

Adult Social Care



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Provider bulletin

Special Edition February 2024

Welcome to a special edition of the Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin.

As there have been some changes across the Market Management Team at Slough Borough Council I wanted to share these with you and introduce you to the people in the team who will be your key contacts.

Lynn Johnson
Interim Group Manager
Market Management

Market Management

The Market Management Team is part of the Adults Strategic Commissioning function and leads on the contract management and quality assurance of the care market, working with Adult Social Care operational staff, and external partners to ensure effective strategic oversight of care provision in the borough.

We use market intelligence to:

- Shape the market for high quality cost effective adult social care services
- Build and maintain effective relationships with key partners, service providers and stakeholders
- Signal plans to the market through our Market Position Statement
- Manage risks to the local market and ensure contingencies are in place
- Ensure our approach to fee setting balances affordability with quality and market risk
- Inform strategic commissioning reviews through Market Sustainability Plans including demand and capacity modelling

We report monthly on the quality and contract performance information relating to our market and reports issues of concern to our Directorate Leadership Team.

In addition, the Care Governance Board (multiagency) meets monthly to review providers of concern, at various stages of the provider concerns process, new and emerging risks, considers recommendations in relation to placement suspension and receives intelligence and information from neighbouring local authorities, NHS Frimley ICB and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Quality Assurance (QA) Team

In order to provide assurance on the stability and quality of our markets, the QA team undertake regular quality assurance visits, and together with evidence and information gathered from people with lived experience, complaints and compliments, provider feedback, CQC and partners, use these to inform regular market oversight reporting.

We have recently reviewed our processes and toolkits and our next programme of visits to care providers will be to launch our new ways of working with you.

Our visit will be wide ranging in its scope and will explore several different areas which usually include:

- Training
- Policies and Procedures
- Recruitment
- Staffing
- Care Plans and Risk Assessments
- Medication
- Complaints and Compliments
- Safeguarding
- Quality Assurance
- Accidents and Incidents

Visits can take between one and two days and would usually be announced. We may include other professionals on our visits i.e., NHS Frimley ICB' s Quality Manager for Care Homes or a pharmacist from the Medicines Optimisation (MOCH) team.

Our visit report and action plan will be shared with you and we will always provide verbal feedback on site at the end of the visit. Follow up visits will be aligned with action plans and will depend on the range of actions identified.

We are not representatives of the regulator (CQC) and our aim is to work with you to help identify areas of improvement while also providing assurances to Slough Borough Council on the quality of care being delivered as part of our Care Act (2014) responsibilities..

The Team includes staff with considerable experience of managing health and social care services and working successfully with service providers and managers to identify and plan improvements to the quality of their service.

Meet the QA Team

Madiha Asmat – Principal Quality Assurance Officer - shared lead for Home Care Services

Madiha started as an apprentice at Slough Borough Council and worked in various roles within Adult Social Care and more latterly as a Principal Quality Assurance Officer.

Madiha is very keen to support and work with Homecare providers to enable them to improve on quality and ensuring good outcomes for local residents. She believes that strong working relationships are key to success.

Tracie Hamer - Principal Quality Assurance Officer - lead for Supported Living services

Tracie has recently joined Slough Borough Council and brings with her many years of experience working as a registered manager of a specialist care home at another London borough.

A skilled practitioner Tracie was also Deputy Manager of a Positive Behaviour Support Team so is bringing a new skill set to the Quality Assurance Team.

Tracie is committed to ensuring best practice standards and compliance with statutory and local requirements and the most effective use of resources.

Usha Ballay - Principal Quality Assurance Officer - shared lead for Home Care Services

Usha has worked for Slough Borough Council for 37 years, in various roles, more latterly as a Principal Quality Assurance Officer, and is committed to working collaboratively with customers, providers, and stakeholders to identify and address concerns, risks, and share best practice in adult social care.

A passionate professional she is keen to build positive working relationships and is looking forward to working with and supporting Home Care providers to improve on quality.

Zoe Buchanan – Principal Quality Assurance Officer - lead for Care Homes/ Extra Care

Zoe joined the Quality Assurance Team at Slough Borough Council in August 2023 after working for the NHS and in the private healthcare sector for over 25 years, primarily in clinical governance and quality assurance.

Zoe believes that engaging with and supporting providers is key to promoting good quality care for local people.

How to contact the Quality Assurance Team

If you would like to contact us please email quality.assurance@slough.gov.uk

Contracts Management Team

The Contracts Management Team manages all Adult Social Care contracts including CQC regulated care through review of KPIs and overall performance. They undertake annual contract reviews/deep dives inform service review/redesign and strategic commissioning plans, mobilise new contracts and support TUPE processes

The team also manage requests for all care provider fee uplifts, including negotiation with providers, subsequent development of business cases to analyse requests and benchmarking of costs.

The Contracts Management team is ensuring we are delivering improved outcomes and experiences for people using services and value for money and effectiveness.

We deliver this through our Market Sustainability Plan which is an analysis of the current context, including the strengths and risks facing the market and an analysis of future market changes:

- Sufficiency of supply of high-quality services
- Choice in care and support provision
- Cost effective and affordable – a market that operates efficiently
- Local provision where most appropriate with diversity of supply
- A stable and sufficient ASC external workforce paid a fair rate and supported with training and development

Meet the Contracts Management Team

Samantha Obeng – Contracts Team Manager/lead for Care Homes/Extra Care contracts.

Sam has been with Slough Borough Council since Summer 2023. She is truly passionate about the range of services and support we commission for local residents and works tirelessly with colleagues to ensure that they are consistently fit for purpose.

Her previous experience hails from both the private and public sector, and she is looking forward to building an even closer working relationship with our care providers in future.

Jenny Lau – Principal Contracts Officer – lead for Home Care Contracts

Jenny joined the Contracts Management Team at the start of this year. She has worked for the Council for 16 years, mainly in the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team in various roles.

Jenny achieved her CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and Supply in 2022 and hopes to use her extensive experience and newly found knowledge to successfully manage her allocated contracts.

Contract Officer Vacancies

We have two vacancies which we will be advertising imminently:

- Principal Contracts Officer – this post will take a lead for Supported Living Contracts
- Contracts Officer – this post will support the team as a whole and manage a small portfolio of low-risk contracts

If you need to contact any member of the team with a contract query please do not hesitate to email us on: ASC.ContractManagement@slough.gov.uk

Sophie Waters – Fee Negotiator

Sophie joined the Council in January 2024, having worked with a number of London boroughs and with large County Councils.

Sophie has 20 years' experience across Strategic Commissioning, Supplier Relationship and Partnership Management, Contract Management, Procurement, and Project Management within both the Private and Public Sectors.

Sophie is supporting our approach to fee uplifts 24/25 and will be part of the team engaging with you during February to inform the determination of discretionary uplifts prior to publication of the proposed fees.

In the interim of you have any immediate queries do not hesitate to contact us on Fee.Uplifts@slough.gov.uk