



Internal Audit Report
Housing & Community Care
Quality of Residential Care
14-12
January 2015

Final Report

Chief Executive's Service
Finance Division
Perth & Kinross Council
2 High Street
Perth
PH1 5PH

Background and Introduction

This audit was carried out as part of the audit plan for 2014/15, which was approved by the Audit Committee on 2 April 2014. The purpose of the audit was to review arrangements in place for the verification of care standards in residential placements.

Where adults are placed in residential homes, the Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that they are appropriately cared for and protected. The protection of vulnerable adults was included within the Corporate Risk Profile for 2013/14.

Residential care placements are available for people for whom living in their own home, even with support, is no longer a practical option. A care assessment of the client's needs is carried out (with the exception of emergency placements) before any service to the individual can commence.

All care homes must be registered with The Care Inspectorate, an independent regulator formed under the Public Services reform (Scotland) Act 2010, which regulates numerous types of care service, including care homes, ensuring care providers meet the expected National Care Standards. These standards detail expectations relating to the quality of care and support; the environment; staffing and management and leadership. To ensure a consistent approach, all independent care homes in Perth & Kinross have signed up to the National Care Home Contract which details the outcomes that residents and prospective residents of Care Homes can expect. Care homes receive regular inspections from The Care Inspectorate.

Perth & Kinross Council use a number of quality measures linked to the fee levels paid to care homes and undertake risk based contract monitoring visits to ensure these quality measures are being met. In addition, regular reviews of each resident's care plan are undertaken by Housing & Community Care Operational staff.

Acknowledgements

Internal Audit acknowledges with thanks the co-operation of the Contracts Compliance & Commissioning Officer, and other officers within Housing & Community Care during this audit.

Control Objectives and Opinions

This section describes the purpose of the audit and summarises the results. A 'control objective' is a management objective that requires the maintenance of adequate and effective internal controls to ensure that it is achieved. Each control objective has been given a rating describing, on the basis of the audit work done, the actual strength of the internal controls found to be in place. Areas of good or poor practice are described where appropriate.

Control Objective: To ensure there are arrangements in place for the verification of care standards in residential placements.	
<p>Auditor's Comments:</p> <p>The audit confirmed that the Service's arrangements for assessing and verifying care standards in residential placements are adequate and are consistently applied.</p> <p>The Service utilise a risk based approach to monitoring which is based on the National Care Standards framework and National Care Home Contract. This includes evaluations of the quality and delivery of service to clients, the capacity and capability of the organisation and the quality assurance systems in place.</p> <p>Recommendations arising from inspections are documented and timescales are agreed with the care manager for implementing improvements. Although there is no formal follow up process, the monitoring officer checks the completion of recommendations during the next scheduled monitoring visit and information from inspections informs the risk-based process for visiting establishments. Links with internal operational colleagues and externally with other local authorities and the Care Inspectorate have been established to share care home "market intelligence".</p> <p>There is scope for improving the Service's oversight of the monitoring procedures. Although the service stated that monitoring reports are shared and approved by the monitoring officer's line manager prior to being finalised, there is no method for evidencing these authorisation processes for reports.</p>	
Strength of Internal Controls:	Moderately Strong

Management Action and Follow-Up

Responsibility for the maintenance of adequate and effective internal controls rests with management.

Where the audit has identified areas where a response by management is required, these are listed in Appendix 1, along with an indication of the importance of each 'action point'. Appendix 2 describes these action points in more detail, and records the action plan that has been developed by management in response to each point.

It is management's responsibility to ensure that the action plan presented in this report is achievable and appropriate to the circumstances. Where a decision is taken not to act in response to this report, it is the responsibility of management to assess and accept the risks arising from non-implementation.

Achievement of the action plan is monitored through Internal Audit's 'follow up' arrangements.

Management should ensure that the relevant risk profiles are reviewed and updated where necessary to take account of the contents of Internal Audit reports. The

completeness of risk profiles will be examined as part of Internal Audit's normal planned work.

Feedback

Internal Audit welcomes feedback from management, in connection with this audit or with the Internal Audit service in general.

Distribution

This report has been distributed to:

B Malone, Chief Executive;
J Walker, Executive Director (Housing & Community Care)
J Gilruth, Depute Director (Housing & Community Care)
B Atkinson, Depute Director (Education & Children's Services)
D Fraser, Joint Head of Community Care
C Johnston Joint Head of Community Care
L Cameron, Head of Housing & Strategic Commissioning
J Symon, Head of Finance
P Graham, Senior Corporate Strategy Manager
K Sharp, Service Manager South & Older Peoples Service
G Taylor, Head of Democratic Services;
P Dickson, Complaints & Governance Officer;
External Audit;

Authorisation

The auditor for this assignment was J O'Connor. The supervising auditor was M Morrison.

This report is authorised for issue:

Jacqueline Clark
Chief Internal Auditor
Date: 12 January 2015

Appendix 1: Summary of Action Points

No.	Action Point	Risk/Importance
1	Monitoring visit reports - authorisation	Medium

Appendix 2: Action Plan

Monitoring Visit Report - Authorisation

The Service advised that draft monitoring visit reports are reviewed and approved by the Contracts Compliance & Commissioning Officer's line manager and also his Team leader. However this authorisation process is not documented and there is no evidence of such reviews.

Management Action Plan

The Contracts Compliance & Commissioning Officer will ensure that the authorisation process is documented and that evidence of the approval is retained.

Importance:	Medium
Responsible Officer:	D Henderson, Contracts Compliance & Commissioning Officer
Lead Service:	Housing & Community Services
Date for Completion (Month / Year):	Completed
Required Evidence of Completion:	Copy of authorised monitoring report

Auditor's Comments

Satisfactory