

## REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK (OPERATIONS AND SERVICES) SUB COMMITTEE		Subject: REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF SOCIAL WORK RECEPTION SERVICES
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 3 <sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2006	Ref: JD/JJ/SH	

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the progress of the operation of Reception Services Teams within the Social Work Department.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Reception Services are an important element of the Departments Assessment and Care Planning activity, being the first point of contact for many service users.
- 2.2 The introduction of the revised Reception Services in April 2002 followed the findings of a Departmental working group. The Review noted that systems to deal with initial enquiries from the public varied from area team to area team, with no consistent approach to referrals and screening arrangements. Consequently the service received by the public varied from area to area.
- 2.3 The Review concluded that, for the most part, public enquiries related to requests for information and advice which, with a change to the system of operation, could be dealt with to conclusion at the point of contact or within a short space of time thereafter.
- 2.4 The working group was given the remit to design consistent, quality Reception Services across the Department embracing the principles contained in the Modernising Government Agenda. The overall recommendation of the group was that dedicated Reception Services Teams be established in each of the six area teams across the Authority.
- 2.5 It was recognised that a new post of Reception Services Senior Social Worker was required. As part of the overall re-structuring of the Social Work Department, Social Work Committee approval was sought to create 6 new posts of Reception Service Seniors. In addition, six posts of Social Work Assistants were approved to facilitate the introduction of the service. The full staff compliment of the teams was achieved by transferring existing posts of Social Work Assistant and Occupational Therapy Assistants to Reception Services Teams.
- 2.6 The review noted that referrals made to Reception Services did not need qualified Social Workers to be part of the Reception Services team but to be available to provide professional support.

### **3. CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1. Reception Services Teams became operational in each of the six area teams on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002.
- 3.2. Initially an implementation group met monthly to deal with operational issues arising from provision of the service. This has now been streamlined and the group comprising of a Service Manager and the six Senior Social Worker Reception Services meets quarterly. It provides a means of disseminating best practice across the Authority and ensures consistency of service.
- 3.3. In the calendar year 2005 Reception Services dealt with almost 15,000 referrals which equates to 62% of the new work coming into the department. In over 80% of this work the assessment was completed by Reception Services. In 79% of cases Reception Services Teams completed the work within one week.
- 3.4. A Customer Satisfaction questionnaire has been developed and is used within each locality.
- 3.5 A summary of year to date is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3.6. In March 2005 Reception Services were awarded Charter Mark Status.

### **4. DEVELOPMENTS**

- 4.1 The Review of Reception Services in respect of Charter Mark will be included in the overall departmental application planned for later this year.
- 4.2 In relation to Domestic violence within Bellshill/Motherwell localities M.A.R.A. (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) is being piloted. Reception Services play a key part in providing information and initial assessments.
- 4.3 Following the re-design of the Sensory Impairment Teams a training programme with Reception Service staff is being implemented in relation to working with service users who have a sensory impairment. This forms part of the quality improvement agenda for customer care.
- 4.4 Discussion is currently taking place with the Fire and Rescue Service in respect of home fire safety visits. This is a service offered at present by the fire service however they wish to provide this for those in receipt of Social Work Services as means of ensuring it is offered to more vulnerable people. Reception Services will clearly be a key contact point.
- 4.5 The operation of Reception Services will be subject to review to ensure that the framework in place is the most effective arrangement to address referrals and screening requirements in respect of social work services

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

- 5.1 There are none at this stage.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Committee is asked to:

- i) note the progress of Reception Services within the Department
- ii) request the Director of Social Work to bring forward a further Report on the progress and Operation of the teams

  
**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**6 September 2006**

*For further information on this report please contact Jane Johnstone, Operations Manager, Tel: 01698 348268.*

**APPENDIX 1**

<b><u>Reception Services Survey</u></b>				
<b><u>North Lanarkshire</u></b>				
<b><u>Year To Date</u></b>				
<b><u>Total Responses:</u></b>		<b>578</b>		
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>% Response</b>
<b>CONTACTING SOCIAL WORK</b>				
Given name of person dealing with you?	530	45	575	99%
	92%	8%	100%	
Staff attentive & helpful?	572	2	574	99%
	100%	0%	100%	
Staff punctual & reliable?	567	6	573	99%
	99%	1%	100%	
Treated fairly & sensitively?	573	0	573	99%
	100%	0%	100%	
Staff use plain/clear language?	571	2	573	99%
	100%	0%	100%	
Given appoint. In 3 days?	426	129	555	96%
	77%	23%	100%	
Offered Benefit check?	509	47	556	96%
	92%	8%	100%	
<b>VISITING OFFICE</b>				
Location of office convenient?	382	10	392	68%
	97%	3%	100%	
Did staff wear name badges?	357	28	385	67%
	93%	7%	100%	
Able to discuss enquiry in private?	389	1	390	67%
	100%	0%	100%	
Opening times clearly displayed?	381	5	386	67%
	99%	1%	100%	
Office open at advertised times?	382	2	384	66%
	99%	1%	100%	
Reception area clearly marked?	376	1	377	65%
	100%	0%	100%	
Was area clean & tidy?	361	5	366	63%
	99%	1%	100%	
Waiting area comfortable?	382	8	390	67%
	98%	2%	100%	
Were you seen promptly?	376	13	389	67%
	97%	3%	100%	
Did your appoint begin on time/within 5mins?	341	24	365	63%
	93%	7%	100%	
Was the reason for delay explained?	23	6	29	121%
	79%	21%	100%	(from those over 5 mins)