

Draft Annual Report 2011-12

Who we are
What we do
The difference we make



Denbighshire County Council
Social Services

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If you would like to find out more about our services and how to access them, contact the First Contact Team. You can write or call in to see them at:

64 Brighton Road
Rhyl
LL18 3HN

County Hall
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
LL15 1YN

Phone 01824 712900
Fax 01824 712888
Text 07917 597993
Email firstcontactteam@denbighshire.gov.uk
Website www.denbighshire.gov.uk

This document provides a summary of our annual self assessment. [Click here](#) if you want to read the full detailed assessment.

For a version of this leaflet in Braille or another language or format, call free on 0800 243 980.

Introduction

This is my annual report about social services in Denbighshire. The report looks at performance in 2011/2012 and sets out our priorities for 2012/2013. The report provides a detailed assessment of how effective services are for adults and children and families.

How effective are our services?

My overall assessment is that Denbighshire Social Services continues to perform well. We have a very committed work force and I am pleased with their continued work to ensure that we can deliver positive outcomes for people.

Recent Welsh Government papers set an agenda to transform social care services in Wales. We have already started to deliver this agenda. Over the last 3 years we have made good progress in adapting and developing services to respond to the needs of an ageing community and increasing numbers of children and adults with complex needs. We recognise that there is more to do and the priorities we have set will continue to modernise our services.

Modernising our services will include some difficult decisions. In some instances this will involve changing the way we work and the way services are delivered. We will need to ensure that we manage change consistently well, ensuring that people who use social services, our staff and communities have the opportunity to shape the way change is taken forward.

We recognise that some of the decisions will not be popular. However, the financial climate means that tough decisions can not be avoided. Our focus will be on making changes that deliver cost effective and sustainable services. Central to this will be the need to ensure vulnerable people are protected and that people receive high quality services that provide people dignity in care and good outcomes.



Sally Ellis

Corporate Director for Demographics, Wellbeing and Planning

Children & Family Services

Supporting Children and Families

What we are about

We aim to ensure vulnerable children:

- ✓ are safeguarded
- ✓ live with secure, stable loving families
- ✓ have opportunities for success, and
- ✓ are enabled to grow and develop into healthy, well rounded adults.

The Services we provide

We recognise the importance of providing the right support to children and families at the right time. This involves working closely with other agencies to combine our effort so that we:

- help prevent problems arising
- respond early before problems escalate, and
- provide effective support when intensive help is needed from statutory services.

The services we provide include:

- information, advice and signposting people to help and support
- supporting families to care for their children safely and to reduce the risk of family breakdown
- helping children in need, children with disabilities and young carers
- supporting looked after children and care leavers
- providing stable, secure placements through fostering and adoption, and
- child protection to ensure vulnerable children are safe.

Providing an effective and timely response

Every year families, professionals and the general public contact us with concerns about children and young people. In 2011/2012 we received 5150 of these contacts. It is not appropriate for social services to be involved in the majority of these cases. Often we have limited information about the families that are brought to our attention so we have developed systems to help ensure that we make informed decisions about the best way to respond. Twice a week we meet with teachers, health visitors, and the police to share information and concerns about children and families. At these meetings we agree what action is needed and who will take the lead. This approach helps to ensure that families who need help get early support from the most appropriate agency and that we (social services) are able to target who we work with. This way of working has also helped us to halve the number of children/young people who are referred to the Department more than once during the year. We are pleased that re-referrals went down from 39% in 2010/2011 to 20% in 2011/2012.

In 2012/2013 we will work with the Family Information Service to ensure families have access to information about the support they can access in their community and from statutory services.

Supporting Families

During 2011/2012 we have improved the way we support families to care for their children safely and to reduce the risk of family breakdown.

We have started using an approach (Framework Analysis) which involves agencies working together to assess, plan and support children and families. Our approach is to place the family at the centre of making change to their lives. We ensure that the family are listened to and that we help them to build on their strengths, their resilience and their skills. The approach is known as putting a Team around the family.

Case Study: Putting a Team Around the Family



Our ambition is to develop a good range of services that support children and young people as their needs change. In 2011 we worked with specialists (Cordis Bright), and our partners (including health, the voluntary sector and education) to identify vulnerable families whose needs are most likely to escalate. In all 723 families were identified. Common themes that emerged in the lives of these families included:

- no resident parent in work
- a low household income (less than £297 per week)
- signs of inappropriate or inconsistent parenting
- evidence that a child displays challenging behaviour
- family lives in temporary, overcrowded or poor quality accommodation
- family cannot afford certain food or clothing items
- evidence of substance misuse, and
- evidence of domestic violence.

Whilst a combination of these factors are often present in families who are vulnerable, or at risk of vulnerability, it is important to remember that the factors are only indicators. It does not always follow that a family will be vulnerable if one or more of the indicators are present.

This research has given us a good understanding of the needs of vulnerable families and has helped inform:

- how agencies can work together to target help and support to families before their problems escalate
- guidance on the families we help through our Team Around the Family initiative, and
- the type of services we will develop and commission to support families.

Currently we have a range of support services for families in need, examples include:

- support to help a family manage their household e.g. by developing parents skills to manage their finances
- therapeutic support to children and parents, and
- individual and family parenting programmes

However, these services do not always join up in a way that provide families a smooth transition in and out of services as their needs change. We have developed an action plan to grow and develop our range of intensive family support services. This is part of a wider multi-agency approach to family support that we will continue to develop over the next 2-3 years.

Helping children in need

Children with disabilities

Services for children with disabilities focus on maximising their development and wellbeing and supporting them to live within their community. In our last annual report we highlighted the work we had planned with Health on a project to develop an integrated disability service at Hyfrydle in Denbigh. There have been delays in this project which means that we have not yet fully joined up our services. This is disappointing but we are confident that our Health colleagues will ensure that the project is delivered this autumn. Positively the lease for the building has been signed and development work has commenced.

A key focus of supporting young people in transition to adulthood is to provide effective planning to make sure that their future needs are identified and that seamless and appropriate services are put in place. This is an area where we do well. However, we recognise that there is a cohort of young people receiving direct support from the Children and Family Services who will not be eligible for support from adult services as they get older. We have set up a key worker service to work with partner agencies to identify support that may be available for this group of people

Young carers

We are working with the North Wales Carers Strategic Group to develop a Regional Carers Strategy. We have committed to working across North Wales to develop a regional young carers service for 2013/14.

Looked after children and care leavers

Looked after children are children and young people who are in the care of the local authority because of a care order made by the court or by agreement with their parent(s). Often these children are referred to as being 'in care'. Over the last 3 years the number of looked after children in Denbighshire grew. The number of looked after children has now stabilised although children are still coming into care and we are finding that they are staying in care for longer (this is discussed later in the report). In Denbighshire there were 165 looked after children on the 31st March 2012.

The Council acts as a 'corporate parent' for looked after children to make sure their health and well-being is promoted, that they take full advantage of opportunities and reach their full potential. We are proud of the work we have undertaken in 2011/12 to be good 'corporate parents'. Being a corporate parent includes making sure that looked after children attend school, visit the dentist and have health immunisations. We have performed well in these areas.

One of our developing strengths is the attention we give to ensuring that children and young people are involved in their care arrangements. We aim to ensure that young people are a key part of any decisions and arrangements for their future and to ensure that they are supported to become as independent as possible.

"I would like to thank my Social Worker for her time, appreciated the relationship they had developed and how she was able to challenge me to consider new possibilities and actions in difficult areas of my life"

Service User (Court practice group)

We have a range of approaches to collecting feedback children and young people which includes individual care planning and reviewing arrangements through to general surveys, exit questionnaires and planned events such as a Looked After Children Awards and Celebration Event. We are proud that all children and young people have access to an independent advocate.

Whilst we have some excellent examples of individual service user engagement and involvement in determining how their needs will be met we need to get better at pulling this information together to develop a more comprehensive picture of common themes/ issues that arise. We also need to develop our approaches to engaging and involving service users in service design and development. In response the revised Quality Assurance Framework (2012-2014) has placed a stronger emphasis on service user engagement and a number of improvement activities have been identified.

We have strengthened the way we support care leavers by setting up two new practice groups. Practice groups are how we organise our staff into areas of work. One practice group supports looked after children and the other focussing solely on care leavers. There is seamless planning and co-working between the two areas. We buy a Personal Advisor service from Barnardo's to help care leavers. As part of our ongoing commissioning arrangements we will be reviewing the type of service we need to ensure we can best meets the needs of care leavers.



Fostering and adoption

We have a dedicated in-house Fostering Service that is responsible for making sure we have suitable foster carers. This includes ensuring people are trained and supported to provide positive and stable placements for looked after children and young people

We have worked hard to maintain an appropriately staffed fostering service which offers dedicated support to foster carers and a comprehensive training programme. This has helped ensure that there has been good placement stability for looked after children. However, as children are tending to remain in foster care longer at a time when children continue to come into care, we are experiencing challenges in responding to the varying and differing ages and needs of children and young people. Through our Foster Care Forum foster carers have told us that our current training for foster carers needs to change. In response we will review the foster carer training programme and develop bespoke training and support packages for longstanding foster cares and kinship carers (carers who are relatives of the young people they look after). We have had a successful annual fostering inspection with no formal requirements for improvement/ compliance.

We have worked closely with the North Wales Adoption Service which has focussed on providing a steady supply of approved adopters. The service has recruited dedicated staff to focus solely on the assessment of adopters. There is now a rolling training programme for prospective adopters, established, effective and targeted promotional material and an increased number of assessments being presented to panels. We have also established a joint adoption panel with Conwy. However, even with this effort and focus progress has been restricted due to a national shortage of prospective adopters. This coupled with prolonged care proceedings means that children have not been moving on quickly to permanent placements.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

One of Social Services' key responsibilities is to protect children from harm and take action to protect any child who is found to have suffered abuse, or whose welfare is likely to suffer without further intervention or services. We try to do this in partnership with families, and where appropriate, keep children in their own homes.



Our assessment is that we have efficient and well developed systems in place to keep vulnerable children and young people safe. We ensure that our processes for dealing with child protection are followed in a timely manner and we work well with other agencies to safeguard children. We have a well established joint Conwy and Denbighshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board which makes sure that there is a consistent approach to safeguarding and child protection across all key agencies. The authority's Estyn inspection of Education was positive about the safeguarding work undertaken in the authority. We have also provided a comprehensive range of child protection training across the social care sector with 121 receiving child protection training during the year.

In 2012/13 we need to ensure we consult more effectively with children who have been subject to the child protection process in order to better understand the impact (positive/ negative) it has had on their safety.

How does our performance compare?

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making a decision on referrals within one working day • the percentage of referrals which are repeat referrals • a high percentage of initial assessments are completed by qualified social workers • completing initial assessments within 7 working days • ensuring that the child is seen as part of the initial assessment • undertaking initial child protection conferences within 15 working days of the strategy discussion • child protection and looked after reviews are carried out within the statutory timescales • open cases are allocated to qualified social workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing core assessments within 35 working days • ensuring that children do not experience changes of school unless it is due to transitional arrangements • undertaking statutory visits to looked after children in accordance with regulations • ensuring plans for permanence for looked after children are in place at the point of their second review • child in need reviews are carried out within the statutory timescales

Strengths (contd.)	Challenges (contd.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placing looked after children in appropriate placements so that they do not experience unnecessary placement moves • supporting children and young people to ensure attendance in school whilst being looked after • ensuring looked after children and young people are not permanently excluded from school • maintaining contact with young people aged 19 who were in care on their 16th birthday 	

Delivering an efficient, high quality and well managed service

Over the last year we have achieved a great deal with the commitment of an experienced and established workforce. We have successfully implemented a major restructure of our Service in 2011 that supports and promotes good quality social work practice. Information about how we our managing our service can be found in our full assessment (a link to this document in on page 2).

Looking forward—our top priorities for 2012-13

The pace of change within Children’s Services continues to be fast, diverse, and demanding. We must manage this pace within a challenging and testing economic environment in which significant long term efficiency savings must be made. Our focus will be how we improve outcomes for children and young people whilst delivering efficiencies.

We have set priorities for the next 3 years. The information below sets out the main focus of our energies in 2012/13 to deliver the 3 year priorities:

Priority	We will
<p>Vulnerable families provide stability and safe care for children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement the Family Support Strategy that will clearly set out the range of support services that will be delivered to families by the Children and Family Service. • develop the approaches and processes for • delivering family support services in line with partner agencies and the Families First programme of early intervention. Linked to this is the roll-out of a new Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) which is a new approach to working with families to collectively assess and identify need and the support required. • implement a new approach (Framework for Analysis) to working with partner agencies in the assessment of the needs of families and the planning, delivery and reviewing of services to meet those needs (Framework for Analysis).
<p>Looked after children are provided with permanent, stable, secure and loving families and become independent adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the options to develop a new training programme for experienced foster carers and carers looking after family members so that they can develop the skills to help support children and young people with a range of complex needs, and • undertake an evaluation of Bryn y Wal children’s home and look at options for how we use the budget for this service to meet the future needs of children and young people who are looked after.

Priority	We Will
Vulnerable children are protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the range of multi-agency panels that work to support vulnerable children/young people and families and reduce the number of these panels to ensure maximum involvement of all professionals, • work together with our partner agencies to develop an agreed programme to respond to the impact of domestic abuse on children • develop consultation approaches that enable us to learn from the experiences of families who are subject to Child Protection process
Children with complex additional needs are enabled to live stable, secure and inclusive family lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review delivery of services to children and young people with additional needs to make sure the service is able to respond to their needs effectively.
The Children and Family service is efficient, of high quality and well managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the way in which we use our information and intelligence to inform service development and delivery.

Adult & Business Services

Supporting Adults

What we are about

We aim to support people to live as independently as possible. For most people this means working with them so that they can continue to live in their own home.

The services we provide

The type of service we offer depends on a person's needs. Depending on their situation we could offer someone:

- information and advice
- advice about benefits and how to claim them
- signposting to services available in their community
- support that helps people to regain or develop their skills and confidence to take care of themselves
- special equipment and home adaptations
- care and/or support in a person's home
- short breaks
- day services
- care in a residential or nursing home for people with specific high level care needs

Click [here](#) for more information about the services we provide.

A year of change

During 2011/12 we delivered an ambitious programme to transform adult social care in Denbighshire. We put a new structure in place which had 2 key features.

A new Intake and Reablement Service which:

- ◆ makes it easier for people to access our services
- ◆ enables us to provide a timely response when people seek help, and
- ◆ focuses on how we can maximise peoples independence.

Services delivered through locality offices which:

- ◆ bring a stronger link between our services and the communities they serve
- ◆ enable agencies to work together to jointly assess and support people, and
- ◆ promote health, well-being and independence in towns and communities.

The emphasis of the new structure is on prevention and early intervention, whilst recognising that an ageing population will have complex, long term care needs that require responsive support tailored to individual needs.

We have carried out a review of our new structure gathering the views of staff, partner agencies and most importantly some of the people who have received our services. The outcome of the review showed that:

- ◆ we treat people with dignity and respect
- ◆ people felt that our services are reliable, and
- ◆ overall we are easy to contact (but there is room for improvement).

One person told us:

“I am grateful for the prompt service received and the kind and caring attitude of the staff as I find it difficult to be in the company of strangers.”

The review highlighted that we need to ensure that service users and their carers know who to speak regarding their care. 25% of users who responded to were unclear about who they needed to speak to if they had any queries. We have started work to make sure that people are clear about who is responsible for their care. We are also looking at what information is given to people once our input has ended.

Click [here](#) to see what people told us about our new structure.

Providing an effective and timely response

Our First Contact Team provides a single point of access to our services. They carry out initial screening to identify what needs the individual might have and refer them to the appropriate team or relevant external agencies. Last year our First Contact Team provided advice, information and support to over 6000 people.

In 2011/12 we developed the input of social work staff and occupational therapists into initial screening processes. We believe that this approach has improved signposting, assisting people to access information/advice and low level support in their own communities and improved the quality of information for referrals to practitioners in the longer term teams. In 2012/2013 we will be developing standards for our First Contact service that will help us better understand how effective the service is and the difference it is making.

We are pleased that we have been selected as a pilot to develop a single point of access to social and health care services. This will seek to remove the need for a service user or their carer to make contact with a range of agencies when in need of support. Health and third sector colleagues were an integral part of the development bid which secured financial support from the Social Services Improvement Agency for initial development costs. This is an exciting opportunity and we look forward to reporting our progress at the end of 2012/2013.

Click [here](#) to find out how you can contact social services.

Promoting independence

We have developed our services to provide a stronger focus on supporting people to maintain their independence. These services are rapidly becoming the first line approach to service provision. Reablement and telecare are good examples of the work we have undertaken to promote people's independence.

Reablement

Reablement is short-term support which is designed to develop people's confidence to manage as many tasks as possible on their own rather than having other people do things for them.

Last year our Intake and Reablement Service has assisted 2549 people to retain their independence by delivering short term intensive support. 69% of people no longer needed a package of care after short term support.

We were pleased that an evaluation showed that our approach to reablement is working. A survey completed by people who have received reablement showed that at the end of the reablement service:

- ✓ 76% of people stated they had more confidence
- ✓ 47% said the service had helped improve their privacy, and
- ✓ 49% said it had improved their dignity.

When we went back to people 3 months after they had received a reablement service we found that:

- ✓ 62% of people felt their confidence had improved further
- ✓ 25% said it had remained the same, and
- * 7% of people felt their confidence deteriorated.

Click [here](#) for more information about reablement in Denbighshire.

Telecare

Our Community Equipment Service (CESI), which is a formal partnership with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCU), provides and manages a wide range of equipment from hoists to Telecare to help people live independently within the community.

Telecare is a range of equipment that uses sensors and an alarm system which is plugged into the telephone socket. This alerts a carer or a response centre when a person needs help or something has been detected such as gas or smoke. 1300 people are now provided with Telecare in Denbighshire with 450 new installations in the past year.

The CESI service provides a quick response with 83% of equipment delivered within 5 working days. Positively 82% of equipment is recycled meaning that it is put back for use in the community.

Click [here](#) for more information about telecare in Denbighshire.

Ellen's Story

Ellen had been in hospital for 7 months. Although she was ready to be discharged from hospital her property was unsuitable.

We arranged temporary accommodation and a reablement care package to enable her to leave hospital. The social work and OT (Occupational Therapist) then worked together with Housing and Ellen to find a property that was suitable to meet her needs.

Ellen is now living independently in the community of her choice. She is independent with personal care tasks and is managing all food and drink preparation. Ellen's family and friends support her with shopping. Ellen has managed to walk to the local bus stop to use local transport into town on a couple of occasions.

Improving services by moving to a locality approach

We have developed a locality approach to working with people who have more complex long term needs. A key feature of locality working is the way agencies working closely to provide better co-ordinated services as well as strengthening the links with the communities we serve.

To support people with chronic conditions to be as independent as possible, we are working with Health colleagues and aiming to have 4 trained Health and Social Care Support Workers deployed within Locality Teams with the ability to work to a range of professionals and in particular District Nurses, Social Workers and Occupational Therapists. This has worked well at Hafan Lles. Hafan Lles is our locality in Prestatyn where social services staff are located in council offices with Health colleagues.

Unfortunately we have not yet been able to collocate Social Services and Health staff in our other localities (Rhyl, Denbigh and Ruthin). Health are committed to locality working but have found it hard to find suitable accommodation. Staff members in both Social Services and Health have expressed concern that delays in finding suitable accommodation is proving a barrier to integrated working. We will continue to work with Health to try and find a way forward but this will be difficult as neither organisation has specific funding for this development.

Modernising our services

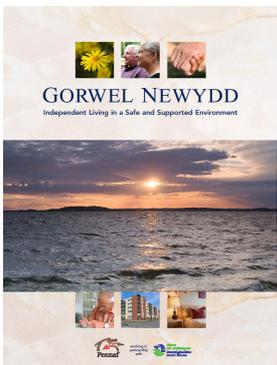
We need to ensure that we continue to develop modern services to respond to the changing needs of people in Denbighshire and financial pressures. Our focus will be on supporting more people to be independent, ensuring that there are good quality services that promote dignity in care and reducing costs. We will need to ensure that our quality assurance framework is fully embedded to ensure that we have a better understanding of the quality of services in Denbighshire. We also need to develop our systems to provide a deeper understanding of service users and carer experience and where they feel improvements need to be made, we have some good examples.

Over the coming year we will need to make some difficult decisions about the services we provide and the way we provide them. We will need to ensure that services provide good outcomes for vulnerable people with eligible social care needs. This will include remodelling day services and reviewing the provision of meals on wheels. We will also adopt new approaches and ways of working with the 3rd sector (voluntary organisations), independent providers, community councils, statutory partners and other local authority colleagues.

As a nation we have an ageing population. This is particularly true in Denbighshire where the proportion of older people in continues to increase. Denbighshire has one of the highest proportions of older people in Wales. By 2015 people over the age of 90 will have increased by 40% since 2009. With an ever-ageing population we are seeing increasing levels of physical and mental frailty.

In response we have strengthened our services for older people with mental health problems (EMH). We have commissioned the provision of day activities for people with EMH as part of our support for carers. These approaches move away from traditional models of EMH day care and aim to break down barriers of isolation by providing services in places such as Extra Care Housing where people can form friendships and support networks.

We are proud of how we have developed Extra Care in Denbighshire. We have established schemes in Rhyl and Prestatyn and a further scheme opened in Ruthin last year. The Ruthin scheme remodelled our existing in house Care Home (Awelon) and we have commitment to build an Extra Care Scheme in Denbigh. There is a clear need for more Extra Care facilities in Denbighshire but funding the development of a further phase is challenging.



Click [here](#) for information about Extra Care Housing in Denbighshire.

We have worked well with Leisure Services to promote and develop opportunities for older people to participate in physical activities. Examples include guided walks, free swimming and aqua aerobics and chair based exercise sessions provided to community groups, in Extra Care Housing and in our day centres.

Over 100 people enrolled for chair based activities with the average age being between 80 – 90 yrs. One Extra Care group now feel that once a week session is not enough and are now trialling twice a week session with two residents leading the group. People have told us:

“I look forward to the Monday session as I feel that it sets me up for the week.”

“I feel that I am walking better and not dragging my feet.”

Jean’s Story

Jean has attended your chair based exercise group at Nant-Y-Mor and can't praise the group enough. She has gained more movement in her arm since doing the exercises. There has been a marked improvement in her arm since her injury, she did have Physio following the removal of her plaster, but this stopped after so many weeks, leaving her with very limited movement. This exercise group has not only given her the motivation to carry on these exercises at home, but to meet others.

Cath's Story

Cath is a 72 year old lady who suffered a stroke which left her with complex needs. In the beginning it seemed unlikely that Cath and her husband (her main carer) would be able to cope if Cath returned home.

Cath's husband had a carers assessment and a care package was put into place to help support him in his caring role. More suitable accommodation to meet Cath's needs was found and adaptations were made. Her husband was given in depth training in correct moving and Handling techniques to enable him to maintain his own and his wife's safety in transfers and daily living.

Cath was offered and accepted day care and her husband was given an advocate to assist with financial matters and correspondence.

Following detailed work by a social workers and OT Cath's husband was able to manage his role as main carer and both are managing independent living in the community.

Click [here](#) for more information about the Carers Emergency Card Scheme.

Communities

We have a range of services that have been developed to build networks and support to help people live in their community without reliance on statutory social care services.

The New Work Connections (NWC) project supports people over the age of 16 who, through a range of disadvantages, are economically inactive or unemployed.

The number of people with a learning disability also continues to increase. Since 2008/2009 we have seen a 15% increase in the number of people needing a service (241 people in 10/11 rising to 378 including 47 people aged 65+ in 11/12). There are also pressures from the high cost of young people with complex disabilities reaching adulthood.

Last year we started work to develop Intensive Supported Independent Living accommodation in Henllan which will support 8 people with learning disabilities, 2 physically disabled people and 2 people with autism to live in the community. Whilst there have been delays in delivering the scheme we are on track for a summer opening and funding arrangements between Health and ourselves have been agreed.

In addition two new housing schemes providing low level supported housing, one for 5 adults the other for 3 adults with learning disabilities have been developed since September 2011. These developments involved close and detailed consultation processes with local residents and both schemes have been very successful.

Click [here](#) to find out more about Community Living Schemes that support people with a learning disability to live in the community.

Supporting Carers

We value the role that carers have and appreciate this can be a challenging and demanding role. We are very committed to improving and developing support and services for carers, and are providing more services to carers than ever before. Over recent years there have been significant improvements to the service, including the appointment of a Carers' Commissioning Officer, the development of a Carers' Strategy, a dedicated Carer Assessors service, Carers Emergency Card Scheme, EMH Carer Support, Healthy Carers Worker post, and a dedicated webpage. However, we recognise that there is more to do to ensure that carers forms a central part of our assessment processes. We will provide refresher training for our staff on our carers' assessments and services to support carers in Denbighshire.

The main group of people we work with are people who have social care needs and we believe that help with pursuing training and/or employment can often help to transform people's lives and reduce dependency on health and social care services. A valuable part of our work is supporting people with a physical disability or sensory impairment to improve their range of skills, qualifications and work experience through a range of activities. During the year we supported 514 people. 332 people achieved a range of identified positive outcomes. In addition to these, 30 participants have entered education and training, 32 have entered volunteering and 17 have entered employment. Now that training services, which had to be procured, and the full staffing complement for the project is in place, we are aiming to help more people in 2012/2013.

We have worked closely with communities to develop a range of community initiatives that include Passion for Life, Dignity in Care and Telebuddy services and My Life My Way groups, which is a mentoring scheme where older people support young disadvantaged people.

Our Supporting People strategy has been very successful in providing a range of options for people to have supported accommodation in the community.

Click [here](#) for information about the type of support provided through Supporting People and how you can ask for help.

Evaluation questionnaires demonstrate that our Welfare Rights Team makes a real difference to people's independence, health and wellbeing. Last year our Welfare Rights Partnership removed £17m in personal debts, generated increased income of £8m and moved approximately 1,138 people out of poverty. Helping more people out of poverty will be a challenge in 2012/20123 within the context of the Welfare Reform Bill and the current recession which will make it more difficult for people to find an employment with tax credits route out of poverty and disability benefits will become increasingly more difficult to claim or renew.

Click [here](#) for an annual report on the work of the Welfare Rights Team.

Partnerships

Many of our services are carried out in partnership with a range of statutory and third sector organisations.

We have been successful in developing new services in partnership with the third sector. For example, an advocacy project for older people, Gofal (a project launched this year that won award for the British Red Cross) and Telebuddies which is a service where volunteers phone people who may feel lonely or isolated to make sure they are okay. We have also developed a new Compact agreement and Code of Funding Practice with the third sector. Four volunteers aged 70+ have become accredited trainers for the Dignity in Care training programme for front line staff.

We are currently piloting Community Information Points in 3 rural areas with Town & Community Councillors helping to bridge the gap between local communities and those agencies able to offer help and support.

Following the planned closure of the base in Llangollen, there are now two Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) providing services to Denbighshire, one team in the North (Hafod) and the other team in mid Denbighshire (Tim Dyffryn Clwyd) covering mid and south Denbighshire.

These teams (which are a partnership of social care and health colleagues) aim to provide holistic assessment and interventions based on identified needs. Interventions are based on the recovery model and enable service users to be as independent as possible. In 2012/2013 we will work with health to implement the New Mental Health measures.

Whilst we have engaged fully with BCU at a local level, Health's North Wales agenda presents some challenges. Health want to see greater consistency across North Wales and standard approaches. This is understandable but in some cases we may want to develop and deliver services in different ways to respond to different communities across Denbighshire. We will need to continue to work with Health to manage this agenda.

We have some excellent relationships with Health. However, the large restructure that has taken place across Health in North Wales has meant that Health have not always been well placed to respond as quickly as we would want. Health have been working hard on bringing together their structure and we look forward to working positive working on delivering good outcomes for people.

We commission good quality services from independent providers including the Multiple Sclerosis Society and North Wales Deaf Association and we work well with other organisations to provide services, for example Vision Support to deliver our service to people with visual impairment and those who are deaf-blind; and Care and Repair who assist vulnerable people with their housing needs including adaptations to support independence and safety.

Safeguarding

We have effective systems in place to make sure that vulnerable people are safeguarding. We work well with other agencies and 318 people from across the social care workforce attended POVA (protection of Vulnerable Adults) training. We have posters that explain the types of abuse a vulnerable person may suffer and who can be contacted by anyone who has concerns.

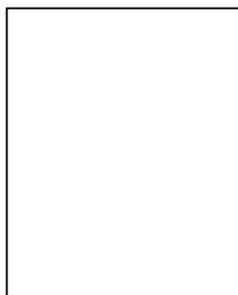
We need to make sure that there is a consistent understanding and application of the Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) and the concept of 'Best Interest' where people can make decisions about another person in certain situations. We will deliver specific refresher training for staff around the Mental Capacity Act. Through a complaint we have learnt lessons about how we can improve the way we involve and inform families about POVA cases, and the need for us to provide greater clarity about our decision making in strategy meeting minutes.

Click [here](#) for information about the kinds of abuse vulnerable adults may suffer, and contact details for anyone with concerns about the welfare of a vulnerable adult.

Click [here](#) for information about how vulnerable adults can protect themselves against financial abuse, and what to do if they feel they are being abused.

How are we performing

Last year our services were inspected as part of a planned inspection of an adult social care by the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW). The inspection provides an important independent evaluation of services that we provide. We were pleased with the outcome of the inspection which concluded xxxxxxxx – highlights to be included once final report is received.



Follow this link to see the inspection report (assuming this will be public by the time the ACRF is published).

During our restructuring process we maintained “business as usual” and sustained performance against our statutory PI’s. Our assessment of our strengths and challenges is as follows:

Strengths	Challenges
<p>Our analysis is that we perform above the Welsh average for the following performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Managing or removing risk in POVA cases.✓ The rate of older people supported in the community.✓ Ensuring that care packages are reviewed.✓ Ensuring a low number of delayed transfer of care.✓ Providing carers with a service following an assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The rate of older people supported in care homes.➤ The percentage of carers who were offered an assessment or review of their needs in their own right.➤ The percentage of carers who had an assessment or review of their needs in their own right.➤ We recognise that there is still an insufficient take up of Direct Payments in particular by older people. We need to improve this and work with staff to understand and break down the barriers that prevent people taking up a Direct Payment.



Click [here](#) to see how we how performed against our performance indicators in 2011/2012.

Looking forward—our top priorities for 2012-13

The numbers of vulnerable people requesting services continue to grow year on year. Extended life expectancy aligned with a growth in chronic conditions adds to the pressures already resulting from a challenging and testing economic environment in which significant long term efficiency savings must be made.

We continue to explore innovative ways to both promote and maintain independence by delivering services that support and safeguard vulnerable people to remain within their own communities for as long as possible.

We have set priorities for the next 3 years. The information below sets out the main focus of our energies in 2012/13 to deliver the 3 year priorities:

Priority	We will
Personalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introducing and promoting customer service standards across all services.• Developing and implementing robust customer engagement and involvement.• Further developing a citizen directed approach.• Enhancing the use of Assistive Technology to support adults to remain safe and independent.• Developing and implementing an effective care co-ordination model.
Localisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further developing and implementing a model for the delivery of health and social care within a locality structure.• Developing commissioning strategies that reflect and responds to the needs of Localities.• Developing the Single Point of Access, Assessment and Care Co-ordination across health and social care in Denbighshire.

Priority	We will
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing an Action Plan as a result of learning / recommendations from the Serious Case Review. • Undertaking a feasibility study regarding a new approach to meeting the needs of disabled children and adults. • Developing the performance management focus onto quality, outcomes and service user value. • Delivering training around the Mental Capacity Act. • Reviewing the Management arrangements of the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) function including the Annual POVA training plan.
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an Accommodation Strategy in partnership with Housing Services. • Continuing to implement a Reablement Strategy across all services. • Further developing an effective and productive interface with BCUHB
Efficiency and Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a staff engagement strategy. • Further developing the social care workforce to strategy taking account of changing needs and to develop an approach to respond to and embrace new models of social care provision. • Modernising service delivery, maximising office space and utilising new technology to increase capacity and productivity delivering efficiencies to ensure sustainability. • Implementing staffing / workforce indicators as laid out in the Social Care Measure.

Delivering an efficient, high quality and well managed service

We have worked hard to ensure that our workforce is a stable one that is well trained and equipped with the skills to meet the requirements of changing and modernising services. Information about how we are managing our service can be found in our full assessment (a link to this document is on page 2).

Feedback can be provided to:

ACRF Feedback
Ty Nant
Prestatyn
LL19 9LG.

You can also call 01824 712900 or email:
ssdcomments@denbighshire.gov.uk to leave feedback.



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