

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 22 AUGUST 2002	Ref: DM	

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This paper advises Committee of service development proposals for people with physical disabilities in North Lanarkshire and seeks approval for funding to support their implementation.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Services for people with physical disabilities have begun to change over the past year within North Lanarkshire. Implementation of the recommendations of a Member/Officer group on equipment and adaptations has resulted in the creation of a joint equipment store between Social Work and Lanarkshire Primary Care NHS Trust. An information and assessment unit adjacent to the store will open later in the year, together with provision of a mobile unit which will operate throughout the authority.
- 2.2. There have been marked improvements in the Occupational Therapy service and substantial reductions in waiting list for assessment and the delivery of equipment. However demand for these services increases 15-20% per year, nationally and locally, and such improvements cannot be sustained without further investment in Occupational Therapy staff.

**3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1. At present Occupational Therapists employed by the Social Work Department, unlike their counterparts in the NHS, receive separate line management and professional management. This is a long standing but inappropriate arrangement. The need to address it has become more pertinent by the need to meet future post-qualifying requirements for Occupational Therapists; if continuous professional development cannot be demonstrated the Council will neither recruit nor retain this valued grade of staff. Furthermore the Department is anxious to reintroduce student placements for Occupational Therapists, a practice that was discontinued some years ago. It is clear that the provision of quality placements for students has a positive impact on recruitment of these after qualification.
- 3.2. There is currently 1 Senior Officer, Independent Living in post within Social Work. The postholder supports service development and oversees professional development in Occupational Therapy. It is proposed to create 3 posts of Senior Officer (Independent Living) at grade PO2/5. The total cost of this proposal, including on-costs, is £93,267. Each post would be located in one division and manage all the Occupational Therapist staff within that division as well as helping to support the professional development of unqualified staff working in this field, such as those in Reception and Screening Teams.

- 3.3. The establishment of posts of Occupational Therapist in the Department is 18.5. This is inadequate for the volume of work required and means that staff have little opportunity to use the rehabilitation skills for which they trained. This is a source of frustration to staff and a contributory factor for problems associated with staff recruitment and retention.
- 3.4. It is proposed to create a further 8 Occupational Therapist posts at grade COT. The cost of this proposal, including on-costs, is £199,854. It is also proposed to create 3 Clerical Assistant posts at GS1/2 to support Occupational Therapists and local performance management arrangements at a cost, including on-costs, of £38,311.

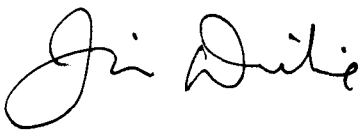
#### **4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The resources required to support the service developments described are contained within existing community care monies.
- 4.2. The proposals seek approval to create 14 posts in all as set out in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) agree the development proposals laid out in the report; and
- (ii) approve the funding required to support the development agenda; and
- (iii) approve the creation of 3 posts of Senior Officer (Independent Living), Grade PO2/5, 8 posts of Occupational Therapist, Grade COT, and 3 posts of Clerical Assistant / Typist, Grade GS1/2.
- (iv) invite a further report from the Director of Social Work to a future Committee; and
- (v) remit this to Policy and Resources (Personnel Sub) Committee for their consideration; and
- (vi) otherwise note the content of this report.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**8 July 2002**

*For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Manager, Planning & Development (Community Care Partnerships) Tel: (01698 332072)*