

SUNDERLAND CARERS' MANAGEMENT BOARD (CMB)
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th JANUARY 2021

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

1. Virtual meetings

To keep in touch with events during the Covid-19 crisis, virtual meetings are taking place, using the Microsoft Teams software.

2. Matter arising from meeting on 7th October 2020

A query had been raised as to whether, when a resident needed to be taken to hospital, they could be accompanied by family members or staff. Although this was not permitted in general because of Covid restrictions, a dynamic risk assessment could be done. If this concluded that the resident needed to be accompanied to prevent harm or upset to them then this would be acceptable in the patient's best interests.

3. Update from Chief Operating Officer of SCAS

General SCAS update

- Following the retirement of Councillor Ann Lawson, Councillor Melanie Thornton had been appointed to the SCAS Board as one of the three elected members.
- A new 7-year contract had been ratified by the Council and commenced on 1 December 2020, providing a welcome measure of stability to services.
- The company was set to break even in the current year and the budget for 2021-22 had been agreed.
- New service developments were announced, some structural changes were planned and a 5-year replacement programme was in place for some older accommodation.
- Training and spot inspections were continuing as far as possible in the currently restricted circumstances. Specific training was being provided in infection control, PPE and other Covid issues.

Covid-19 update

- The target was for all staff to be vaccinated by the end of January.
- Residents were planned to be vaccinated by mid to late February and were prioritised according to categories of age and vulnerability.
- In discussion it was noted that the order of vaccination was laid down by the NHS but where appropriate it may be decided to vaccinate everyone in a home at the same time
- Covid-19 testing arrangements had been put in place – weekly tests for staff and monthly tests for service users.
- Monitoring and outbreak control procedures were in place and were discussed. Areas covered in the event of an outbreak included lockdown, informing families, notifying the Health Protection Agency and minimising staff movement between services.

4. Points and queries raised by carers

- Clarification was sought regarding guidance relating to visits to homes. Although the general policy was to follow current PPE advice, it also allowed for individual circumstances and well-being to be taken into account, based on risk assessment. In practice it was thus possible to have visiting arrangements tailored to the individual needs of residents.
- The value to SCAS of direct feedback about services through the Carers' Board was emphasised. Similarly members greatly appreciated being kept informed and being able to ask questions and raise issues in a forum where they could be dealt with directly.
- Appreciation was expressed at the efforts of SCAS staff in keeping services going in difficult and stressful circumstances. It was requested that thanks be conveyed to all staff for the level of care and caring shown and the fact that residents had been looked after so well.

5. Future meetings

The following meeting dates are scheduled for 2021, all on Wednesdays at 6pm.

14th April

7th July

6th October

It is hoped that normal face to face meetings can resume eventually but virtual meetings will continue until this became possible.

All family carers will be invited to participate and will be most warmly welcomed.