

Date: Wednesday 13 March 2002
Venue: National Assembly Building, Cardiff Bay
Title: Health and Social Care for Adults: Creating a Unified and Fair System for Assessing and Managing Care

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the Committee about the introduction from 1 April 2002 of Guidance for Social Care and Health Bodies on the Unified and Fair System for Assessing and Managing Care for Adults.

Action

2. The Committee is invited to note this paper. A copy of the full Guidance has been placed at the library.

Background

3. *Improving Health in Wales – a Plan for the NHS with its Partners* outlined the commitment to develop by April 2002, a unified and single assessment and care management system for people with complex health and social care needs, in particular older people. The forthcoming Guidance ensures that this commitment is met. It also meets the targets set in *Building for the Future* and updates and consolidates the former Welsh Office Guidance *Managing Care* April 1991. The Unified Assessment process is also key to the effective delivery of NHS Funded Nursing Care in care homes.

4. The Final Guidance has been developed as a result of:

- The findings of a multi-agency All Wales Reference Group, chaired by Jon Skone, Director of Social Care and Housing, Pembrokeshire. This work focused on how the unified assessment and care management system should operate in Wales.
- Participation of the Welsh Assembly Government in the Department of Health's National Assessment Working Group which was set up to advise on the Single Assessment Process.
- The work of Age Alliance which contributed its own findings and sought the views of older people and their carers in Wales on the Unified Assessment Process on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.
- Written responses to the draft consultation paper and contributions at an All Wales workshop for

health and social care agencies in December 2001.

5. The whole of the Guidance will be issued under section 7(1) of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and as guidance for health bodies. Responsibility is placed on both agencies to ensure effective multi-agency working takes place in order to secure the necessary compliance. This Guidance forms part of the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the National Service Framework for Older People.

Key Features of the Guidance

6. Individuals who need help typically have been assessed by a variety of health and social care staff. Unified assessment procedures instead take a holistic approach to assessment with benefits for people who use services, for agencies and for professionals. The aim in developing unified assessment procedures is to ensure more effective joint working and to prevent people being serially assessed and asked for the same information by different agencies. Level of assessment must also be proportionate to an individual's needs.

7. One of the key principles underpinning the Guidance is that assessment should always be person-centred, ensuring that the person's views and wishes shape the assessment process. Agencies must ensure that their assessment process also identifies the presence of carers, and their requirements for assessment.

8. The unified assessment process which will initially be developed for older people (see Annex 2) identifies a model of the different types of assessment and the areas or domains of need that should be referred to by agencies in completing an assessment. These Domains/Area of Assessment will ensure that there is greater consistency in the way assessments are carried out across Wales and will lead to improvements in the quality of assessments.

9. The Guidance also provides **a framework** for determining eligibility for **all adult social care services**. The framework should lead to greater equity and fairer access to care services across Wales and within a local area people in similar circumstances should receive services capable of achieving broadly similar outcomes. The Guidance also offers a starting point for developing unified eligibility criteria for packages of continuing health and social care. Further revised guidance on continuing care is planned to assist this process.

10. Local authorities are required to review and revise their eligibility criteria and related arrangements in consultation with health partners. From October 2002 they should be using revised eligibility criteria for adult social care, and case reviews should be commenced, according to the Guidance. By October 2003 reviews of the needs of service users in receipt of services at the start of October 2002 should have been completed.

11. The Guidance emphasises that once it is determined that an individual is eligible for support, then and only then should decisions be made about the type and level of service to be provided. Agencies

must adopt an individualised approach to care planning and support which focuses on the promotion of independence and the outcomes and objectives to be achieved by the provision of services.

12. The Guidance emphasises that throughout their contact with agencies, people should be kept informed of the process, and involved in the discussions about their assessment and the options available for providing help or support. It is recommended that this is best achieved by designating one member of staff as a care co-ordinator, who may also offer continuing support to service users and their carers.

13. Appropriate services will be matched to an individual's needs through the 'Statements of Purpose' provided by service providers. These will detail the aims and objectives, philosophy of care, services and other facilities, and the types of person for whom the service is designed.

14. The Guidance requires that wherever possible, personal plans of care should be developed with, and agreed by, service users. Agencies should provide service users with a copy of the plan and ensure that it is fully explained to the user and other relevant people, including carers.

15. Minimum standards for reviews are also described in the Guidance. Reviews must establish how far the services provided have achieved the outcomes, set out in the personal plan of care. It is also necessary to re-assess the needs of individual service users and their carers at this time and consider the continued eligibility for support. Reviews also provide the opportunity to monitor the quality of the service provided.

16. The implementation steps and related timescales for the unified assessment and care management system are included at Annex 1 and 2.

17. Agencies are required to report on their progress with the Unified Assessment and Care Management System to the Welsh Assembly Government by 30 September 2002 and thereafter annually in the required plans for Health and Social Care agencies.

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Implementation requirements and timescales

1. Agencies are required to involve local stakeholders, including service users, carers, providers and local voluntary and community organisations, in the implementation of the unified assessment and care management system.

2. Agencies are advised that project plans for implementation of the Unified Assessment and Care Management System should be based on the following 12 steps.

- i. Agree purpose and outcomes**
- ii. Agree shared values**
- iii. Agree terminology**
- iv. Map care processes**
- v. Estimate the types and numbers of older people needing assessment**
- vi. Agree the stages of assessment and other aspects of care management**
- vii. Agree the link between clinical diagnosis and assessment**
- viii. Agree the domains and sub-domains of assessment**
- ix. Agree assessment approaches, tools and scales**
- x. Agree joint working arrangements**
- xi. Agree a unified assessment summary record**
- xii. Implement a joint staff development strategy**

Implementation Milestones: Unified Assessment and Care Management System Including Fair Access

APRIL 2002

- **From April 02**

- Agencies to consider 12 steps of implementation to ensure start of the unified assessment and care management system for older people. Assessing training needs of staff and developing an action plan with partners as a first priority.
- Commence development of eligibility framework- to include consultation process.

- **30th September 02**

- Provide update to Welsh Assembly Government on progress with unified assessment and care management system.

- **1st October 02**

- Revised social care eligibility criteria to be operational for all new adult service user groups.
- Begin reviews of all current service users.

APRIL 2003

- Revised action plan for further implementation of the unified assessment and care management system for older people.
- Begin to plan the unified system to cover the remaining adult service user groups - ensuring integration with other policy developments for these groups (eg Care Programme Approach).

1st October 2003

- Reviews now complete for all service users in line with the revised social care eligibility criteria.
- Update on progress to Welsh Assembly Government in relevant plan updates.

APRIL 2004

- Revised action plan for older people.
- Begin to implement single assessment and care management system for remaining groups.
- Update on progress to Welsh Assembly Government in relevant plan updates.

APRIL 2005

- Single assessment and care management system fully implemented for older people.
- Revised action plan for other adult groups.
- Update on progress to Welsh Assembly Government in relevant plan updates.

APRIL 2006

- Single assessment and care management system in place for remaining adult service user groups.
- Update on progress to Welsh Assembly Government in relevant plan updates.