

Sefton Public Engagement and Consultation Panel

Date: 27th May 2022

Title: Proposal to undertake Public Engagement and Consultation Activity – Independent Review of Domiciliary Care provision across Sefton

Report of: Sefton Council – Pippa McHaffie
Healthwatch Sefton – Diane Blair

1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. To receive information with regard to the consultation plans being developed with regard to the Independent Review of Domiciliary Care provision across Sefton

2. **Background**

- 2.1. The main purpose of the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel is to coordinate and ensure the quality of public engagement and consultation, in accordance with the standards for engagement and consultation.

3. **Name of Issue you are Consulting On**

- 3.1. Healthwatch Sefton and Sefton Council are working in collaboration to survey around 80 service users receiving Sefton Council commissioned Domiciliary Care.
- 3.2. Sefton Council currently commissions Domiciliary Care for around 1,800 within the Borough from approximately 38 Providers.
- 3.3. Duties were placed upon Local Authorities in The Care Act 2014, to 'facilitate a diverse, sustainable high-quality market for their whole market' (Section 5 of the Care Act 2014). Therefore, this review sits within the role of the Local Authority to understand the views of people receiving Domiciliary Care to ensure that they are receiving high quality care.
- 3.4. Sefton Council's current commissioning arrangements are due to expire in Autumn 2022 with the Council looking to commence new arrangements. The new arrangements will be informed by different strands of work including regional and national best practice, feedback from Adult Social Care, Provider engagement, and the Service User survey by Healthwatch Sefton described in this report.
- 3.5. Healthwatch Sefton is a body commissioned by the Local Authority to

undertake a number of statutory functions in relation to Health and Social Care as outlined in Section 182 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, including gathering the views of Sefton residents and making the views known.

- 3.6. Gathering feedback from local residents who receive care at home from Domiciliary Care providers is a key priority on the Healthwatch Sefton work plan. The aim of this work is to gain assurance about the quality of care provision.
- 3.7. Domiciliary Care has faced, and continues to face, challenges due to Covid19 pandemic and capacity. Staff recruitment and retention is seen as the primary contributing factor to issues within the sector. These were seen prior to the pandemic but have been exacerbated by the pandemic.
- 3.8. This piece of work has been delayed by the Covid pandemic.
- 3.9. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix 1). Any subsequent pieces of work (such as the Domiciliary Care Tender) will have Equality Impact Assessments completed.

4. The Consultation

- 4.1. The aim of the Consultation is to collect the views and experiences of current service users receiving care brokered by Sefton Council. These views will support both the Sefton Council and Healthwatch Sefton in meeting their statutory obligations with the overall aim to improve the service received by Sefton residents.
- 4.2. The consultation is anticipated commence in June although exact timescales and length of consultation are yet to be confirmed as it will depend on the level of responses from the contacted Service Users. However, it is currently anticipated that it will take 2 – 3 months.
- 4.3. Healthwatch Sefton and Sefton Council have worked together to draw up a list of questions that will be asked to a small subset of people receiving care.
- 4.4. Sefton Council, relying on its duties outlined above in The Care Act 2014, is providing Healthwatch Sefton with the contact details (First Name, Last Name, Phone Number, and Address)
- 4.5. Initially the contact details for 100 Service Users receiving Domiciliary Care brokered by the Local Authority will be provided to Healthwatch. Whilst it is hoped that the survey will collect 80 responses, 100 contacts are being provided to Healthwatch to account for some participants not willing and/or being unable to take part in the research.

- 4.6. The 100 service users will be a representative sample of the overall service users receiving Domiciliary Care, such as different agencies represented, ages and ethnicities of service users.
- 4.7. Healthwatch Sefton will subsequently issue a letter (Appendix 2) to each of the 100 Service Users outlining that the aims of the survey and informing that they would receive a phone call in 2 weeks' time to find out if they would like to part, have a conversation with them (based on the agreed questions) or book in a call at a later date. The letter will be issued with a Privacy Notice (Appendix 3), contact numbers for Healthwatch Sefton and a copy of the survey for people to review in advance (Appendix 4).
- 4.8. Two weeks after the letters are issued, Healthwatch Sefton staff will begin this work by contacting service users by telephone.
- 4.9. The phone calls will be conversational with Healthwatch Sefton staff using a series of questions, and prompts, to engage service users in a conversation about their care. Staff will subsequently draw themes from their responses. It is hoped that this method will produce more rich data than close ended, dichotomous questions.
- 4.10. The questions cover a range of different topics including the impact of Covid on their care, what is important to them in their care, and the quality of their care.
- 4.11. A Service User will be able to opt out of the review at any point within in the phone call or request a phone call back at a more convenient time.
- 4.12. The attrition rate of Service Users is currently unknown, and therefore, after 4 weeks of completing the survey, Sefton Council and Healthwatch Sefton will meet to review the response rate and engagement of Service Users. At this point, the method will be reviewed, and more names supplied to Healthwatch Sefton should that be deemed a sensible course of action and would garner better results.
- 4.13. Individual responses shall remain anonymous to ensure candor, however Healthwatch Sefton would abide by its safeguarding policy if it sufficiently concerned by a Service User response. All staff undertaking the phone calls will be trained in Safeguarding.
- 4.14. Participants will not be stopped from sharing specifics on the types of personal care/medication they receive, however, any specifics of the care they receive will not be recorded. Notes from the discussion will cover overall discussion points rather than verbatim notes, and therefore will use phrases such as 'personal care', 'medication care' rather than specific details.
- 4.15. Healthwatch Sefton will direct people to the Council's front door if a

Service User mentions that they are unhappy with their current care package. If a Service User requires support in other ways, staff will direct them to Healthwatch's Signposting service.

- 4.16. Domiciliary Care Providers in Sefton will be informed that the survey is taking place.
- 4.17. Accessibility data (such as communication needs, and Care of Addresses) will be shared with Healthwatch Sefton to ensure that these needs can be catered for, including providing a FREEPOST envelope for written responses and/or original letter/questions in a larger font.

5. **Reporting and Publishing the Findings**

- 5.1. Healthwatch Sefton will produce a report following the completion of the phone calls including the themes from responses into a report.
- 5.2. The report will be drafted and will include findings from the project, based on the key themes and include any recommendation required.
- 5.3. The report will be sent to Sefton Council (the commissioner) for comment and a formal response will be required within 14 working days. Once a formal response has been received, the report will be approved by the Healthwatch Sefton Steering Group and published widely.

6. **Legal Department Comments**

- 6.1 Sefton's Legal Department has considered the consultation plans contained in this report and has no comments to make.

7. **Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Public Engagement and Consultation Panel is recommended to:
 - a) Appraise the public engagement and consultation plan for the Independent Review of Domiciliary Care provision across Sefton
 - b) Request that the officers return to the Panel to provide details of their feedback and evaluation resulting from the above consultation.

