

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny
Date:	24 November 2009
Subject:	Care UK
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek – Corporate Director, Adults and Housing
Portfolio Holder:	Barry Macleod-Cullinane – Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - Care UK performance 2008-09 Appendix 2 - Complaints information issued to service users

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

At Overview and Scrutiny on 24th September 2009 the committee asked for the following things :

1. A Director of Care UK to be invited to the meeting on the 24th November in order to answer questions;
2. A written report to fully address the issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 24 November 2009.
3. Information concerning the way in which staff that had recently arrived in the UK were CRB checked and whether all service users were provided with a complaint form, be provided to the committee.
4. Detailed information regarding the training received by Care UK staff to be provided to the Committee.

Recommendations:

That the Committee consider the attached report which responds to the issues that they have raised, that they note the answers to the questions about CRB checks and Training and that they note the recent improvement in Care UK's performance.

Section 2 – Report

1.1 In response to the request for a Director of Care UK to attend the meeting officers have invited Geoff Benn – The Group Development Director for Care UK and Donna Cousins – Regional Operations Director Care UK to answer the Committee’s questions. (Geoff’s biography is available via the following link : http://www.careuk.com/directors/show_all_management?tag=management_team)

2.1 Response to the issues raised by Overview and Scrutiny with regard to Care UK.

The issues that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have raised relate in general to concerns about the quality and performance of the Care UK contract, therefore the Adults Housing Contracts team have presented information that provides context to the service and monitoring data that indicates that the service is improving with plans in place for it to improve further.

Specific concerns about CRB checks , Complaints and Training are addressed in sections 3 and 4 of this report.

2.1.1 Context

In presenting the evidence of the improvement in the quality of services offered by Care UK the councils contracts team has been proactive in monitoring the contract and requiring improvement.

Firstly it is important to put the Care UK service in context – it operates in the West of the Borough providing 25% of the contracted Homecare provision delivered in Harrow as a whole. It delivers in excess of 18,000 care visits a month to around 300 residents. The rest of the provision is commissioned through Supporta Care who deliver a further 25% and a range of ten spot contracted agencies who undertake 50% of the work. This provides the diversity of choice and risk and market management required as we deliver the personalisation agenda. In most areas of quality Care UK compares well to the other providers who the council contract with. Harrow’s contracted providers are all of an acceptable CQC standard – fair or above.

2.1.2 Chronology

- i. The Care UK contract was agreed by Cabinet in July 2007 and has been operating since December 2007 as a result of a full tender process and TUPE transfer of staff. The service operates in the West of the borough and provides 25-30% of the Homecare delivered in Harrow.
- ii At an early stage in the contract issues about performance were identified by the council through close monitoring.
- iii. In October 2008 the independent regulator of the sector the Care Quality Commission (CQC) rate the service as a 0 star.
- iv. In November 2008 the Director of Adults and Hosuing issues a Contract default notice to Care UK requiring immediate and ongoing improvements in respect of performance particularly around levels of missed calls and complaints. At the Same time Harrow ceased placing with Care UK.

v. In January 2009 the Council agree improvement plan with Care UK having seen them substantially comply with the default notice.

This sets key targets for attaining : a 2 star service ; reducing levels of complaints and missed calls and increasing client satisfaction.

vi. In February 2009 with a follow up CQC inspection the service is rated as 1 star and improving.

vii. Panorama undercover reporter working at the Harrow branch of Care UK in February 2009 - Panorama broadcast April 09. The report didn't highlight anything that the contracts team were not already aware of. Safeguarding reviews were undertaken of the service users involved and no concerns were discovered. Council audited the recruitment process for the reporter gaining employment these were followed robustly.

viii. Close monitoring of progress against the improvement plan continues with clear improvements in missed calls and complaints shown by Care UK. In May 2009 it is agreed that Care UK can take on new work in Harrow but the council is careful to ensure that recruitment keeps up with this to be sustainable.

ix. Care UK are due to be inspected again by CQC in November 2009.

2.1.3 Performance of the contract

Harrow Adults Contract team undertakes a range of monitoring activity and has a range of data which enable us to judge that the Care UK service in Harrow is improving, a number of these have been identified below :

2.1.3.1 Volume of Complaints / Service Failures is low when compared to the volume of visits.

Service Failure Complaints have dropped and when compared against volume of calls compare well to other providers. In Quarter 1 09/10 complaints data for Care UK was as follows :

Provider Care UK

Upheld 20

Not Upheld 1

Total 21

Volume of provision – i.e. number of visits in Quarter extrapolated from May snapshot 31,056

This equates to 0.06% of service failure complaints upheld per volume of provision, acceptable threshold is 0.1% . This is down from 64 complaints raised in Quarter 3 of 08-09.

There is ongoing close monitoring of these complaints and the agencies response to these.

2.1.3.2 Missed calls.

The level of missed calls and calls cancelled due to lateness service failures have dropped significantly as shown in the graph in *Appendix 1* – there have only been 6 missed calls reported between April - October 2009. This is a key indicator of the services performance.

Telelogging is the way that care workers log the time that they are delivering care by using the clients phone to log in and out which is a significant tool for safeguarding both users and carers care. Care UK are now 85 % compliant with 85% of all calls logged in the service users home. The council has access to this live data and can verify performance data - check if calls have been missed etc.

2.1.3.3 Service User satisfaction :

Significantly the Independent Age Concern survey that the council commission to judge the service user satisfaction of the homecare provision reports twice yearly on the larger contractors Care UK and Supporta Care. It reported most recently in August 2009 for the six months January 09 - June 09.

The key findings of note were :

- 27% of those surveyed (15 people out of 54) stated that the service had improved in the previous six months (this compares to only 2.7% reporting an improvement in the previous six months).

- Overall Satisfaction with the service is at 89 % according to the survey

- 7.4% (4 people) stated the service had worsened compared to 37.8% (14 people) for the previous six months July 08 -Dec 08.

- There have also been improvements in continuity of care according to the survey.

There is general satisfaction with the standard of Care and the Care Workers.

There are clearly still areas for improvement identified by the which we are focusing on with Care UK through the improvement plan and by using the survey these are noted in 2.1.3.5.

2.1.3.4 Other – It is worth noting that performance at typical times of strain for services over Christmas 2008 in the February 2009 snow and over the summer holidays 2009 has been good.

2.1.3.5 Improvements still required

Beyond ensuring that the service delivers sustained improvement in the areas already identified

- The major area for improvement is around communication and people being notified about changes in carers and if carers are late.

- Continued improvement in the continuity of care is required

- Satisfaction with responses to Complaints requires improvement as well

2.1.4 Ensuring ongoing improvements.

In order to ensure ongoing improvements are delivered the council has a number of arrangements in place :

1. Care UK are independently regulated by CQC – who noted improvement with the service and who the council work closely with to ensure improved standards.

2. On a daily basis the Adults Brokerage team monitors performance through access to telelogging , receiving complaints and monitoring refusals etc.

3. Care UK along with the other agencies provide weekly performance reports to the contracts team.

4. Care Management feedback from reviews of service users if there are concerns over the quality of care delivered.

5. The contracts team undertakes risk based monitoring visits some of which can be spot checks in response to any concerns about performance.

5. There is a quarterly Partnership Board with senior council and Care UK officers present. Age concern and Harrow carers sit on these boards to provide independent assessment.

6. There is a Quarterly Complaints report for all Homecare services reported to the Chief Executive.

7. There is an Age Concern survey twice yearly.
8. There is a National Homecare survey
9. Regular reports to the Corporate Director of Adults & Housing and the Portfolio Holder.
10. There will be an Annual Report that incorporates the activity noted in 1-9 above and that derives an Annual Improvement Plan for the following year.

3.1 The Committee requested data in relation to how CRB checks are carried out on all staff, including those from other countries? And asked how does Care UK background check individuals that have only recently arrived from other countries?

Care UK provided the following response :

' To confirm Care UK are not a Tier 2 employer therefore, we do not employ from overseas. Our applicants either live in the UK, or have lived in the UK at some time in their lives and are therefore required to apply for an Enhanced CRB Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau before they can begin working with the Company. They must have the Right to Work in the UK prior to applying to Care UK as part of our recruitment policy.

As part of the referencing, we would obtain overseas references if they fall into the referencing period required i.e. References should cover all employment over the previous two years or, where this has been with numerous employers, at least the last two employers.

If the applicant has had no employment during that period then references should be sought from their previous four years. If the individual has had no employment within the previous four years, two personal references should be requested. The referees should not be related to the applicant and should ideally be of professional status. These will need to be obtained on each and every occasion even if from overseas. 100% of references are also verified.'

3.2 The Committee requested information about whether a complaint form was provided to all service users. Care UK responded that:

' All Service Users have a copy of the complaints process within their Service User guide'

A copy of the complaints information included within the guide is included as Appendix 2

In addition Harrow Council Contracts team would note that volume and quality of response to complaints is regularly monitored and a letter was sent in August 2009 to all service users receiving a Homecare service to reinforce that people can complain to the provider and/or the council as the body that contracts for the service.

4. 1 The Committee asked for detailed information regarding the training received by Care UK staff:

Care UK Provided the following information:

4.1.1 An Overview of Training Provided to Care UK Staff

All staff have a full induction programme.

Care staff are taken through the Common Induction Standards using a blend of e learning and in house trainer led sessions before shadowing an experienced care worker. Minimum standards are met but this process is currently being revised with the aim of extending the trainer and mentor contact time during the first 12 weeks. This will allow more flexibility to accommodate learner and local authority needs.

Mandatory training updates are provided in house at the specified intervals
Care workers are also supported to achieve their NVQ 2 and any Skills for Life needs. Some go on to do an NVQ level 3

The range of specialist topics is growing and in order for Care Workers to be able to deliver a quality service for a range of service users we take advantage of training offered by local authorities, PCT's and by our own trainers such as for Dementia Care, End of Life Care. Some training, for example Medication training is currently delivered by an external provider
Supervision and annual appraisal keeps the identification of training needs ongoing

In House Trainers

Our in house trainers keep up to date by attending train the trainer courses, required updates and by attending local authority training sessions where appropriate. They have a professional link to the Head of Learning & Development and their own training needs are identified through this network and their Performance & Development Reviews

Managers have a local induction and a Divisional and Group one to ensure they have a broad understanding of the company, the Division and their role
This is followed by a series of internal management modules around managing people, finance and quality, A training catalogue showing internal training opportunities is being extended gradually to support a wide range of training needs including Induction, IT, Supervision skills and HR topics

Care UK has recently introduced leadership behaviours and each manager is having feedback after completing a tailored 360 appraisal and personality questionnaire with a view to development needs and strengths being identified. This feeds into the Performance and Development Review process which incorporates a personal development plan

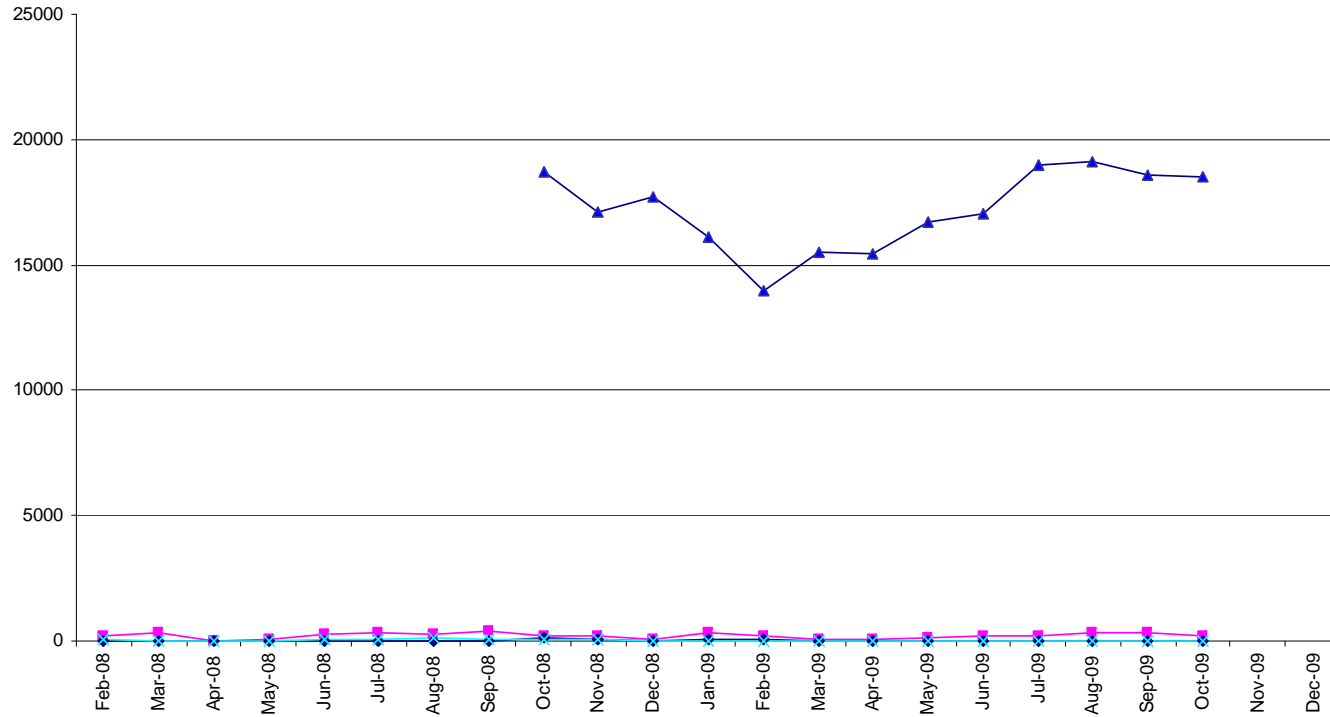
There is support for managers if they need to achieve their NVQ level 4 and there are Group development programmes suitable for Branch Managers to Director level.

Section 3 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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Appendix 1 - Care UK performance 2008-09

Care UK Visit Breakown



	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09
▲ Total Commissioned Visits									18700	17119	17683	16109	13990	15495	15432	16743	17076	18961	19102	18594	18483		
■ Visits Cancelled in Advance bu SU	222	331	6	41	258	314	276	373	219	191	82	335	230	56	75	149	183	201	360	301	192		
◆ Cancelled by SU due to lateness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	108	40	22	34	44	12	3	6	6	14	23	16	10		
✕ Missed Visits	46	33	6	14	38	52	111	77	53	43	31	1	7	1	2	1	0	0	1	1	1		