



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual PSW Report

Stockport ASC 2023

Julia Newton



Ambitious Stockport, creating opportunities *for everyone*

Forward

I am delighted to share my annual Principal Social Worker report for Stockport Adult Social Care Services during 2022/2023. This report describes the progress on the work undertaken to promote and improve the quality social work practices and outlines the priorities for the coming year.

As Principal Social Worker, I recognise the importance of supporting our workforce in striving for the highest standards of practice when working with individuals, their families and carers. We work with people at some of the most challenging times in their lives and therefore it is imperative that we are a responsive and customer focussed service. We are duty bound to identify people's individual strengths and networks providing support where necessary but always with the intent of promoting their independence and their right to choice and control over their lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our adult social care workforce for all their hard work and commitment to support the residents of Stockport.



Contents



- **The role of the PSW**
- **Mission, Vision, and Values**
- **About Stockport**
- **Regional and National Networks**
 - GMSWA: ASYE, Practice Education & CPD
- **Further practice developments 22/23**
 - Strengths Based, PEOPS model, Apprenticeships, POPP, Training offer.
- **Workforce**
 - Workforce Strategy
 - 100 Day Challenge
 - Workforce Engagement
 - Voice of Practitioners
 - Employer Standards Health Check
- **Case Study**
- **Quality Assurance**
- **Making it Real Board**
- **Priorities for the next 12 months**

What is my role as Principal Social Worker?

The Care Act states that every Local Authority must have a Principal Social Worker (PSW) in place, and they should be visible across the organisation. The PSW is to support and develop effective conditions for practice. They will oversee quality and improvement of practice and have direct contact with the Adults Director, the senior management team and front-line practice.

I am the PSW for Adult Social Care in Stockport. I lead the Practice Quality Business Group comprising of a Practice Lead who acts as a vital link between frontline practitioners, workforce development and the business group, and a Service Manager who business-partners with corporate teams within the Data Service (Adult Systems, Adult Data Analytics) and feeds into the Adult Social Care Transformation & Change Programme.

The business group operates across all service areas comprising Adult Social Care. Its primary function is to drive forward a culture of continuous learning, reflection and improvement to ensure that the highest standard of practice is embedded across the organisation. Central to this, it has a role in keeping business architecture, systems and processes both governed and under general review and plays a vital role in driving forward service improvement. Ensuring the right tools, training and support are in place to enable continuous development of both the organisation and its workforce and plays a key role in distributing legislative and policy updates, practice toolkits and guidance to frontline practitioners to support them to keep up to date with current thinking and evidence-based practice models. The business group also works closely with a wide range of corporate partners to develop digital and data tools data to enable it to measure success, using the intelligence to feed into service and practice improvement initiatives.

Mission, Vision & Values

Our ONE Stockport approach enables us to work in a collaborative and integrated way to improve outcomes for people. The ONE Stockport Borough Plan is the shared vision for Stockport for 2030, outlining 9 key priority areas and partnership delivery plans grouped under three core pillars – **One Heart, One Home, One Future**. It is supported by the ONE Health and Care Plan. This is our integrated five-year strategic plan for health and social care in Stockport and describes how we will achieve the priorities described within **ONE Heart**. The integrated plan encompasses the strategy for Adult Social Care, describing how we will promote prevention and early intervention, enable people to maximise their independence and when formal care and support is required ensure that they have access to a wide range of high-quality services. As PSW it is my role to work with other professionals across Stockport to develop and implement policies and practices that help people to live as happily, healthily and independent as possible. I work with colleagues across our locality to ensure that our workforce has the right knowledge, skills and training to do their job well. I am committed to driving forward co-production within our locality so that people with lived experience can influence the design and delivery of services.



The Council plan describes the key role that the Council plays in supporting the borough through the provision and deliver of key services that are essential to everyday life. The work we undertake in Adult Social Care helps to deliver this plan to help make Stockport a great place to live, work and visit.

As PSW I actively support the embedding and delivery of the Council Vision, Mission and Team Values across Adult Social Care. Our values define how we work, we always think about Stockport first, achieve as a team, work with ambition and show everyone respect. These values underpin everything we do in ASC in Stockport and is why we have developed



an emblem of one of the values – **People at the heart of what we do.**



About Stockport

Demographics

In 2021, the total population of Stockport was 295,243. 21.2% were aged under 18, 58.6% aged 18-64 and 20% aged 65 and over, with 2.9% aged 85 and over. Stockport has seen an increase in population size of 3% from 2012 with a further increase of 3.3% predicted by 2030. The greatest increase has been seen among those aged over 65 and 85 with 16% and 23% respective growth in the last 10 years. Stockport has more older people and fewer younger adults than both the national and Greater Manchester average and has an old age dependency ratio (working age population to over 65 population) of 33.2 per 100 working age population: the 12th lowest out of 15 Metropolitan Districts in the Northwest region. Whilst older adults are living longer, younger people (aged 18-29) are leaving Stockport for further or higher education, to find work or more affordable housing. By 2030 it is predicted that a third of Stockport residents will be aged over 65.

Health inequality

Stockport is an affluent borough and continues to be one of the healthiest places to live in the Northwest. It has a lower-than-average deprivation level compared with other areas and with overall health outcomes similar to

national average however we know this is not the experience of all of our residents. Stockport is highly polarised with pockets of very concentrated deprivation contrasting with large areas where deprivation is relatively low. Stockport now has both the most and least deprived electoral ward and GP Practice in Greater Manchester.

More areas rank in the 1% most deprived nationally compared to the average. Where Stockport's population has grown, it has grown most rapidly in areas of deprivation. Average life expectancy is high but there is a significant difference across our neighbourhoods. People in the most deprived areas live on average 10 years less than the least deprived areas, and 25% of an average life is spent in fair or poor health in deprived areas compared to 15% in more affluent areas.

In the 2021 census, an estimated 53,500 people described themselves as having a disability – this has increased from 2011 to 2021 by 2.4%. Brinnington and Central Stockport have the highest proportion of people who are considered disabled under the Equality Act. There are 1,700 people [add in how many are known to ASC] with a learning disability and 3,000 people have a serious mental illness. 31,200 people reported to be providing unpaid care to a friend or relative. Prevalence of long-term health conditions also continues to rise at a level greater than population increase. More than 40% of the people registered with Stockport GPs have one or more long term health condition, rising to 92% of people aged 85+. Diabetes and dementia are the fastest growing long term health conditions in Stockport and the Alzheimer's Society estimated that there are 4,131 people aged 65 plus living with Alzheimer's or dementia in Stockport, with this figure estimated to rise to 5,764 by 2030ⁱ. Inequality is one of the single biggest challenges for Stockport's health.

Regional and National Networks

I am an active member of the GM, Regional and National PSW Networks. These networks are focused on improving social work practice and championing the voice of social workers delivering excellent outcomes with people to improve lives. Being involved with these networks has ensured that Stockport has had the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the various developmental workstreams and projects they support.



The work at a GM level has been of particular importance to ensure that social work has been recognised and understood within the GM Health and Social Care Partnership. The GM PSW Network report through to the GM DASS group and ensures that there is a connection to frontline practice which influences decision making at a strategic level.

We aim to:

- Share best practice across GM to support practice quality
- Support, maintain and grow our Social Work Academy
- Provide social work leadership within the GM Health and Social Care Programme
- Ensure a GM voice at a regional and national level
- Provide peer support, supervision and challenge across the GM Network
- Focus on adherence to the statutory obligations enshrined in legislation for local authorities and support each other when responding to national policy and legislative changes.

Below is an example of the work the GM PSW Network has done to ensure that social work standards are integral to the integrated Health and Social Care Partnership Workforce Delivery Plan.

Integrated ASC Workforce Delivery Plan – Social Work

*The Standards for employers of social workers in England 2020



Greater Manchester
Integrated Care

WORKFORCE INTEGRATION

- Ensure delivery of **Standard 1* - Strong and clear social work framework** across all Social Work employers
 - Strategic accountability
 - Operational accountability
- Strengthen **Social Work identify** across health and social work, including clarity on social work roles and responsibilities. Central to this will be ensuring senior **Social Work leadership** across systems and organisations, including Mental Health Trusts
- **Alignment of terms and conditions** across all GM Social Work employers

GROWING AND DEVELOPING OUR WORKFORCE

- Delivery of **Standard 6 - Continuing professional development (CPD)**
- Delivery of **Standard 8 - Strategic partnerships** principally through the GM Social Work Academy
- Development of improved **career pathways** within Social Work that acknowledges the **increasing complexity of circumstances and needs** that services must be able to meet with considered and high quality professional intervention

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Ensure delivery of **Standard 5 – Supervision** across all Social Work employers including the frequency and quality of supervision through agreement on safe supervision levels
- Ensure delivery of **Standard 4 – Wellbeing**
 - **Strategic accountability**
 - **Work environment**
 - **Safety**
 - **Tools and support to do the job**
- This will include a robust offer that responds to trauma and moral injury

INEQUALITIES

- Work towards a Social Work workforce, at all levels and roles, that is **representative of our communities**
- Ensure all Social Work employers have a clear **third party abuse protocol** in place, to support and protect all colleagues with any protected characteristic
- Delivery of the **Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)** across all Social Work employers

GOOD EMPLOYMENT

- Delivery of **Standard 2 - Effective workforce planning systems** underpinned by strengthened social work workforce data recording and reporting
- Delivery of **Standard 3 - Safe workloads and case allocation** through agreement of a set of workload limits across different roles for all Social Work employers
- Delivery of **Standard 7 - Professional registration**
- Development of a '**Pledge**' approach to **Agency usage** to address cost and quality challenges
- Creation of a GM **Overseas Recruitment** approach to support aligned activity and support offers
- Alignment of approaches to **flexibility and hybrid working** across employers
- Market supplements
- Registration costs

The GM PSW Network has worked hard over the last 12 months to support and further develop the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy.

The partnership is employer led and works collaboratively with the local universities, strengthening the relationship between them to raise standards of social work practice, through attracting high quality students and ensuring that they and qualified social workers are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and values to best support the people of Greater Manchester.



Further information in relation the GMSWA can be found [here](#) on their website. Below are some of the examples of the work we are undertaking together.

GM Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Programme

The GMSWA coordinates the ASYE programme for Adults Social Work across Greater Manchester. Together with all local authority partners and

training collaborator Griffin Care, we have developed a blended learning programme for all our Newly Qualified Social Workers, making us one of the early adopters of the ASYE Skills Programme.

We in Stockport also have our own offer for our AYSE's but have contributed to the creation of the above programme, this has been a supportive development and we have received positive feedback from those staff who have attended. There is a GM Regional Memorandum of Collaboration and moderation process that we are signed up to as well as our own internal moderation process.

Over the past 12 months 3 ASYES have completed and a further 6 are about to. We currently have another 18 people going through the programme.

One of the difficulties has been the impact of Covid and lack of statutory placements/experience as students, which has raised some concerns over the rate of development and meant more input /support has been required to reach the required standard.

There have been also some disruptions in terms of sickness, maternity, vacancies and internal promotions which have impacted causing some delays, but overall, this has been well managed.

We have also supported one of our employees who wasn't practicing as a social worker to re-register via The Return to Social Work Programme. We are considering if we can use this route further with existing employees who have let their registration lapse or when looking to recruit.

GM Practice Education Support

We are active participants in the GMSWA Practice Learning and Practice Educator (PE) Professional Standards (PEPS) Steering Groups and moderation programmes. We have collaboratively developed a new blended training programme for social workers wishing to become practice educators. The programme has been designed to fit around the learner providing flexibility, to enable them to learn at their own pace. There is a mixture of online modules, videos, activities, quizzes supported by a workbook and a face-to-face workshop.

Over the past 12 months we supported 9 student placements which is lower than usual for us. There were a number of contributing factors: -a number of

PE's have become managers or left; a lack of experienced staff on some teams available or PE stating they were unable to take a student. We have taken steps to improve this by staggering the start dates of placements and a further 4 social workers have undertaken the PE training with more looking to do so. We should have 15 to 20 PE available of which 15 should be active over the coming months.

Each year the GMSWA host an annual conference centred on pertinent issues in Practice Education. Involving keynote speakers sharing key research, updates, learning and experiences, and providing tailored workshops for delegates to attend, maximising their learning and development. This year's conference theme was ***'Promoting competence and kindness in practice education'***.

GM Continued Professional Development Offer

Over the past 12 months our staff have benefitted from several CPD offers delivered by the GMSWA, and we as Principal Social Workers have been able to directly influence the offer to tailor it to the presenting needs of our workforce.

Some examples are detailed below:

- **World Social Work Week**– where a selection of training sessions and workshops were held over the week delivered by local authorities, researchers and the universities on a variety of topics.
- **Safeguarding Practice Research Week**– this was an opportunity for researchers / academics to come together with social workers, sharing research which informs practice.
- **Adult Relational Leadership Programme** - supporting managers to embed relational approaches, developing positive relationships with teams, working through change, uncertainty, and complexity.

- **Mental Capacity Workshop** on -unwise decisions, self-neglect and MCA.
- **Working effectively with interpreters.**

More details on the current offer can be found here: [Greater-Manchester-Social-Work-Academy-Training-Brochure-23-24-v-1.1.pdf \(gmswa.co.uk\)](https://gmswa.co.uk/Greater-Manchester-Social-Work-Academy-Training-Brochure-23-24-v-1.1.pdf)

Further Practice Developments 22/23

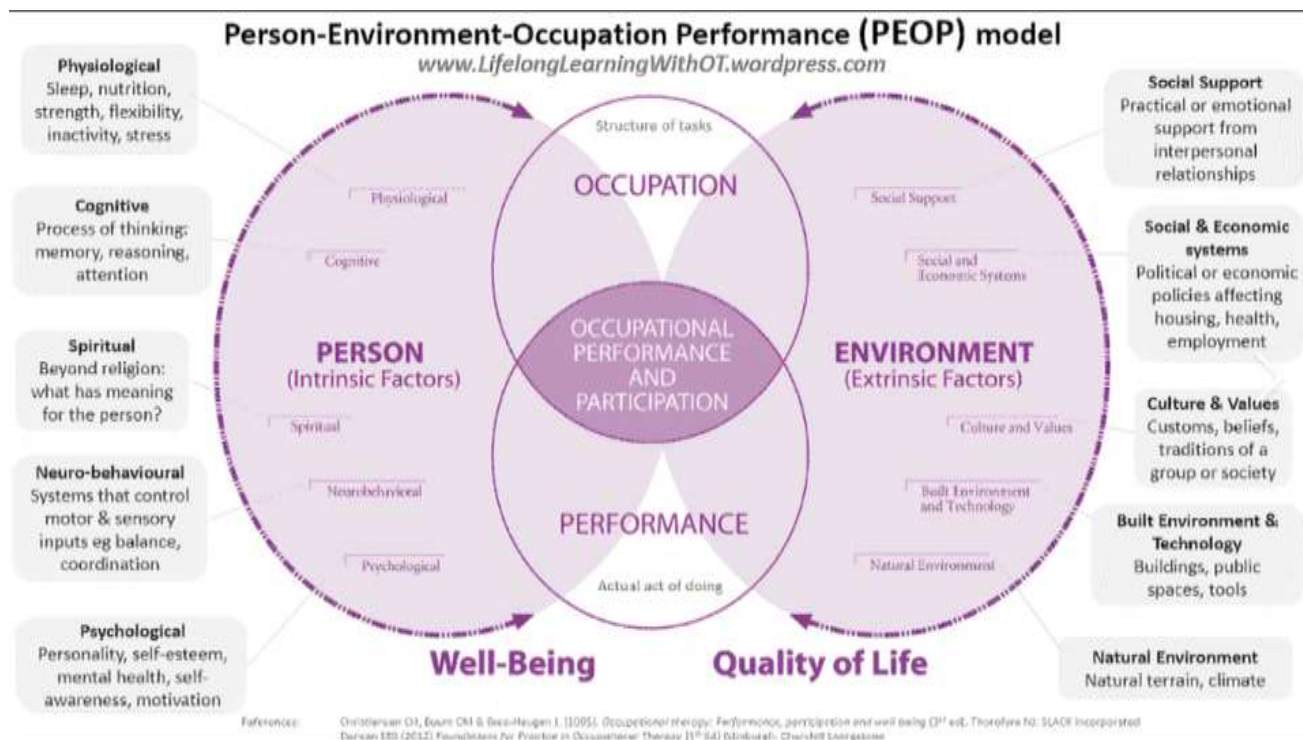
Strength Based Practice

In Stockport we have adopted a strengths-based approach to practice ensuring that we gain a full picture of the person's needs, priorities, to support them to identify their personal/desired outcomes so that we can provide the appropriate response at the right time to meet their needs. All our staff have received strength-based training as we continue to embed this approach.



PEOP Model

We have supported the therapists within ASC to agree and implement a model of practice that supports a strengths based approach. This has been a great piece of work enthusiastically led by the workforce.



Further Practice Developments



Apprenticeships

- We are currently supporting 9 Social Work Apprentices with the first cohort set to qualify early next year with a further 4 due to start in Jan 2024.
- Building on this success we have supported an OT apprentice who has recently qualified and supported another member of staff to successfully complete a Return to OT Practice Programme. We have put forward a further two employees to start on the OT apprenticeship next year



"Hannah" Social Care Officer

"I have worked for SMBC for 17yrs, I started at age 21 within a support work team, I applied for SMBC because they had a good reputation, provided brilliant training and had clear career progression incentives. Recently I have been successful through the application process and have started the Social Work Degree Apprenticeship. It is a great way to progress your career and learning at Stockport, SMBC have been very supportive, adjusting my workload and being flexible around my university time."

Practice Observation and Progression Programme (POPP)

This programme aims to provide an opportunity for social workers to demonstrate that they have met a range of required standards for practice as an experienced social worker within the Professional Capabilities Framework and met the Knowledge and Skills Statement for Social Workers in Adult Services. Over the past 12 months we have supported 9 members of staff to progress and there are currently a further 6 people are actively undertaking the POPP programme.

I always enjoy reviewing the evidence portfolios and chairing the progression panel, observing how their practice has developed and the positive impact that their interventions have had on people's lives.



Best Interest Assessor (BIA) Training

With the announcement on the 5th April 2023 that the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) will be delayed "beyond the life of this Parliament" we have needed to train additional Best Interest Assessors (BIAs) to support us with our statutory duties under the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. We have supported 17 additional members of staff to qualify as BIAs.



GROW AND THRIVE

Everyone thrives, has access to learning and development and can reach their potential.

Revised Training Offer

Over the last 12 months we have been working closely with our colleagues in People and OD to review and refresh our training offer to our workforce maximising any opportunities to roll out training across Children's and Adult Services where applicable. We have introduced a training calendar and role specific training expectations and wish to develop these further. We have closely monitored our performance in relation to the council mandatory

training and have seen our compliance rates significantly improve. To support the workforce, we have provided the following additional training:

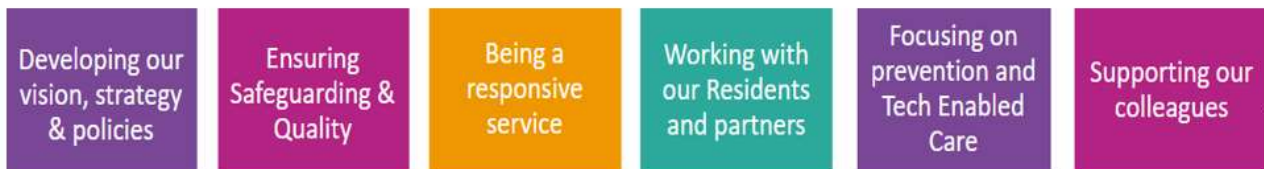
- Mandatory supervision training for all supervisors
- Strength Based Leadership Sessions and a Leadership Forum building on the corporate offer and Leadership Behaviours
- Equality Diversity & Inclusion Training for assessment teams and managers

Workforce

We currently have 166 qualified social workers in Stockport ASC and have a process in place to provide assurance regarding their registration with Social Work England. We are also supported by several other key professionals and unregistered colleagues who support us to deliver our service. During the year we have done a lot of work to embed the Council Vision, Mission and Values which is helping us to keep people at the heart of all we do.

We have developed a new workforce strategy for our directorate and have invested in the training and development offer available to all colleagues.

To help us keep people at the heart of all we do we have set six big ticket items. Supporting our colleagues is one of these items.



ASC Workforce 100-day Challenge

To realise our goals, we need an ambitious plan, that will ensure that we  **LIVE OUR VALUES**, putting them at the core of our work to deliver our One Stockport Borough Plan in Adult Social Care.

A 100 challenge was set involving all levels, professions and experience across ASC, also inviting colleagues



across the Council to ensure its success. The ethos of the 100 day challenge is to be led by data, breakdown barriers and be bold with our ambition.

The mission was to find courageous solutions to our workforce challenges, led, delivered and owned by the ASC workforce.

Creative Recruitment

The plan will sell Stockport as the great place it is to live and work, highlighting the financial incentive to make the move. We will use digital methods to target those living in these areas, create leads and raise the national profile of Stockport Council as a destination organisation to work for.

Creative Job

The 100 day challenge group has worked to streamline many roles into fewer clear job profiles. This supports the recruitment of roles, clear establishment reporting, flexibility to go where the needs of the service are and to support a clear career development pathway. With the national challenges facing social care workforce, we have undertaken a detailed benchmarking exercise to establish a clear plan of action to support a workforce retention plan.

Creative Careers

We want our workforce to have opportunities to grow the thrive in Stockport. Therefore, we have developed an ambitious and stretching career development pathway programme for all across ASC.

We also recognise importance of engagement with our workforce. Therefore, working closely with the DASS and senior management team, we have developed some great internal networks:

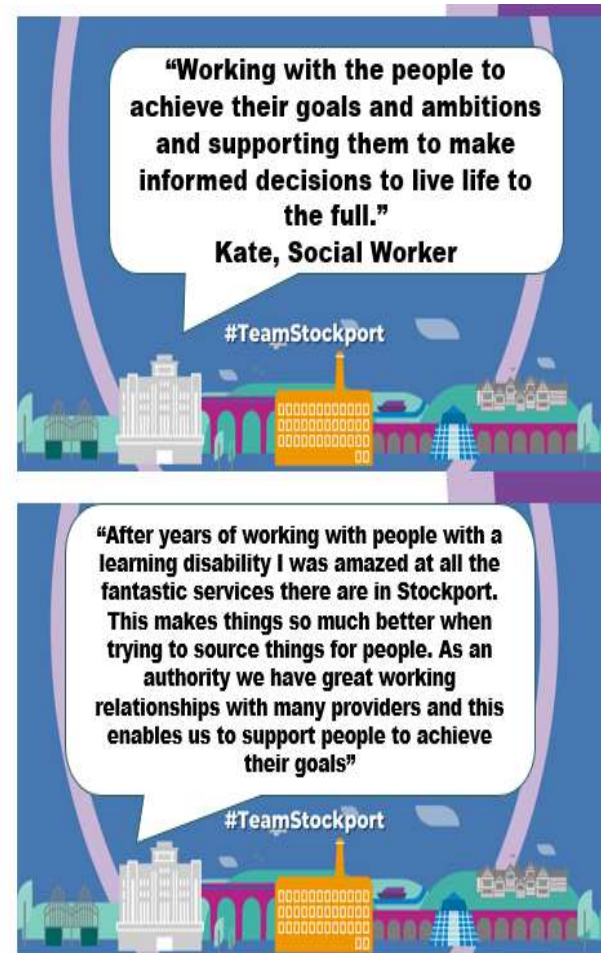
- **Practitioners Forum**
- **Social Work & A BIA Forum**
- **Managers & ATM Forum**
- **Leadership Forum**
- **Monthly Let's Talk Sessions**
- **SMT attending Team Meetings**
- **Team away days**



- **Front line visits**

Together we have developed several bespoke wellbeing activities across our teams as we recognise the importance of investing in our workforce.

Working for Stockport Council



Employers Standards Health Check Survey - 2022

You Said....

- You are treated with respect and were clear on your role however you felt the barriers & challenges to practice could be better understood.
- You felt safe and cared for by managers but raise that your wellbeing could be better supported.
- Supervision was generally regular and uninterrupted but needs to be more critically reflective using theoretical frameworks and approaches.
- You feel supported with your workload by team colleagues, but allocation and workload pressures are still a challenge.
- You felt you had autonomy and were able use professional judgement and creativity however, the practice framework could be strengthened.
- You felt there needs to improvement with induction, annual PDP's and protected CPD time.

We Did....

- We have introduced regular Let's Talk sessions, various forums including a Practitioner s forum and have increased our presence at team meetings to enable conversations across the workforce.
- We have focussed on the workforce's wellbeing and enhanced the corporate wellbeing offer; facilitated Team Away Days and linked in with the GM Hub
- We have completed a supervision survey and delivered supervision training for supervisors at all levels which stresses the importance of high quality and regular reflective supervision.
- We have introduced Stockport Local appointments to increase preventative work and reduce waiting lists. We are reaffirming the use of the caseload weighting tool ahead of supervision.
- We have been developing Standard Operating Procedures / Practice Standards and leaflets to support our practice; these will be on the new Information Hub. We are developing a practice framework.
- We reaffirmed the offer of 2.5hrs a month protected time for CPD and have encouraged peer support. We have had a focus on PDPs and are reviewing the induction.

Clare's Story

Clare is a 41year old lady with both a learning disability and physical disabilities that have led her to be wheelchair dependent. Clare lived with her partner who was also her carer in her Stockport Homes property. In Feb 2022 ASC received concerns from her day care provider regarding her living situation.



On reviewing the case file, the newly allocated social worker noted that there had been previous safeguarding concerns that had been explored with Clare, but she has chosen to remain living with her partner. The approach taken by the social worker was to build a relationship with Clare by meeting her at the day care provision on a weekly basis. Building a rapport with Clare and gaining her trust. Through spending time with Clare, she did become more open in her discussions about her living circumstances and disclosed to the social worker that her partner would not allow her to have support at home, was only getting her out of bed once a week for day care and was expressing he would kill himself should she attempt to leave him.

It became apparent that Clare was not receiving the personal care she required. Clare was only receiving one meal a day often in the early hours of the morning. Clare had always taken pride in her appearance, but she was inadequately clothed. Clare had been isolated from her family and other social networks by her partner and he was financially exploiting her. The social worker secured an advocate for Clare and continued to meet with her regularly jointly with the advocate. The social worker carried out a Care Act Assessment that highlighted Clare had significant needs. Clare was assessed as having capacity in relation to her care and support needs. The social worker was however concerned that Clare was subject to coercion and control.

By gaining Clare's trust and ensuring that she felt in control of the situation the social worker was able to support Clare to think through her current situation and her quality of life. Clare agreed to look at an alternative flat where she could be supported. Clare decided to inform her partner. The situation escalated and there was a need to provide Clare with an emergency place of safety until she could move to her new home. The Social worker and the daycare provider supported her into the evening to ensure that she was safe. Having moved to her new home and receiving the correct level of care Clare's outlook on life has changed completely. She has regained contact with her family and her social networks are growing.

Quality Assurance

In 2022/23 we have launched our Quality Assurance Framework which aims to embed a cycle of monitoring, continuous reflection and learning based on the principle that there is always room for improvement. To support us in this work we have developed a set of local practice standards that our staff and local user groups have had the opportunity to contribute to. However, our aim is to co-produce these further with people who use our services via our recently launched Making it Real Board.



We have rolled out practice reviews across the assessment teams to provide greater oversight and quality assurance, to date there have been 243 completed, these reviews also contain the feedback from people. We are working hard to ensure that this process is fully embedded across the service and any practice needs are identified and addressed.

We are building links between performance management, quality assurance and operations so they are informed by one another, with the aim of continually monitoring the impact and quality of service delivery to improve outcomes for both residents and carers. Ensuring practice standards within ASC are being consistently delivered to a high level will be key in identifying areas for improvement and the training of our workforce.

This work will be enhanced further by analysing and acting upon information from external feedback such as customer complaints, results of customer & carer engagement, LGO responses, input from partner agencies, our providers, and the Safeguarding Adults Board. Looking forward, we aim to ensure that there is a systematic approach to addressing areas of improvement, identifying and allocating resources to undertake quality assurance activities to support practice and service development. This work will be closely monitored via the monthly Quality Assurance Senior Management Meeting where we will continue to share information, best practice, and experience to drive quality improvement, establishing a systematic learning culture across ASC.

CQC Assurance

The Health and Care Act 2022 extended the duties of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to local authority adult social care departments and from April 2023 CQC's new regulatory powers came into force. From April to October 2023, CQC undertook 5 local authority pilot assessments and from mid-December will be providing formal notification to the first tranche of 20 Local Authorities for full assessment. At the time of writing there is no indication from CQC who the first 20 Local Authorities will be, so we have no confirmed date for Stockport Council. CQC have committed to undertaking assessments of all Local Authorities in the first 2 years, so we must prepare for as early as mid-December and within 2 years of this date.



In Adult Social Care we have been preparing with a full programme of self-assessment and improvement activities. We have now completed a first draft self-assessment and are continuing to review and update this over the coming months and until our first CQC assessment. We have received positive feedback about our approach and our self-assessment report, and we are now working closely with corporate partners to refine this before sharing and socialising more widely. Updating the self-assessment will remain ongoing and interactive as we continue our improvement journey in Adult Social Care.

Making it Real Board



We have recently launched our Making it Real Board. Following the TLAP personalised principles that focus on what matters to people. The purpose of the board is to bring together people who use adult social care services, carers, staff representatives and senior leaders from the council to work together to improve our services and the experiences of people who access them. I am keen to support this exciting

development and connect with those with lived experience to shape future practice.

Priorities for the next 12 months

