

Meeting	Care Scrutiny Committee
Date	03/02/2022
Title	Updated Report on Occupational Therapy Service (OT) in Gwynedd Social Services.
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Member	Dafydd Meurig, Cabinet Member, Adult Health & Well Being.

1. Purpose of the Report.

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update following the report from 14th January 2021, on the continued contribution of the Occupational Therapy Service within Gwynedd Adults Health and Wellbeing Department.

2. Introduction

2.1 The purpose of the Community Resource Teams is to “Help Me Live My Life as I want to Live It”. Occupational Therapy has a very important role helping the citizens of Gwynedd to achieve their personal outcomes by promoting independence.

3. Developments within the Service.

3.1 The report in January 2021 stated the vision to create moving and handling assessor posts within the Community Resource Teams to enable a designated person to focus on Right Sized Care and Safer Moving and Handling.

3.2 The Department’s application for additional funding was successful. This has enabled the Service to establish a ‘Moving and Handling Team’ and appoint five Moving and Handling Assessors to be part of and Support the Community Resource Teams. There has been a slight delay in recruiting to these posts; but we are very pleased to announce that all posts have now been filled.

3.3 The team comprises of 4 Occupational Therapists and 1 Registered Nurse. This is somewhat of a new and different approach. It is important to have the right skill mix within the team to ensure a holistic multi disciplinary approach to assessments and maximise the impact of the outcomes for the individual.

3.4 The next steps for the Moving and Handling Team is to undertake specialist training to improve knowledge and competence and enhance Service Delivery. The team has already started to make significant improvements to the life of the residents of Gwynedd in terms of using the right sized care approach and liaising with families and care staff to deliver a high quality service with some of the more complex type cases.

3.5 The team will develop measures and case studies to evaluate their impact on the lives of individuals and their families.

3.6 Recruiting Occupational Therapists to work for Gwynedd Council has been challenging in the past. Since the last report, a number of key improvements have been made in terms of staff recruitment. Some of the successful applicants for the Moving and Handling posts were already employed as Occupational Therapists within the Department. We have been successful in recruiting to back fill these posts.

3.7 The Council has been successful in appointing an Occupational Therapist on a short term contract to the Learning Disability Service to back fill the secondment of the current therapist to a more senior role. We have also appointed a part time Occupational therapist to Support the Children and Families Service.

3.8 The Department has been successful in ensuring additional monies to fund two Occupational Therapy Trainees to complete the Occupational Therapy Degree Course at Glyndwr University. This is in addition to the existing trainee who is nearing the end of her course. We have recruited one trainee who is an internal member of staff to complete the part time degree course and one trainee to complete the full time university course.

3.9 Even though the Occupational Therapy Service is currently fully staffed; there has been gaps within the Service over the past year due to a number of reasons including, staff sickness, maternity leave, gaps between staff being appointed to new roles and appointing to back fill these posts. In addition there has been an increase in demand for the Service. The main increase has been for individuals with complex Manual Handling needs and individuals requiring support to regain or maintain independent living skills.

3.10 As a result of the above, the Service has to prioritise requests for assessments depending on needs and risks. Waiting lists for assessments still exists in some areas and we are working hard to reduce these. Due to high demand for bathing assessments, we have within the last few weeks started piloting a scheme working alongside Gofal a Thrwsio to facilitate a level 4 truster assessor framework to assist with some of the long standing bathing assessment waiting lists. This is in addition to supporting some of our home care supervisors to undertake the training to assess and order low level Equipment.

4. Demands for Equipment / Specialist Equipment Provision

4.1 As people are now living at home for longer with more Complex needs the demand for Equipment and in particular specialist items of Equipment to enable them to stay at

home safely with Support from family or care staff continues to grow. Without this provision it will lead to carer breakdown and people being admitted into hospital or longer term care. It is important that funding for this continues to match the demand for need.

5. Aims for the Service over the next year.

4.1 The aim for the next year is to build on the achievements of the past 12 months to develop the Moving and Handling Service and free up capacity for Occupational Therapist to provide preventative Support to enable the residents of Gwynedd to achieve their personal outcomes. We will continue to work to reduce the waiting lists and provide high quality timely interventions.