

Briefing Sessions on the Single Assessment Process with the Voluntary Organisations: October 2004

Introduction

Two briefing sessions were held for voluntary organisation managers working with older people in Hertfordshire. The briefing material focussed on the Single Assessment Guidance and the policies agreed by all Single Assessment partners.

These notes reflect the opinions and experience of delegates. Some of these comments suggest where changes should be made.

Inclusion

Biggest positive from the workshops is that the voluntary organisations are keen to be actively involved in Single Assessment. It is very important to them that they be included in the Single Assessment process and specifically that individual cases referred to them contain all the information they need.

- Fear that voluntary organisations will not actually receive the Single Assessment paper work
- Representatives wanted statutory services to think pro-actively about the services they can provide as part of an overall support package.

Contact Assessment

Voluntary organisations would be happy to receive Contact Assessments as a referral into their service.

- Referrals currently being received in day centres from Adult Care Services but these are not on a Contact Assessment form or do not include the Contact Assessment information.

Delegates would like to use Contact Assessment documentation as a referral to other statutory agencies where they have identified a need for further assessments. **Action:** The Steering Group will be asked to decide whether in certain circumstances voluntary agencies can use Contact Assessments to make referrals to statutory service. On receipt of a Contact Assessment the statutory agency would confirm the assessment information and decide on the next steps. Such use by voluntary organisations in receiving and initiating a Contact Assessment would reduce duplication and would confirm that the services they provide are taken seriously.

Service User Held Record (SUHR)

All delegates were supportive of conversations with service users and carers and the summary of this in the Contact Assessment or in the Single Assessment and Care Plan, held in the Service User Held Record.

The importance of ensuring that contact numbers of the different services are easily identifiable for clients was stressed. Also that medication information should be recorded in the SUHR where necessary.

Issues for voluntary Organisations in Sharing of information

Issue for volunteer visitors knowing the details of the Contact Assessment or the Single Assessment Summary and Care Plan.

- The Assessor should explain the need to share information to the service user prior to making a referral.
- A brief note of this agreement should be record on Contact Assessment or Single Assessment Summary & Care Plan by the Assessor

- If required, the Organiser would then ask the user what information they would be comfortable to share with volunteer visitors.

Care Coordination

Strong belief that service users with complex needs require coordination of the assessment process to ensure that all assessments are completed .

Some feeling that the system isn't yet sufficiently robust in deciding when there should be a coordinator and who is initially responsible for deciding this. This issue was strongly reinforced in the written evaluations of the sessions

- This issue will be covered with more detailed guidance currently being developed.

Contacting Adult Care Services (ACS)

Voluntary Organisations wanted to be like other statutory services where if they are involved with a user and Adult Care Services need to be contacted concerning the case then direct phone contact can be made with ACS without going through the call centre. This issue needs to be thought through as it has resource implications for local area Teams.

Training

Proposal that voluntary organisations be included in joint briefing and training re Single Assessment and Single Assessment issues.

Local resources

Voluntary organisations want to be included in the local information guides of available resources and also to have similar information available to them

- Should result in appropriate referrals being made to vol agencies.

Some voluntary orgs feel that they are not sufficiently used especially in the transition between hospital and home.

Learning disabilities

Consider the work required in Single Assessment for older people with learning disabilities.

Communication

Consider contacting local CSVs to inform staff, volunteers and users about Single Assessment and what they can expect via the CSV local newsletter.

Resolving issues

The briefing made it clear what voluntary organisations could expect from Single Assessment. In specific cases where this is not happening, the issue should be taken up with the staff member concerned or their manager.

These notes were made by Stephen Casson, the facilitator.

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