

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Life Choices - The Social Work Department in House Supported Living Service
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 18th April, 2000.	
REPORT AUTHOR: Jim Nisbet, Principal Officer, Community Care	
REF: JD/JN/HS	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks Committee approval for the further development of the Social Work Department's in house Supported Living Services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of a range of developments introduced to support the implementation of the learning disability strategy, Committee approved interim arrangements for the department to provide supported living services in house in February, 1999.
- 2.2 Having put in place the services required on an interim basis, the Department has given consideration to the desirability of developing a longer term capacity to provide supported living services as part of the range of intensive home care the Council provides.
- 2.3 In order that proposals for an in house service be considered objectively, a development plan has been produced for the in house service along similar lines to those plans produced by independent sector providers. The production of a development plan gives the opportunity to benchmark the in house service against those of independent providers in terms of cost, quality, practice and procedure and follows best value principles.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 3.1 The development plan was developed by a working group of staff experienced in service development, commissioning and provision of intensive home care services for a range of client groups but predominantly in the target group of adults with learning disability.
- 3.2 Central to the plan are principles and a philosophy which promotes a person centred focus to supporting people in ordinary living settings, enabling people with a learning disability to lead the lifestyle of their choice, to participate in the life of their local community and experience community integration and inclusion.

- 3.3 Initially, the nature of service provided will be direct support to individuals by dedicated staff teams. As the service develops it is intended to explore other forms of support including natural and informal community supports. The use of informal supports is not driven by a desire to reduce costs but rather a belief that informal supports can make a significant contribution to enhancing personal choice and quality of life.
- 3.4 Quality of services and continuous improvement are important features of the development plan and methods of measuring and demonstrating quality are set in place. Internal and external monitoring and evaluation measures are identified and are considered to be robust.
- 3.5 It is suggested that the service, to be called Life Choices, is located in Merrystone House, Coatbridge, and from there services the entire authority. Merrystone is already the base for a range of home care services including both the Intensive Home care Service, and the embryonic in house supported living service previously approved by committee in February, 1999. The proposed location of the service in Merrystone House is logical and allows the integrated development of such intensive home care services.
- 3.6 In proposing the development of the service, consideration was given to those in house services already developed following Committee approval last year. Although small in number, the five clients receiving service and their carers report high levels of satisfaction with the person centred approach to service provision.
- 3.7 The development plan, together with the infrastructure proposals, are based on the Life Choices services developing to provide individual support and packages to approximately thirty people.

4. THE LIFE CHOICES STRUCTURE

- 4.1 It is proposed that the service be managed within the overall management framework within Merrystone House.
- 4.2 Individual services, designed to meet the needs of specific clients, will be provided by Home Support Workers, Grade 1 and Grade 2 as appropriate, in line with previous agreements and the tasks involved in the model of care provision being provided.
- 4.3 It is proposed to create the post of Home Support Link Worker at Spinal Column Point 17 (Home Support Worker Grade 3). A separate report has been prepared regarding the creation of Link Worker posts.
- 4.4 In approving interim arrangements for this service in February, 1999, one post of Home Support Manager was established and approved at an earlier Committee. As the service develops, any requirement for a further post of Home Support Manager will be the subject of another report to a future Committee.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In line with arrangement for other supported living providers, it is intended to finance necessary infrastructure costs of the service from Resource Transfer monies from the Health Board.
- 5.2 The development of supported living packages in house will similarly be funded through resource transfer monies.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Committee is asked to -
- (i) note the contents of this report
 - (ii) approve the arrangements for the further development of the department's in house supported living service
 - (iii) note that further reports will be presented to Committee as the in house service develops.



**JIM DICKIE,
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK
14 APRIL, 2000**

(For further information contact Jim Nisbet, Principal Officer, Community Care - Telephone 01698 332031)