

Customer Relations Team

Adult Services Annual Report

April 2014- March 2015

Blackpool Council



Customer Relations Team – Adult Services Annual Report

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1. Annual Overview

Adult Services received 91 complaints over the year – a decrease of 17 on last year’s annual figures. However, the complexity of complaint elements has increased. Of the 91 complaints received 19 were upheld in their entirety with a further 26 partially upheld. Therefore, overall 45 complaints were upheld in some element (49.45%). To put this into perspective the number of adults receiving a service was 4,707 and Blackpool’s population of adults (18+) was 112,370 (population figures as at as at mid-year 2013).

Forty-eight of the 91 complaints were dealt with inside the allocated timescale (52.75%), which is defined as 15 working days or within the allocated timescale dependent on complexity. This is an improvement on the two previous years reporting of timescales being achieved: 51% for 2013/14 and 43% for 2012/13. All complaints were responded to within the statutory timescale of six months.

Three hundred and sixty seven compliments were received this year, broadly similar to the two previous years figures: 350 during 2013/2014 and 375 in 2012/2013. It must be acknowledged that specific criteria for accepting compliments has been applied and therefore these are genuine statements of thanks for duties carried out, above and beyond the expected level of service.

Over the year, Adult Services has received 52 MP enquiries (an increase of 15 from last year) and 14 Councillor Enquiries (a reduction of 13 on the previous year) and were spread evenly over the year.

This report will provide further breakdowns of these highlights with potential explanations for some of the statistics.

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2. Adult Services Customer Feedback

The following table shows the total numbers of Complaints, Compliments, Comments, MP/Councillor Enquiries and Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) cases for the year.

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year End Totals
Adult Social Care	69	61	49	69	248
Care & Support	70	50	65	45	230
Business Support & Resources	2	5	3	9	19
Commissioning	25	19	20	16	80
Total	166	135	137	139	577
Comparison Totals for 2013/14	143	182	121	140	586
Comparison Totals for 2012/13	95	128	184	197	604

The table highlights that front line services are in receipt of the highest level of enquiries, which is to be expected due to the nature of their business. Feedback can be extremely valuable, as it enables the department to monitor services and to seek to improve services where necessary.

The breakdown of this feedback can be seen in the following sections of the report.

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3. Complaints

Statutory legislation dictates that all complaints should be addressed and concluded within a 6 month timeframe. Adult Services feel all complaints should be addressed quickly and efficiently. Therefore, in the first instance, 15 working days has been allocated for a response to be completed. Where complex cases are concerned it is sometimes more appropriate to allocate a longer timeframe for a response. Each case is individual and is viewed on its own merits. The allocated timescale is always communicated to the complainant so that they know when they can expect a response.

Adult Services endeavours to make the complaints process accessible so that complainants feel able to feedback their concerns. A definition of a complaint can be found in Appendix A.

The breakdown of the complaints by service area for the year is shown in the following table:

**U – Upheld; PU – Partially Upheld*

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year End Totals
Adult Social Care	9 (1U & 2PU)	9 (1U & 4PU)	12 (1U & 1PU)	13 (1U & 3PU)	43
Care & Support	1 (1U)	1 (1PU)	1 (0U & 0PU)	2 (1PU)	5
Business Support & Resources	N/A	N/A	1 (0U & 0PU)	1 (1PU)	2
Commissioning	9 (3U & 2 PU)	8 (6PU)	12 (5U & 3PU)	12 (6U & 2PU)	41
Total	19 (5U & 4 PU)	18 (1U & 11PU)	26 (6U & 4PU)	28 (7U & 7PU)	91 (19U & 26PU)
Comparison Totals for 2013/14	21 2U & 4PU	31 7U & 11PU	23 6U & 8PU	33 8U & 9PU	108 23U & 32PU
Comparison Totals for 2012/13	28 1U & 0PU	28 7U & 8PU	23 8U & 5PU	27 0U & 1PU	106 16U & 14PU

*[*Also included in the 91 complaints - 6 withdrawn; 36 not upheld and 4 outstanding]*

Once again, as expected there are higher levels of complaints received by front line services. However, it must be noted that Commissioning has seen a marked increase in their complaints which covers; external providers of both domiciliary care and residential care. Contract tenders have also been underway and possible uncertainty could have contributed to the rise in this department's complaints. Both provider areas can increase complaints dramatically if issues arise within homes or with service providers and the Department has robust processes in place for supporting and challenging providers in their handling of complaints. Care and emotional wellbeing are paramount and must be addressed quickly and with efficiency.

Further analysis of the complaints shows how many complaints were "upheld" or "partially upheld". A complaint will usually be upheld if it is evident that the Department could have done more to support the customer. Partially upheld can relate to a number of elements and can include not meeting timescale.

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The table below shows the breakdown of “upheld” and “partially upheld” complaints for the year by Service.

Over the year, it has been noted that complaints in general are becoming more involved with multiple aspects being listed as issues rather than in previous years where the tendency was one main issue. This has had an impact on timescales, investigation work, staff resources and outcomes. Any item being partially upheld must be accounted for. This is evidenced by the above figures.

A few of the general reasons for complaints being upheld over the year are shown below:-

- Lack of action, impacting on expected level of service delivery and has been acknowledged by the service. (This theme was introduced in Q3 to evidence perceptions of complainants who felt we had not delivered either in part or in a timely fashion, on intended actions.)
- Errors in service delivery, such as failing to follow correct policies and procedures, resulting in safeguarding or HR procedures being pursued.
- Staff attitude/behaviours have continued to be sited by complainants and in some cases this has been accepted and subsequent actions implemented.
- Expectations of clients regarding care agencies’ delivery of service and packages of care not being met – perceived or actual.
- Issues with residential care homes service delivery which have been addressed via contractual agreement and expected standards of service.
- Delays or confusion around assessments and financial information and contributions.
- A complaint may have been upheld, due to a number of minor or varied issues, which have overall resulted in a poor experience for the service user and/or their families.

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4. Compliments

Compliments are extremely important and help to highlight the areas we are improving in or maintaining levels of high quality service. They act as a morale booster for staff and are evidence that every detail within service delivery matters. Good practice is commended and discussed at senior level to ensure it is implemented across the board where possible.

The table below demonstrates the levels of compliments received by Adult Services split by Service.

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year End Totals
Adult Social Care	27	31	13	40	111
Care & Support	68	48	64	42	222
Business Support & Resources	1	5	2	7	15
Commissioning	11	6	2	0	19
Total	107	90	81	89	367
Comparison Totals for 2013/14	87	116	73	74	350
Comparison Totals for 2012/13	39	65	136	135	375

The level of compliments has slightly increased this year, and the number of compliments was more than three times the number of complaints received. It is noted that the front line services, particularly within the Care and Support Division, are consistently in receipt of high numbers of compliments. There have been specific criteria applied to compliments again this year – receiving thanks for simple completion of duty is not enough to be recorded. Staff are expected to complete duties to the expected level as standard practice. However, where extra thanks have been supplied for performance above and beyond normal, then it has been recorded as a genuine compliment. Examples of some of these compliments can be seen in [Appendix B](#).

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5. Comments

Comments are equally important as complaints and help to shape and improve the quality of service. If necessary, Adult Services will respond to comments based upon the same timescale as complaints. However, each comment will be judged individually as to whether a detailed response is necessary or not. Work on the comment will continue whether the customer is aware of this work or when it is inappropriate to share the outcome of the comment with the customer. This year the number of comments has decreased significantly compared to the previous two years.

The following table shows the levels of comments received by service area:-

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year End Totals
Adult Social Care	6	1	2	1	10
Care & Support	0	1	0	0	1
Business Support & Resources	1	0	0	0	1
Commissioning	5	4	2	1	12
Total	12	6	4	2	24
<i>Comparison Totals for 2013/14</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Comparison Totals for 2012/13</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>43</i>

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6. Timescales

It is good practice to keep the complainant informed of progress at all times. Therefore, if for any reason, Adult Services is unable to meet the allocated timescale for response – a telephone call/holding letter or email - contact should be made advising of the delay together with a new expected date of response and apology for inconvenience caused. It is usual to contact the complainant via their original form of contact to the Council or via their indicated preferred method for reply.

It is recommended within the Customer Feedback Procedures, that the following timescales are met:-

- Complaints – 15 Working Days
- Councillor/MP Enquiries - 5 Days
- LGO – 5 Working Days as indicated by LGO
- Comments – 15 Working Days

The table below shows the percentage breakdown of timescales **successfully met** for complaints by service areas over the year:-

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year End % Totals
Adult Social Care	44.44% 4/9	55.56% 5/9	58.33% 7/12	61.54% 8/13	55.81% 24/43
Care & Support	100% 1/1	100% 1/1	100% 1/1	100% 2/2	100% 5/5
Business Support & Resources	N/A	N/A	100% 1/1	100% 1/1	100% 2/2
Commissioning	66.67% 6/9	37.5% 3/8	41.67% 5/12	25% 3/12	41.46% 17/41
Total	57.89% 11/19	50% 9/18	53.85% 14/26	50% 14/28	52.75% 48/91
<i>Comparison Totals for 2013/14</i>	<i>38%</i> <i>8/21</i>	<i>45%</i> <i>14/31</i>	<i>39%</i> <i>9/23</i>	<i>73%</i> <i>24/33</i>	<i>51%</i> <i>55/108</i>
<i>Comparison Totals for 2012/13</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>46%</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>48%</i>	<i>43%</i>

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General reasons for timescales not being met can be as follows:-

- Key members of staff unavailable to respond due to sickness or leave.
- Complex investigation work required for the case, which may include multi-agency communication, which may in turn prolong the response timescale.
- With increasing workloads on restricted resources, it is not possible to prioritise complaint responding/ investigation within some service areas.
- Unexpected outcomes from complaints, resulting in extraneous pieces of work having to be undertaken and implemented causing time and resource constraints across the department.
- Departmental work on specific issues which have arisen unexpectedly hinders the complaint process having an impact on time and resources thereby having a knock on effect on meeting timescale.
- Services not allowing adequate time for Director to thoroughly review the investigation work undertaken. Any further work required is already out of timescale.
- Multiple complaints regarding the same matter from different family members which delays the investigation process.
- Senior officers unavailable to sign off final response.
- Balancing of priorities, such as safeguarding of vulnerable adults, which is always the higher priority and can result in a delay in complaint work being completed.

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7. Complaint Themes

There are a set off 12 standard themes used by Adult Services to record complaints against, which have been thoroughly interrogated and reviewed by the Council’s Scrutiny Committee during 2012/2013.

These themes help Adult Services to identify trends and patterns quickly and aid in the recognition of action required. To aid unity in recording and balancing the number of complaints, the main overarching or most appropriate theme is used for recording purposes.

The following table shows the breakdown of the annual complaints by theme.

Themes	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Year End Totals	Upheld [U] or Partially Upheld [PU]
Assessment Undertaken	1	0	2	1	4	2PU
Bully/Racist Incident	0	0	0	0	0	0
Safeguarding	0	0	7	4	11	4U
Confidentiality	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial/Funding	0	1	2	2	5	2U 2PU
Lack of Communication	1	0	0	2	3	1PU
Policies & Procedures	0	2	0	0	2	1PU
Quality of Service	9	8	5	9	31	7U 8PU
Staff Attitude/Treatment of Customer	5	5	8	7	25	5U 8PU
Request for Service	2	0	1	0	3	1U
Lack of Action	1	2	1	3	7	4PU
Total	19	18	26	28	91	19U 26PU*
<i>Comparison Totals for 2013/14</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>23 upheld & 32 partially</i>
<i>Comparison Totals for 2012/13</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>39</i>

*[*Also included in the 91 complaints - 6 withdrawn; 36 not upheld and 4 outstanding]*

The theme of “Quality of Service” is the highest theme for received complaints. It must be noted less than one quarter of complaints in this category were substantiated outright. Perceptions of quality of service are very real to service users and must be listened to in order to make necessary improvements to services. Expectations of service users must be addressed clearly and from the outset of contacts, followed by very definite checking of understanding in order that the expectations can be managed and attained wherever possible.

Secondly, is the theme of “Staff Attitude/Treatment of Customer”. Again, service users’ expectations of the service and role of Adult Service staff must be made clear together with open and clear discussion of the service user’s own case. Alleviation of any misunderstanding needs to be improved upon. Of the 25 complaints made, only 5 were upheld as a whole.

The “Safeguarding” theme was used in Q3 when ‘complaints’ received were in actual fact raising safeguarding issues. The complaint process is superseded by the Safeguarding process. Once all issues and concerns have been addressed, the safeguarding lead advises the Customer Relations Team if any concerns not of a safeguarding

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nature are still outstanding after the safeguarding process has been completed. If necessary the complaint process will then pick up these remaining items. However, in the majority of cases, everything is encompassed within the safeguarding process to ensure a full picture is apparent and relevant work and remedy is underway. Of the 11 cases raised, only 4 were substantiated.

“Lack of Communication”; a high theme in previous years, has continued to fall and has only had 6 complaints over this reporting year with only 1 partially upheld case. This is a direct result of listening, learning and responding to valid concerns raised by service users and their families.

Each Head of Service has been asked to review and report back through Governance Committee on actions they intend to take to reduce these areas of complaints in future.

8. Lessons Learnt

As part of statutory regulations, the Council must identify lessons learnt and learn from its complaints, thereby improving service delivery. Equally recognised are the complaint themes mentioned above which will feed into the lessons learnt. It is recognised that the key areas for improvement are Quality of Service and Staff Attitude. In order to move forward, we must continue to improve in these areas and implement positive changes that will be of benefit to all service users and the Council. Where there are areas of repeat and similar complaint issues, these must be reviewed and avenues found to move forward and improve thereby achieving better service delivery. Where possible, lessons learnt are shared with complainants via the response letter in order to evidence that their concerns have been taken seriously and appropriate improvements have been implemented. These improvements could continue to take the form of a number of actions:

- Further training for individual staff
- Periods of close monitoring or supervision
- Team training
- Amendments to policies and procedures
- Cultural changes led by Senior Managers
- Review of contracts with third parties

Lessons learnt can be positive as well as negative and are just as important. Good practice needs to be shared and encouraged across the Directorate as a whole.

The Customer Relations Team is responsible for recording the lessons learnt as supplied by the relevant Service Managers who are at the heart of the investigation work and can ensure meaningful changes are understood and implemented. We have, as a Directorate recorded 12 items as lessons learnt over the last year, examples of these can be found in [Appendix C](#). It must be noted, not all complaint cases produce lessons learnt but review of each case is insisted upon by the Director of the Service to consider if there is anything to be learnt.

9. Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

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The LGO is the Governing Body that reviews and investigates complaints against Councils where appropriate, usually where cases have followed procedures and the complainant feels their issues have not been addressed or resolved to their satisfaction. Under the Adult complaints process, the LGO can be contacted after a response to a complaint has been received from the Council.

However, some complainants prefer to contact the LGO in the first instance. The LGO will determine whether this is a premature complaint which must be directed back to the Council to respond to in the first instance or if they will commence an investigation based on the information provided by the complainant.

Over the year, 29 contacts have been made by the LGO which relate to 15 named cases for this reporting year. It must be noted that LGO complaints can be lengthy and complex in as much as service users are not satisfied with the efforts made by the Council in the first instance. Therefore, review of work already undertaken must be made along with further questions being asked by the LGO which can include requests for copy documents and chronologies.

All but three enquiries have originated from Adult Social Care complaints with the remaining three from Commissioning. Some of these cases covered both areas but were allocated using the majority of elements as appropriate. It is to be expected that the LGO cases develop from the front line service areas which receive the highest levels of complaints.

Of these 29 cases, there are 8 outcomes to date:

- Two were outside of LGO jurisdiction
- Two showing fault by the Council
- Four not upheld

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10. Members of Parliament (MP) & Councillor Enquiries

Blackpool Council's Chief Executive maintains that all MP and Councillor Enquiries must be actioned and resolved within 5 working days. MP and Councillor Enquiries can be categorised as:

- requests for background information,
- reasons for decisions,
- requests for service or
- requests to review of outcomes

The following table shows the annual breakdown of MP Enquiries received by Adult Services:-

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Totals
Adult Social Care	14	11	11	9	45
Care & Support	1	0	0	1	2
Business Support & Resources	0	0	0	1	1
Commissioning	0	0	2	2	4
Total	15	11	13	13	52
<i>Comparison Totals for 2013/14</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Comparison Totals for 2012/13</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>41</i>

Adult Social Care received 86% of the total enquiries.

The following table shows the annual breakdown of Councillor Enquires received by Adult Services:-

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Totals
Adult Social Care	2	3	5	3	13
Care & Support	0	0	0	0	0
Business Support & Resources	0	0	0	0	0
Commissioning	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	4	5	3	14
<i>Comparison Totals for 2013/14</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Comparison Totals for 2012/13</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>38</i>

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The majority of these Councillor Enquiries are for Adult Social Care (93%). Again it is important to note that these enquiries were received by front line services.

11. Freedom of Information Requests

The timescale for responding to FOI request is 20 working days as set out by the Information Commissioner Office and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

There are a number of circumstances where the request may be exempted in part or as a whole: included in the list are:

- Time taken to collate the response would be in excess of 18 hours (needs to be evidenced)
- Individuals could potentially be identified
- Information not held in a retrievable format or not collected at all
- Future publication is intended – date to be provided
- On-going investigations may be affected by the divulging of the requested information

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Totals
Adult Social Care	5 80% met timescale	15 40% met timescale	9 55% met timescale	24 88% met timescale	53 66% met timescale
Care & Support	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Business Support & Resources	2 0% met timescale	14 50 % met timescale	3 67 % met timescale	5 100% met timescale	24 55% met timescale
Commissioning	15 60% met timescale	14 64% met timescale	10 100% met timescale	2 50% met timescale	41 69% met timescale
Total	22 59% met timescale no exemptions	43 52% met timescale 1 exemption	22 77% met timescale no exemptions	31 87% met timescale no exemptions	118 69% met timescale 1 exemption

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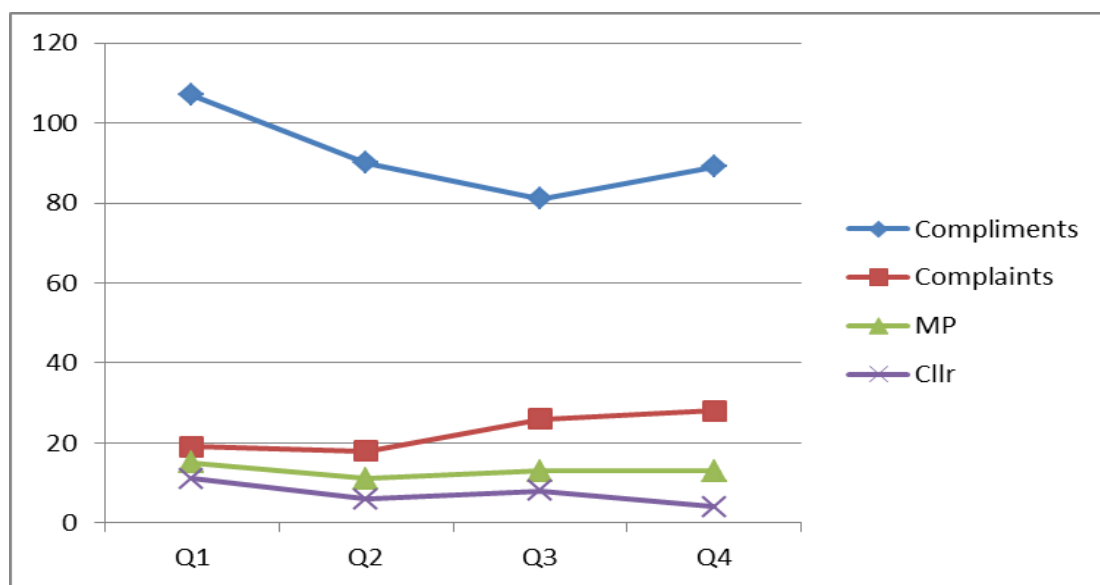
12. Staff Training

The Customer Relations Team is available to provide staff training on complaint handling to each department and will tailor the training to meet the needs of the service. Useful and practical staff guidance is currently being updated and will be available electronically in due course.

13. Conclusion

Overall, the number of complaints has reduced compared to the previous 2 years. Heads of Service are looking closely at the reasons behind the slight upturn in complaints in the last 6 months of the year.

To conclude, for the year 2014/15 the level of complaints has increased in the last 2 quarters of the year. Both MP and Councillor Enquiries have been fairly constant; compliments dipped in the winter months, slightly increasing in numbers at the beginning of 2015.



Recommendations for Adults Services, based in the information available are:-

- All service areas to continue to work with the Customer Relations Team to recognise and action “Lessons Learnt” from their complaints or compliments. Heads of Service to produce lessons learnt alongside responses to complaints.
- Achievable timescales need to be implemented, with focus on ensuring complaints are responded to within these extended timescales where possible. Action has been taken to streamline the approvals process which should impact on timescales.
- Heads of Service to continue to review why trends are occurring in some themes, with particular focus on the high numbers of complaints in specific themes and reporting back through the Governance Committee.

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Appendix A - Definitions

The term “complaint” is defined in the Department of Health “Learning from Complaints” guidance as follows:

“an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority’s provision, which requires a response”

The Government updated Adult Social Care complaint procedures on 1st April 2009 as part of the Listening, Learning and Improving agenda, ‘Making Experiences Count’ and Blackpool Council adheres to these changes. The definition of a complaint did not change. The Government has given Councils the power to decide whether Adult Social Care ‘complaint’ correspondence is actually a comment or a complaint. All issues are treated individually and on their own merit, receiving the same standard of service.

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Appendix B - A selection of compliments for Adult Services

Adult Social Care:

<p>I am a severely disabled adult aged 38 and in a power wheelchair, I live in the Blackpool area and receive a care package from your department via direct payment each month. I was recently re-assessed by CR, this lady is a credit to your team, clearly dedicated to her work and so understanding and helpful. I just want to say a huge thank you for your amazing support to me and my family, the work you do is beyond words and so appreciated. p.s keep up the good work and thank you so much.</p>
<p>I feel you both listened to my complaints sympathetically and, where any remedial action could be taken, action was promised.</p>
<p>There should be more people like you! Thank you for everything</p>
<p>The recovery team have really helped me over the last couple of years. i have had some really good advice from both social workers and support workers. They have also introduced me to activities and events that have really helped my key worker and support worker have always been there for me. I really appreciate all the help I have been given. So thanks to all of you.</p>
<p>Carers Service passed on gratitude for the Mental Health and Well-being clinics. Carers Service also passed on the thanks from one of the carers who attends the sessions. He had informed Carers Service that he felt lost and did not know where to turn to. But having come to the clinics he now recognises that there is support for him and knows where to turn. He said he had been provided with a lot of information and support and felt much more confident in dealing with his situation and is positively looking to the future.</p>
<p>I will miss you. I will not forget you, thank you for all the support over the last year. You were like a friend and someone I could talk to.</p>
<p>Thank you for all your hard work in working with me, thank you, you have helped me so much.</p>
<p>During my husband's final few weeks we had the good fortune to be referred to DH. her attention and help was invaluable. She was readily available at all times and willing to listen to me, take on board what I needed and provided no end of help advice and loving care and comfort. A true professional and a credit to your social services. thank you also for the help from others in your department.</p>
<p>Thank you ever so much for helping me. I don't know what I would do without you. I will miss you so much when you go. My family thinks you have been wonderful. I hope my new social worker will be as good, as you.</p>
<p>I receive respite care since my wife suffered a stroke and is now semi paralysed. I think the present system is spot on because when I get low and run down I can immediately make the necessary arrangements via MM SCPU who is a joy to deal with. Social Services can be a little slow when it comes to the annual assessment, but I can live with that as I realise how busy they are and there's always someone worse off than me. Thank you.</p>
<p>Received a voice mail from a service user, thanking JF, Support Worker with the Recovery Team for her help in sorting out a new fire for her. S/U really appreciates everything JF has done.</p>
<p>Thanks for helping H reach inner peace with herself. It has changed her for the better and she is eternally grateful. Thanks all her support over the last year - you were a good friend - I will never forget you.</p>
<p>Thanks for arranging a great experience for me in adult services and for spending so much time explaining the process and procedures.</p>
<p>Her father is at the end of life and daughter stated she couldn't have spoken to a more patient and kind person.</p>
<p>Very impressed with the professional way in which LO and LG had undertaken all care tasks to Mr M she informed myself that she had witnessed them conducted themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times.</p>

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<p>We would like to thank you and your team for the excellent service you have provided in organising the care for my mother. We have had "face to face" dealings with three people who have all been very helpful, knowledgeable & efficient, the same applies to all the people we have spoken to when we have telephoned with our various requests for information, V has been particularly informative & tenacious in her quest to " get things done ". Please pass this note on to all the relevant departments. Thank you all,</p>
<p>Your help and support has been a massive help to me over the last 6 months.</p>
<p>Call from a lady regarding a piece of work that Holly and Mel did. They organised a key safe for the lady and her husband. The lady called to speak to Holly and Mel to express her thanks but could not get through.</p>
<p>Regarding my mother - Both of the best interest assessors that have dealt with this matter have been both professional but also understanding and very supportive and I feel it's very important to write to you to let you know that they have done an excellent job, made a difficult situation a little easier and are a credit to your team. Their support has been very much appreciated.</p>
<p>I feel Social Services, Carers Trust and Alzheimer's Society offer a marvellous range of services, of which my Nan refuses to take part in. This leaves me having to care for her. The advice, counselling and training offered to me has been excellent.</p>

Care and Support:

<p>With special wishes to all the lovely people at Keats. Thank you for everything you do for Jim with best wishes.</p>
<p>Extremely friendly and helpful staff, made life a lot easier</p>
<p>I would just like to thank everyone who has helped me these last 6 weeks all have been very kind and helpful and I am very grateful.</p>
<p>I wanted to write to thank the staff at Homecare for the outstanding care and support they provided to my uncle all through his illness and at the end of his life. He had been a private man and managed to live unsupported un the death of his wife a few weeks ago. The staff came in initially as emergency support then continuing to become his palliative carers. All the care staff who supported him were kind, thoughtful and put his needs first. They helped the family and my uncle approach the end of his life with all the dignity all 89 year old veterans deserve. Thank you to all those who cared for him for your fantastic support.</p>
<p>Bill was terminally ill but looked forward to the visit from the carers. They all could not do enough for him especially C and M whom he loved to have a joke with. I found their help invaluable.</p>
<p>Would like to say that M was fantastic, did an amazing job and very professional a credit to your service</p>
<p>Thanks to all your team you do an excellent job under very difficult circumstances</p>
<p>I would like to thank the enablement team who have looked after me for the last 7 weeks. The support and encouragement they gave me has seen me through a very difficult time in my life and I feel I couldn't have done it without them.</p>
<p>I feel all the carers have been wonderful and friendly. I feel as though I am losing all my friends now the service has finished.</p>
<p>I have no hesitation in praising the carer services provided to and for me during the recent past. Everything and everyone engaged in the provision of the care has been to the higher standard.</p>
<p>Very good place. People were nice. Food is excellent.</p>
<p>I am writing to thank you and your team for the kind and prompt care you gave me over the last six weeks, it really helped me tremendously and I think it's such a good scheme to allow people to recover in their own environment, all the girls were nice and considerate to my needs. Thanking you from my heart, to all</p>

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the team.
Special Thanks for thoughts and time and effort to make it a special day. Whilst life has move don I will miss you all. Warm wishes
Thank you all so very much for making me feel so welcome. I really appreciate how much you have helped me throughout my time here with you and how much you have taught me. Thank you so much again.
Thank you to staff for kindness and patience.
Team have been caring and helpful. Thank you very much - keep up the excellent work.
Great service - given me my confidence back - staff were amazing.

Business Support and Resources:

Just a note to thank you and your team for the work completed. I appreciate that everybody had to go the extra mile and put in additional hours
Thanks for getting back to me and for being so co-operative throughout this matter.
A.... has been working closely with us to make the best use of the continuing care which has been granted for my husband. I have been so impressed by her enthusiasm and positive support, she is friendly but professional in her approach and is a great ambassador for the Blackpool Council
Thank you for completing the final audit of my late mothers account promptly. May I thank you and your team for all your help in the past and wish you well for the future.
Social Care Direct Payments have helped so much to help us cope, simply couldn't manage without them and the PAs and care firm we use. The social care team have been truly amazing, so helpful and understanding, well done!

Commissioning:

I would like to convey to you a big thank you on behalf of all the Staff at Pennystone Court who took part in the Let's Respect Training, we all really enjoyed and gained an awful lot from the training and the delivery of the course. Structuring the course aimed at the levels and styles of the individual learners involved really works and brought the best out in everyone. The Certificate Presentation yesterday was a lovely acknowledgment of our work that we carry out on a daily basis and most of the time goes unnoticed, so thank you for the public recognition.
Thank you for the information, all the staff who attended the forum remarked on how much they enjoyed it. If you have any other dates for further forums for non-carers please keep us to date.
Well satisfied with help given by I care, who have very charming and efficient staff.
Dancing with Dementia Thank you for inviting the staff and residents to yesterday's event. They all thoroughly enjoyed themselves and said the day was perfect. We have already seen some photos and video footage of our residents that the staff took and it looks like they were having a fabulous time. There are some lovely photographic memories for the residents and their relatives. We look forward to seeing the pics you took too.
Dancing with Dementia Firstly congratulations on a super event yesterday. I popped in and did some networking but unfortunately didn't manage to see you both, although I doubt we could have talked much!! There was so much buzz in the place.
All of us at Jah-jireh just loved it because the residents were included, our residents so enjoyed themselves and we are very grateful to Blackpool council for spending some money on those that matter.
Thank you very much for the invite; The residents and staff who attended along with myself thoroughly enjoyed the event and hope there will be similar events in the future.
Just wanted to say a big thank you for the lovely afternoon mum and I had at the Blackpool Tower dancing

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event yesterday. Mum had a fantastic time and the volunteers were wonderful with her and myself. We have some lovely video footage that we keep looking at to remind her of the dancing she did and this gives her immense pleasure The only thing is that everyone I've spoken to who attended wants it to become an annual event (no pressure)!

May I just say a big thank you for all the kind support and guidance provided by the Contracts Team. It has been a difficult task at times but we are thankful to Alison and Tina for steering the home into the right path

I wanted to thank you for the excellent training you provided to the BCH team last Friday. I have received some very positive feedback from all the attendees who felt the training was both useful and informative, they were also impressed with the quality of content and found the session interactive and thought provoking.

H.... is a kind, cheerful young lady. Makes me laugh and makes me feel comfortable.

P... the training you delivered was excellent

Appreciated. S....made the visit feel professional and relaxed. Thank you S.... for continued support - your team are welcome at the Merwood any time.

It is a special experience when the trainer is both enthusiastic and informative about the subject being taught.

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Appendix C - A sample of lessons learnt:

- Better and earlier communication between services (Council and Health) to share information on the improvement of service users so that service users can be kept informed as early as possible.
- It will now be the requirement for all Social Workers to provide an assessment following the visit regardless of whether or not needs can be met by Adult Social Care.
- Manager has requested that all calls that cannot be put through to the named Social Worker, be recorded, and a copy sent to the workers supervisor to ensure a call is returned.
- An anomaly in the computer system was discovered which affected the implementation of the contribution from January 2014. We are now working on this computer error to stop this occurring again for other service users.
- Reminders made re carers assessment must be offered at all times if there is an identifiable carer, including handing out of all up to date fact sheets to service users and record all information in case notes.
- Staff (mobile) did not stay with a vulnerable service user throughout the call out – due to work pressures; Manager to be aware of extra pressures and pertinent instructions provided to ensure vulnerable service users are not placed at risk.
- Agency care visits taking place early and at weekends, when not scheduled. Carers visiting on cancelled days and setting alarms off. Incorrect visit timings by Provider due to errors in new computer system. Matter raised and addressed with Provider by Contracts Team. Contract review to monitor.
- Unhappy with the service at care agency. Clear discussion between all parties undertaken and new processes re timing of visits implemented.
- Poor communication/breakdown in communication; Lesson to learn - staff need to ensure they introduce themselves and are clear with the purpose of their calls to members of the public and service users family
- Better communication required when changing services – this needs to include communication with the service users family – before any changes are made to services a holistic review of the service users' needs and requirements should be carried out.
- The transition policy needs continued work and when completed will then be implemented to all staff across Adult and Childcare Services. Staff within Adult Social Care and in particular the Community Learning Disability Service need to work actively with Childcare Services to ensure gaps in support do not occur.
- Any voids that occur in supported tenancies need to be considered promptly to ensure houses do not become accepted as single tenancy, thus enhancing the difficulties in change for both the existing tenants, new prospective tenants and staff involved in running the house.