lessons can be drawn beyond Covid-19.

- 1.5** In accordance with best practice an annual report is prepared at the end of each year.

2 Background

- 2.1** The Care and Support Statutory Guidance defines the role of the Principal Social Worker for Adults, functioning at the strategic level of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF). The Principal Social Worker role includes:
- Being visible across the organisation (from elected members, senior management, frontline social workers and those who use our services).
 - Having a broad knowledge base on safeguarding and Making Safeguarding Personal.
 - Leading and oversee excellent social work practice.
 - Supporting and developing arrangements for excellent practice.
 - Leading the career development of Social Workers.
 - Supporting effective Social Work supervision and decision making.
 - Overseeing quality assurance and improvement of Social Work practice.

3 Progress

- 3.1** The PSW for Adults in Richmond and Wandsworth is responsible for the Workforce and Development team and the Professional Standards team. These teams oversee the Quality Assurance Framework and the learning and development strategy for the Adult Social Care workforce across Adult Social Care and Public Health focussing on the Adult Social Care services workforce.
- 3.2 Highlights of this year include:**
- Recruitment and Retention work including the Locum to permanent initiative (12 social workers recruited from locum staff to permanent), initial recruitment drive and induction programme for 30 social workers at the beginning of the pandemic and leading on the Transforming the Future Recruitment and Retention task group.
 - Successfully being selected as one of the 18 sites across the country to take part in the new Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES) in social care.
 - Developing partnership working with colleagues across Wandsworth Children's services and Achieving for Children in particular on the WRES and World Social Work Day.

- Highly successful World Social Work Day (WSWD) 2021 celebration event attended by over 1000 people with guest speaker Yvonne Aki-Sawyer OBE, Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone.
- Adult Social Care Academy work expanding the Apprenticeship Programme and ILM Management programme.
- Launching of the Research in Practice resource for staff.
- Strengths based practice (SBP) work including motivational interviewing for managers.
- Expanded Training offer working in close partnership with key training providers
- Professional curiosity workshops.
- Strengths -based practice refresher workshops.
- Supporting Carers workshops to raise the take up of the carer offer across the SSA.

4 Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

- 4.1** Highlights of the year include the ASYE manager winning ASYE Manager for the year at the annual Developing Together – Teaching partnership awards across SW London region.
- 4.2** A new cohort of NQSWs joined the programme during 2020-21 and these colleagues were supported by the ASYE manager who also supported the Think Ahead students and NQSWs from the previous cohort all completing their programme
- 4.3** The PSW and ASYE manager were asked to present best practice regarding our ASYE programme and Wellbeing sessions at a national event for Skills for Care in February 2021.

5 Adult Social Care Academy

- 5.1** The Adult Social Care Academy moved at speed to ensure all learning and development opportunities were available to staff virtually at the outset of the pandemic.
- 5.2** As part of our Equalities Diversity and Inclusion work and the identified need to offer further opportunities for progression to all staff and in particular our colleagues from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background, we approached our corporate colleagues, and we were successful in expanding the mentor offer to staff at PO3 and above and combined this with the offer of mentoring training.
- 5.3 Highlights and achievements include**
- Selection for the new workforce race equality standard (WRES) in social care which has been introduced across 18 councils in England from April 2021. Principal Social Workers from Richmond and Wandsworth Adult Services, Wandsworth Children's Services and Kingston Achieving for Children led on bidding to be part of the initial phase in November 2020.
 - As the Minister stated in the foreword to the Chief PSW annual report for 2020-21 the WRES in social care "aims to include increasing diversity at a leadership level, but also recognising the true value of a culturally vibrant and varied workforce. The more employers and employees see themselves in each other – but also respect their differences where they exist the happier, healthier and more supportive our workplaces will be".
 - The Annual Adult Social Care Health Check survey included feedback from staff across the 8 Employer Standards focussed on the health of the profession.
 - Supportive and positive relationships with senior managers and good lines of communication.
 - Equal and fair treatment of all staff.
 - Inclusive working environment for all staff.
 - The coaching and mentoring offer has been expanded with a new policy developed and we now have an established pool of coaches and mentees in place with plans to expand this offer in partnership with our colleagues in Children's services.

6 World Social Work Day

- 6.1 The theme for World Social Work Day 2021 was 'Ubuntu' - a Zulu phrase, meaning "I am because We are" - strengthening social solidarity and global connectedness.
- 6.2 We held a virtual event attended by over 1000 people from across Adults and Children's Services that was co-delivered by Directors and PSWs across Richmond and Wandsworth Adult's services, Wandsworth Children's services and Kingston Achieving for Children. We were also joined by the Mayors for Wandsworth, Richmond and Kingston and colleagues from Kingston university and our Developing Together – Teaching Partnership from across South-West London.
- 6.3 The guest speaker was Yvonne Aki-Sawyer OBE, Mayor of Freetown in Sierra Leone who was named as one of the BBC's top 100 most influential and inspiring women for 2020 and named in Feb 2021 as TIME magazine Next 100 emerging world leaders.
- 6.4 Yvonne inspired and enthralled as she spoke about her work as Mayor of Freetown and her achievements and challenges. Yvonne reflected on health and social care provision in Sierra Leone and the contrast with the UK and her experience working in Sierra Leone during the Ebola outbreak. Yvonne was awarded an OBE for her work during this period.
- 6.5 Yvonne also talked about one initiative in her current role, Freetown as Treetown and the aim to plant one million trees to counteract climate change and boost urban regeneration. Yvonne's work establishing the Sierra Leone War Trust for Children over 20 years ago in response to the plight of children affected by the civil war was also inspiring. This work continues and the organisation is aimed at improving the health, education and well-being of the next generation of Sierra Leonean adults.

7 Recruitment and Retention

- 7.1** PSW activity at the beginning of the pandemic focussed on ensuring we had sufficient numbers of skilled and competent staff in place to continue to deliver excellent services to our residents during the pandemic. The PSW led on recruitment of locum social work staff to ensure that our front-line services had enough staffing capacity to effectively respond to the pandemic undertaking a huge number of interviews in a concentrated period. The PSW developed relationships with partners and colleagues and found solutions in partnership with colleagues to the challenges of ensuring new staff were set up virtually with equipment and ready to start work at speed. Working to ensure a wholly online induction programme for the new staff members was in place was highly successful with many new staff acknowledging that their process of joining the service was efficiently managed and that they felt supported and valued and that the process was more effective in many situations than a face-to-face induction experience in other boroughs.
- 7.2** Locum to permanent initiative - 12 social workers recruited from locum staff to become permanent staff with a launch event listening to guest speakers (internal staff) who had made the move to permanent sharing the benefits of the move. In addition, a resource was developed for all managers to facilitate these discussions on an ongoing basis.

8 Wellbeing

8.1 In response to the pandemic, wellbeing sessions were delivered to hundreds of staff across 25 teams in groups across Adult Social Care and Public Health. The sessions were developed by the Principal Social Worker and were based on material from Nic Marks and the 5 Ways to Well-being and Dr Laurie Santos from Yale university - The Science of Well-being. These sessions delivered both practical advice and assisted staff to develop individual and team action plans as well as providing a range of resources from occupational health and evidence-based research on coping tips and other materials to assist staff to manage their well-being during the pandemic. The sessions combined new ideas and strategies as well as building on and reflecting on how individuals and teams were already managing during the pandemic. Feedback included the following:

“It was a super supportive, informative and positive session.”

“The resources that you have provided are also very much appreciated.”

“It was a lovely, relaxed session which flowed. Will definitely look at the information.”

“Just wanted to say a big thank you for the session and for the wonderful support material you sent us afterwards. I have used some of it today and I think will be using again in the future.”

“(The session) was very educative and presented a lot of options whilst working from home.”

9 Professional Standards, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

- 9.1** The Professional Standards officer and Principal Social Worker developed and delivered a range of workshops and bespoke sessions to support best practice in response to themes from audit. These included professional curiosity workshops; strengths-based refresher workshops and carers support workshops to increase the take up of the carer offer across the service.
- 9.2** Quality assurance activity included Heads of Service and Service managers auditing quality of work in relation to the new assessment and support forms developed across a range of areas – how we are managing risks and outcomes for residents, complaints responses and completion of carers support forms.
- 9.3** A safeguarding screening audit carried out by the Professional Development Officer indicated that the views of the resident and/ or their advocate are clearly being recorded and there is good evidence of involvement in the safeguarding decision process from the resident and /or their advocate.
- 9.4** The Professional Standards officer supported by the two Specialist Safeguarding Professional Advisors developed, an audit tool and audited in excess of 150 cases ensuring robust assurance on the quality of practice in our service to residents.

10 Future plans for 2021-22

Action work around the Workforce Race Equality Standard in social care and work to be monitored and overseen by the Equalities Diversity and Inclusion Board for Adult Social Care and Public Health.

- Continue to develop and deliver workshops and sessions for staff and managers on bespoke topics including Professional Curiosity; Motivational Interviewing and Complaints for managers.
- Carers sessions to be developed with Carers champions.
- Webinar programme to be developed around key themes to support excellent social work practice.
- Safeguarding and Young adults conference - reflections and learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs).
- Develop well-being offer to team development and well-being days.
- Develop the hybrid model for Quality Assurance including peer audit and continue with annual audit by Professional Standards officer and Specialist Safeguarding Professional Advisors to ensure consistency of approach.





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