

Adult Review Group Meeting – 11th November 2010

These notes have been abridged from the report that Estelle Buscombe prepared following the meeting on 11th November. Thanks again to Estelle for sending them.

Strategic Update (Phillip Anderson, DH)

The National Indicator Set is being abolished. DCLG is carrying out a 'zero based review' which will look at everything that LAs have to provide, check for duplication and agree what can go. This will be done early next year for 2011/12. (The mini review has covered 2010/11.) Only existing data collected will be included. If data is not on this list, LAs will not be expected to provide it.

There was concern from LAs over conflicting messages – Eric Pickles letter to LAs regarding reducing the burden, versus the comprehensive data list and ongoing statutory returns. (Surrey asked if Mental Health service users could be removed from social care collections. This will feed into the ZBR – see next page for more information about the ZBR.)

Early December will see the Public Health white paper issued, the NHS consultation response and draft Health Bill. Autumn 2011 – social care white paper and zero-based review.

SAS & CRILL - Update from CQC (Kate Anderson, IC)

CQC were unable to attend but Steve Willner had emailed Kate with some comments:

"Please convey my thanks to all the councils that got back to us on the SAS questions, it was very much appreciated but obviously as we won't be doing the assessment this year it won't be used.

On the CRILL, we won't be going ahead with this either. CQC and the Department of Health will review the possible reinstatement of the return for September 2011 once plans for CQC's future relationship with councils has been

agreed. CQC are currently updating the CRILL spreadsheets, originally provided to councils in February 2010, with the final quality rating generated for a service by the old system before inspections ceased in June of this year."

Kate will contact CQC re an update on special reviews and any information on the programme for 2011 (including what they will be used for).

Some LAs were confused about whether, in the absence of the SAS, they would still be required to keep evidence. Might CQC suddenly ask for it? Kate will also ask what evidence they expect (if any) for this year and later years.

Recent changes to the SITREP collection – Stuart Knight & Paul Steele, DH

Instead of there being weekly collections, this has been changed to monthly submissions. This followed the change in government and the move away from a target culture, with the accompanying increase in transparency and decrease in burden. This is also no CQC periodic review.

With 52 collections, there are not enough staff to validate them properly. DH can do a better job of ensuring data is accurate now. The new method takes about a third less days to do, although they appreciated that all the data still had to be collected. Members asked how they validate the data: DH staff don't have access to person-level data via Unify2, so they can only check local data with the PCTs themselves. There was concern amongst the group regarding the lack of checks that seem to be done.

Data are published monthly on the DH website (under Performance & Statistics).

They will circulate the link for this to all councils.

For 2010/11 there are four months of weekly collections and eight months of monthly ones. Despite the change, trusts still have to assess the average number of people at any given time subject to a delayed transfer of care. It was felt that the word "weekly" in the NI definition was a bit of a misnomer as it has always been a snapshot. The guidance suggests using the last Thursday in each month for this (previously each Thursday).

The graph shown to the group implied that people had submitted different data on the monthly returns – i.e. that some had summed their weekly figures. DH are unsure of this is a DQ issue, or just an artefact of the change in system/guidance, but will monitor it.

Councils can apply for a connection to Unify2 but it requires an N3 connection (which can be expensive). Email unify2@doh.gsi.gov.uk for this.

Feedback from data quality letter (Anthony Harris, IC)

It was reported previously that some councils do not submit complete statutory returns which means the IC had to spend time estimating the figures. In September, ARG members discussed a draft letter on improving data quality which was proposed to be sent to directors of adult social services. Subsequent to ARG, ADASS S&P accepted the letter, but rejected the idea of accompanying it with a list of the incomplete cells by council. The letter was sent to directors, copied to information contacts on 5th October 2010.

The RAP Return usually has the greatest

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