SERVICE SPECIFICATION FOR: Mental Health Accommodation based services

The specification describes the Service to be delivered under the Steady State Contract for Provision of Supporting People Services.

Working in partnership to provide high-quality, cost-effective and flexible welfare services for the vulnerable people of Kent, which promote independent living, facilitate social inclusion and keep them safe and secure. It is envisaged that welfare services will in time complement other service provision across the county.
(Kent Five Year Supporting People Strategy 2005-10)

1. Introduction

In entering into a contract with Kent County Council, as the Administering Authority, for an accommodation based service funded under The Supporting People Programme, the Provider agrees to comply with this service specification. The specification states Kent County Council’s requirements and is part of the contract for the delivery of an accommodation based service. Compliance with the contract will take place through regular monitoring and review of progress.

These accommodation based services are intended to be of a long-term duration providing an individual with support and accommodation which is not age limited. It is the intention that persons in this service will move on where appropriate in a planned manner.

The service should: -
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for the service user.
- Develop a service user’s capacity to live independently following the completion of a time-limited programme of support, or
- Sustain / increase the capacity of a service user to live independently through a package of welfare services.
- Employ staff commensurate to the numbers of service users dependent on business risk.
- Be fully committed to partnership working due to the close relationship that will need to exist between Adult Services, Kent and Medway NHS Social Care Partnership Trust and Housing 21 (The Landlord)

2. The Aims of a Mental Health Accommodation Based Support Service

The service should offer a safe place to dwell along with support to those experiencing a diagnosed mental health issue and be committed to providing a sensitive, non-judgemental and non-oppressive welfare service. The service will need to demonstrate a commitment to multi-agency working as this is key to maintaining the well-being those living with mental health problems.

The key objectives of the Supporting People Programme are the provision of welfare services to:
- Reduce the incidence of tenancy breakdown and / or individuals losing their homes
- Promote programmes of resettlement and enable people to live independently, including move-on accommodation
- Promote recovery

The provision of the Mental Health Accommodation Based Service will contribute to the following expected outcomes, which link with crosscutting targets of the Supporting People partnership:
- Reductions in levels of homelessness.
- Reduced levels in incidences of repeat homelessness.
• Reductions in the use of inappropriate temporary accommodation.
• Better access to health care and reduction in health inequalities, including better access to both emergency and planned health care.
• A reduction in crisis admissions to hospital.
• Promotion of wider choice in housing and support and independence.
• Promotion of more stable lifestyles, social inclusion and community cohesion.

The level of support offered to service users can vary and is based on the assessed needs of an individual service user.

Service users develop skills required for independent living and their broader needs by enabling access to other relevant services, including specialised floating support or other outreach programmes. The ultimate aim is to improve a service user’s quality of life/recovery and promoting/maintaining independent living for themselves.

3 Client Group
Those affected by a diagnosed mental health problem regardless of age, financial situation, culture and mobility.

The services should be flexible to be able to respond quickly to the diverse range of mental health issues that service users are coping with in complete partnership with the local NHS and Social Care Trust.

4 Service Availability

4.1 Eligibility
The following referral eligibility shall apply: The referral must be for a service user who has a diagnosed mental health problem, an enhanced Care Programme Approach (CPA), be willing to engage in their service and have undergone a recent Activities of Daily Living (ADL) assessment.

4.2 Access
Applications should be made using the relevant local authority housing register form and a single agency assessment (SAA). The applicant must be willing to address any behaviour that might make them unsuitable to be a tenant, and restrict or reduce such behaviour.

4.3 Exclusions
No service user should be unreasonably excluded from accessing a service. Under the principle of fair access to services, access must not be restricted to those meeting statutory eligibility criteria for service provision.

Reasonable exclusions are where:
• People do not meet the organisation’s selection criteria and exclusion arrangements (which reflect the providers’ ability to respond to need and may interfere with the providers ability to protect the existing tenants).
• Referrals are refused in conjunction with the Horizons team/local housing authority on the grounds of risk as a result of the outcome of a needs assessment process and procedure that meets the requirements of at least Standard C of the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF).
The Provider is expected to use its best endeavours to ensure the service is accessible and responsive to the needs of ethnic minority groups and disabled people suffering from mental health problems.

5. Service Details

5.1 Security, Health and Safety

All services must achieve a level C or higher in all objectives of the quality assessment framework especially with regard to the security, health and safety objective, which specify that the following will be in place:-

- An up to date health and safety policy is in place which is known and understood by staff, with special attention to the risks of working in a mental health accommodation based service (and particularly lone working)
- Regular health and safety inspections in common areas are conducted and recorded.
- Risk assessments of premises are conducted at least annually to identify health, safety and security risks to staff, service users and visitors.
- Service users must be aware of emergency and on-call procedures.
- Service users are aware of the health and safety policies and are aware of how to report concerns. Ideally this would form part of a welcome pack given to each service user on arrival including local information. Health and safety concerns raised by service users are recorded by staff.

5.2 Support Tasks

An assessment of need and risk will be carried out in collaboration with the service user and the Supported Housing and Recovery Team. A support plan shall be completed and agreed by both the Provider and service user. The support plan will be specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and timed.

The support planning process shall meet the requirements of at least Standard C of the Supporting People QAF agreed by both the team, provider and services user.

The support plan must identify and record the service user’s needs arising from specific ethnic, religious, cultural, gender, sexuality, and disability or age requirements.

The service shall provide specialist safety planning within the home and in the community

The service shall access or signpost service users to other local services that may be required e.g. medical support, family support agencies, counselling, legal advice, police, education, benefits and training. The service must work with these agencies towards positive outcomes for the service users.

Each support plan will be reviewed on a consistent and systematic basis to meet changing need.

The service shall provide the basic eligible welfare services as defined within the Kent County Council Supporting People Eligibility Policy.

5.3 Staffing and Staff Training

Staff should have the necessary skills and experience and/or training required to deliver a quality service to service users. The support workers must be able to demonstrate knowledge of

- Care of people with mental health problems, its impact and effects
- An understanding of working with aggressive behaviour
- Deliberate self harm
- Knowledge of mental health legislation and best practice
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults
Allied to these requirements there must be evidence of specialist mental health training within the service. The training must be certificated and have been delivered by a recognised training provider. New staff must receive a specialist induction programme dealing with all issues of mental health service provision.

Managers of front line staff at the service will be expected to have received training in mental health problems to enable them to support front line staff in the appropriate manner.

5.4 Service Values and Principles
The following values and principles will underpin all activities undertaken in the performance of the Service:

- The Service shall promote and encourage choice and be based on promoting independence and recovery through support.
- All parties involved in the service will demonstrate a strong commitment to partnership working.
- Service users are supported in achieving their full potential.
- Service users shall be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect and will be at the centre of all decision-making that impacts on their lives.
- The Service shall seek to meet and promote the cultural and religious needs of service users from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The Service shall actively promote the opportunities for service users to be involved with the Provider and seek their view in establishing good practice, reviewing policy and procedure, and maintaining and continuously improving delivery of the service in accordance with the principles of meaningful service user involvement.
- The Service will liaise with other Providers of services to vulnerable people in order to develop effective and efficient practices and partnerships, which will optimise the effectiveness of all services in Kent.
- The service provider will meaningfully engage in community partnerships and mental health forums in order to bring added value to the service and work towards community cohesion.

5.5 Ending Support Provision
Support will cease from a service user when:
- They have secured accommodation elsewhere and are able to move on safely.
- A structured review identifies that a different service or no further service is required.

Where a service user moves on from the service but the Provider assesses that the service user remains vulnerable, then (with the service user’s agreement) a referral should be made to another appropriate organisation.
6. Quality Requirements

The Service will work to the minimum standards as contained within the Supporting People QAF under Standard C and will attain at least level B within one year of the contract award date. The service provider will commit to working towards improving the service to the highest standard.

The Service will have policies and procedures in place, to deal with Adult Abuse Protection issues as appropriate and will comply with the Kent and Medway Adult Protection Protocol. The written policies and procedures safeguard service users from any form of abuse or exploitation and staff are familiar with and follow these procedures.

There are procedures for responding to suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect which reflect multi-agency policies and procedures, including the involvement of the Police and other appropriate parties, in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and the Department of Health Guidance “No Secrets”.

The service provider will notify the Supporting People Team via email immediately any Safeguarding issue is suspected. The Supporting People Team must be involved in any Safeguarding meetings.

Any information given by service users in confidence or provided about service users, and any access to a service user’s personal file will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Service’s written policies and procedures, and in the best interests of the service user.

Service users with special communication requirements have clear and agreed ways of identifying support staff from the organisation to assist them.

Support workers have the skills and experience to deliver the service. All support workers are competent and trained in a specialist manner to undertake the activities for which they were employed and responsible. This includes knowledge of basic housing law and benefit regulations.

Support workers are aware of the requirements of legislation as it applies to their employment and to the client group being supported.

The Provider is aware of legislation, and national, regional and local strategies and policies, relating to Mental Health problems as they apply to the client group(s) the service supports, especially the Mental Capacity Act.

The Provider regularly monitors and achieves the requirements for staff training.

7. Performance Indicators/Outcomes

The performance of the Service will be measured by the following indicators. These indicators may be supplemented during life of the contract, any changes or additions will be communicated to the provider of the service.

7.1 Key Performance Indicators
- % of service users who are supported to establish and maintain independent living

7.2 Service Performance Indicators
- Service Availability – the number of available units as a percentage of capacity will average 100%
- Service Utilisation – the number of occupied units, as a percentage of available units will average 90%
- Throughput – the number of service users accessing the service in a reporting year as a percentage of the number of units (the capacity).
All services will have obtained at least level B of the Quality Assessment Framework within twelve months of the contract being awarded

100% of Service Users will receive a support plan within 14 days of acceptance onto the service

100% of Service Users will receive a needs assessment within 14 days of acceptance onto the service

100% of Service Users will receive an exit interview to be undertaken by the Provider

The service provider will have knowledge of, and work with other agencies to contribute to relevant targets and outcomes

Community Involvement – The service user being able to visit, belong, share and use facilities available in the ordinary places that define local community life

Community Participation – The service user supported in being part of a network of personal relationships

7.3 Public Service Agreement (PSA)

% of service users completing move into independence

The service provider should agree to work with the Supporting People Team to develop and meet outcomes specific to each service user which will include the seven main outcomes for adult social care based on the concept of well-being these being:

- Improved health and emotional well-being
- Improved quality of life
- Making a positive contribution
- Choice and control
- Freedom from discrimination
- Economic well-being
- Personal dignity

The organisation is required to submit Performance Indicator Returns required by the Department of Communities and Local Government, in the prescribed format quarterly within 14 days of the quarter period end.

The service provider should agree to work with the Supporting People Team to develop and meet outcomes specific to each service user.

7.4 Service Reviews

It is envisaged that the Service shall be subject to some form of formal evaluation in the form of a Support Service Review before the Contract term end date.

Quality visits will be made and may be planned or unannounced. Quality visits will be made to assess, but not be restricted to, such elements as

- Continuous Improvement
- Contract Compliance
- Service User involvement
- Review against Performance Indicators
- Key objectives and outcomes
7.5 Outcomes Monitoring Framework

Service Providers must comply with the Supporting People Outcomes Monitoring Framework for long and short term services.

8. Nature of Service Provision

The Provider shall provide the following ‘eligible’ housing related support tasks:

- Help in establishing personal safety and security
- Developing domestic and independent living skills
- Developing social skills/behaviour management
- Help in finding other accommodation
- Help maintaining the safety and security of the accommodation.
- Supervision and monitoring of health and well being
- Supervision and monitoring of medication
- Help in setting up and maintaining home or tenancy (this will also include providing support and assistance to service users that have moved on to other accommodation for a period of up to 6 weeks)
- Help in gaining access to other services
- Help in establishing social contacts and activities
- Access to local communities
- Advice, advocacy and liaison
- Help in managing finances and benefit claims
- Liaison with Community Mental Health Teams and other relevant agencies
- Risk assessment