

Independent Care Matters

the newsletter for independent care providers in York
and North Yorkshire

What does the future hold? ICG Care Conference Report

Is there a future for care homes? Are local care providers part of the future vision for care in our region? How will inspections be carried out?

These are some of the issues discussed at the recent Care Conference held in Harrogate and hosted by the ICG.

Amanda Sherlock, Regional Director for CSCI opened the conference and spoke of the way that CSCI is set to change. She told the audience that in future inspections will be more about the experience of the user rather than tracking files. The inspectorate was gearing up to become more effective and to cut out red tape. And Amanda gave a message that will please complainants of inconsistent reports saying 'decisions need to be based on best practice and not idiosyncratic preferences.'



Future changes in the inspection service are likely to mean that CSCI will not continue its 'policeman role' but would become an advocate for users. It is unlikely to continue with announced and unannounced inspections – as they are carried out currently. Instead, self audit is being considered. Amanda stressed that she is a huge fan of trade associations—like **ICG**—she said 'a network is far more powerful than individuals.'

A future for care homes?

In his speech to the conference **Richard Humphries** from the **Department of Health** addressed an issue that has been causing much debate recently with statements coming from the Government and NYCC which have cast doubt over the future of care homes.

Richard said that future generations will have higher expectations and will want different care solutions. There will be an increase in people supported in their own homes. The Government has set targets for this

to increase year on year. Extra care housing would be a growth area but should not be seen as a panacea. **He said that in his view care homes will still be needed in the future but not necessarily as we know them. They may be part of an extra care housing complex; they may be devoted to respite care, to intermediate care or to rehabilitation. 'No care homes' was in Richard's view too simplistic and facile a view of the future.**

See Conference speaker Derek Law, new NYCC Director of Social Services on page 3

Issue 2

Autumn 2004

Conference
Special



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Conference: ICG on the challenges for the future

Mike Padgham, Chair of ICG said that ICG had three reasons for the holding the Conference:

To make care providers aware of the rapidly changing care market; to make the statutory sector recognise that care providers have an important role to play in the future development of care services; and to stimulate action.

He thanked North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and City of York Council (CYC) for giving funding support for the ICG—calling it a **courageous move**—because by its nature ICG had on occasion to oppose them in debate over matters affecting care providers.

Mike called for a joint vision of the future. He said that many care providers remained unaware of policies like NYCC's *Our Future Lives* which called for an increase in home care and cast doubt on the future for care homes. He said that growing awareness was creating fear and uncertainty and was leading some to question whether their services were wanted.

He then issued a series of challenges:

One: Mike challenged the local authorities to agree to fund the ICG for longer than 12 months and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to contribute also.

Two: to involve the independent sector early in the planning of future services—saying that this was essential.

Three: CYC and NYCC to agree a timescale for achieving the **JRF fair price for care** (see page 4)



Mike Padgham 12/1

Four: local authorities to consider UKHCA costing model for domiciliary care and to adopt it.

Five: statutory sector locally to champion real help for those who wish to develop and grow their services.

Six: statutory sector to actively help care home providers move forwards as the marketplace evolves.

Seven: a united independent care sector representative body that provides a high quality responsive one stop service.

Mike said that he supported the role of care homes within a full range of services that included extra care housing.

He set out the ICG vision as:

- Continuous improvement in the quality of care in homes and in people's own homes—but recognition that this needs proper funding
- Independent care services valued and supported by all stakeholders
- Staff appropriately trained and paid with rewarding career structures available
- Care providers involved from

the outset in planning and provision of care in order to meet evolving need

- An end to age discrimination in the funding and provision of care.

Mike said that **challenge eight** was for all care providers to belong to a representative body.

He called for resources to be directed at training for commissioners of care to include secondments to the sector. Commissioning, he said, should be based on valuing staff. He suggested that a more positive working relationship with CSCI could mean they would influence commissioning.

Finally, Mike called for full support for positive actions including:

- Grants for development and diversification
- Changes in VAT rules
- Speedier planning processes
- Longer term contracts and with more innovation and a sharing of risk.

He asked all stakeholders to work together towards this end and he called on local authorities to respond to the challenges.

Conference: Feedback

Your comments in brief:

- Thank you for a lovely day—it was well worth travelling that bit further
- I got loads out of the day and spent the next day following up things that could be useful to my business
- Content of the speeches was very interesting, organisation very good, and the food was superb but rather a full day
- The conference was interesting but it was a long day
- Very good—the only complaint was lunch was very late
- The content, location and organisation was very good but I would have like fewer speakers and more time for questions
- One of the most interesting and useful conferences I've been to in a long time.

Derek Law—new Director of NYCC Social Services writes for *Independent Care Matters*



Dear Colleagues



I was pleased to attend the Care Conference and have the opportunity to outline my views on the future of care services in North Yorkshire to a wide cross section of social care providers.

Although I only took up my post as Corporate Director - Social Services for North Yorkshire County Council on 4 October, I have already been impressed by the commitment to partnership working across the sector.

I am keen to continue and build upon the established policies in North Yorkshire. Services to adults and older people are based on consolidating our commissioning approach with providers to acquire greater choice and capacity. It is important that we do not fall into the trap of presuming that just because a person is of a certain age or has a level of disability that they must be dependent. Many people are capable of managing their own needs and the availability of direct payments and community based provision allows them greater freedom to do so.

Services to children are similarly based on reduced reliance on residential care. North Yorkshire County Council's strategy is to increase foster care provision and other community based options to ensure children live in a family environment wherever possible.

In order to achieve these aims we need to work together, not only on maintaining and developing services but also investing in workforce development to promote social care as an attractive work option.

Derek Law

Conference: Thank you to Sandie of BBC Radio York for an excellent job as master of ceremonies

Sandie Dunleavy of BBC Radio York facilitated the ICG conference and Chaired the two Question Time sessions with consummate professionalism. Before the start of the event she conducted a number of interviews with speakers and audience members that were broadcast live on the day and helped to raise the profile of the care sector. ICG thanks Sandie for helping to make the day so successful.



Conference: Bill Hodson for City of York



Bill Hodson, Senior Assistant Director of Strategic Services for City of York Council told the conference that finances in York were likely to be even tighter in future. York has the 2nd lowest council tax among unitary councils in the country and next year the Council faced its largest ever budget gap.

He said that research in 2001 showed that 94% of older people wish to remain in their own home.

CYC's current work and future plans include:

- A Rapid Response service is now giving short term home care with an 'enabling' focus
- A night time home care team has been set up
- 16 'transitional care' beds have been commissioned from private providers
- Up to 105 additional extra care housing places
- 2 new private nursing homes to open in York
- Maximised use of Supporting People grants e.g. tenancy agreements for people with learning disabilities.

Bill called for health improvement standards to be embedded into care services. He spoke of the Council's Concordat with ICG and the importance of taking a partnership approach.

CYC and NYCC are working with ICG on the JRF model

ICG commends City of York Council (CYC) and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) for working together with us on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Model to identify a Fair Price for Care for each area.

To aid this work, care home owners have been asked to let ICG know staff costs.

The work of collecting the data is now complete in York but is being done in North Yorkshire and we urge care home owners to co-operate. If insufficient information is collected the work could be placed in jeopardy. **If you have been sent a form –please complete and return it.**

Information received will be kept in absolute confidence by Keren Wilson, ICG Development Director and used to create a matrix.

Once complete, ICG will work with the councils on how and when a fair rate will be achieved.

ICG aims to persuade the councils also to commit to work on the UKHCA model for costing home care.

Any queries? Call Keren Wilson on **01423 816 582**.

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ICG Member wins Prince's Trust award



Erica Gray, Managing Director of Simplycare Ltd, a home care agency in Whitby has been awarded the Prince's Trust and the Royal Bank of Scotland Enterprise Award for the Yorkshire and Humber Region. Erica had to send a written statement about how she deals with business issues before being invited to the Prince's Trust office in Pontefract for an interview.

The presentation was held in Leeds and Erica was one of four finalists chosen from 3,500 businesses set up with the help of the Prince's Trust. Four winners from each of the 12 regions will now be chosen to go to London in February to find the overall winner.

Erica says ' It was a complete surprise to win as you just tend to take your work for granted and if there's a demand on your service you try to employ more people to fill the gaps. I only employed two people when I started in 2001 and now we employ nearly 50. Similarly, I had only five clients and now we have nearly 200. We are the preferred provider in Whitby and we promote training and development throughout our workforce and this helped us to achieve Investors in People earlier this year.'

'In such a stressful marketplace I feel this award is more of an achievement and recognition of how the care industry is developing its workforce, valuing its care workers, increasing standards of care for clients and diversifying to meet differing and more demanding needs.'

Congratulations Erica!

People Matter

Managing people is one of the most difficult challenges to be found at work.

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Direct Payments—concerns over home care safeguards

NYCC replies over the concerns raised by ICG on Direct Payments.

As a local authority we encourage direct payments recipients to get CRB checks done—we do not have the power to insist on this however as they would be the employer. If a CRB check is done and someone chooses to employ someone with a criminal record this is down to them as the employer.

There are some practical difficulties that are being taken up nationally: individuals cannot be registered to get CRB checks done and would have to go through an umbrella organisation. When the disclosure is sent to the umbrella organisation it cannot be made available to the individual who is the (potential) employer. Only a summary can be passed to the individual employer and there is no clear definition of what to include in this.

clude in this.

NYCC adds: the aim of direct payments is to promote independence. Social Services have to strike a balance between promoting people's independence and protecting their vulnerability.

ICG response:

It seems there is more work to be done to make this satisfactory.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships provide free training for young people aged 16-25 years at the start of training. They work towards an NVQ qualification. Apprenticeships in care are offered by York Training Centre—which covers York and North Yorkshire. For full details call Jill Frudd on 01904 554 032



Wanted: Employers for people with learning difficulties

Is your business based in the Scarborough, Ryedale area? Could you give a place to someone with learning difficulties for a few hours a week on a paid or voluntary basis? Do you have opportunities in kitchen work, helping to prepare food, serving lunches, clearing dishes, vacuuming, dusting, washing or ironing? If you could give someone an employment chance please call Julia Huby, Supported Employment Co-ordinator on 01723 371 335.

ICG is to meet with Kathryn Hudson the first ever National Director of Social Care at Dept of Health. We will be stressing the need for more consultation with the independent sector over the future of social care.

ICG has held very useful meetings with MPs Phil Willis and Lawrie Quinn to keep them abreast of issues in the care sector.

Recent care home closures—five in Scarborough/Ryedale

Is there a future for small care homes?

This is the question that has been raised following the closure of five homes in the Scarborough and Ryedale area. **ICG** is aware of the great misery and distress caused to all concerned by the closure of a care home—to the elderly people who call it their home, to the staff and to the owners.

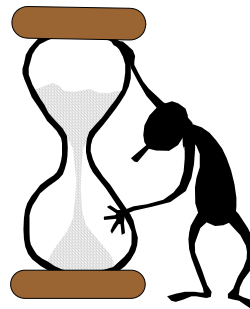
How easily can a small home fall into difficulties? Very swiftly it seems. For one care home it began with the sad deaths of three residents in swift succession. Then three empty beds with no replacements coming from Social Services and before long the budget deficit began to bite—causing great anguish to a business that had run smoothly for years but lacked the means to provide a substantial contingency fund.

In such circumstances where does a home owner turn for help? The owner feels that if he

or she notifies Social Services of the difficulties then this will only ensure that their home receive no further clients. Most owners keep their distress to themselves until the situation becomes so critical that closure is the only way forward.

ICG believes that small care homes offer an excellent service to the community and have an important role to play within the range of local care services.

ICG would like to explore the options open to owners who find themselves in difficulties. If you have any views on this then please contact: Keren Wilson on 01423 816 582 or e-mail keren.wilson@indcaregroup.plus.com.



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CRB Checks—practical help with completing the forms

Many people are disappointed at the time it takes to get CRB checks returned *See letters page 11*. This has been drawn to the attention of the Department of Health—but what can we do to make sure that forms are not rejected causing even further delay? Here are some tips to help you complete the form—kindly supplied by **NYCC** who have extensive experience of applying for CRB clearance for staff:



1. Use only **BLACK** ink
2. Don't use Tippex
3. Put a line through mistakes and write in correction as clearly as possible
4. Leave an empty box between words
5. Mark choices with an X not a tick
6. Make sure the form is signed at Section H
7. Lines 1-10 **must** be completed

Section B - indicates to CRB whether the post warrants the level of disclosure you request. Make sure you use the correct category code.

Section C - if you have crossed **Mrs** or **Ms** or entered a title in the 'other' field in Section A then the surname at birth field **must** be completed even if the surname is the same.

Section D - current and previous 5 year address history **must** span a full 5 years with no gaps.

Sections E & F - CRB no longer requires any of this information—leave it blank do not put a line through it.

Section H - applicant **must** sign both boxes and applicant **must** return it to you and not send it to CRB.

Section X - make sure applicants are issued with guidance on the documents they **must** provide—a large number of applications cannot be processed because insufficient documents have been used to

verify identity.

Make sure counter signatories know which original documents they need to see. All documents **must** be in the current name of the applicant, at least one **must** show current address and one **must** show date of birth.

Section Y - must be completed by a counter signatory.

TOP TEN ERRORS

- Incomplete address history
- Black ink not used
- Form sent to CRB by member of staff not a counter signatory
- No documents seen
- Form sent to CRB by applicant, not counter-signed
- Inappropriate documents seen
- Tippex used on form
- Middle name not entered on form but appears on driving license
- Evidence seen but not entered
- Incorrect category code for the post

If any of the above occurs then CRB will return the form and you have to begin again.

Suggested actions

- Train counter signatories
- View the video available from CRB*
- Issue the guidance with every form
- Undertake thorough checks before counter signing forms
- If necessary, develop policy and guidance documents for managers

*To order the video call 0151 676 1748

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Working with Trading Standards to improve contracts



ICG has agreed to help **NYCC** Trading Standards in its efforts to ensure that all consumer contracts are fair.

Trading Standards officers would like to examine the stan-

dard terms used by care providers so that they can help and support them to meet the terms of the Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999.

ICG encourages care home owners to send in their contracts to:

David Sayer, Principal Trading Standards Officer **NYCC**
Unit 4/5, Block B, Thornfield Business Park, Standard Way, Northallerton, DL6 2XQ
or call David on 01609 768 619.

NYCC and electronic invoicing-home care providers

ICG has met with **NYCC** over its introduction of electronic invoicing (Issue 1).

ICG put the case for home care (domiciliary) providers including their distress at the way this had been communicated; the imposition of charges for payment of invoices; disquiet that the IT provider could put up the charges at any time; lack of understanding that care providers could not claim back VAT so would end up paying more; the very small profit margins for home care; disparity over exemptions in the first year and some IT problems for those who had tried to join.



NYCC accepted **ICG's** concerns and agreed to look at them. **NYCC** confirmed that joining the scheme was not compulsory. **ICG** was told that take up among care providers had been low, though not for other types of supplier with just under 18% of those invited to join signing up. In an effort to help to resolve the current situation **ICG** worked with the Council on an invitation to care providers to attend a meeting at Romanby. Unfortunately, this meeting had to be cancelled due to lack of response. **If any home care provider would like more information on electronic invoicing, please call Tony Law on 01609 532 993**

Your letters ...

ICG Local Meetings

My husband and I would like to say how pleased we were that we attended the recent ICG meeting in **York**. We found it to be a very constructive meeting and now can see some real hope for the views of owners and managers of care homes being heard in the right places.

It was particularly gratifying that you allowed the meeting to form the Agenda as it went along, whilst at the same time introducing significant topics for discussion, allowing everyone the opportunity to voice their concerns and worries regarding the current state of the care industry. We found it particularly useful that time was allowed for those present to talk among themselves and to find that everyone has the same concerns and worries—it often seems that one develops 'tunnel vision' battling alone to find a way through the red tape that is threatening to strangle our reason to be: giving the elderly the care and concern they need and deserve.

We look forward to hearing the results of your discussions with the powers that be and would encourage all homes and care businesses in the area to be represented at future meetings. We wish you every success in your endeavours to ensure that the voice of private sector in care is heard loud and clear.

Josie Bishop

The Abbey Residential Home

Many thanks Josie—in November ICG will hold meetings in **Skipton, Harrogate and York**. To find out more about local meetings call **Keren Wilson** on **01423 816 582**



Update on letters in Issue 1—**Moving Story** and **Red Tape**

Moving Story — a success!



Following ICG taking up the case with CSCI, Denise Wells at **York Helpers** was told that a further registration fee of £1,400 would not be required but that her move of office would be viewed as a variation and would therefore cost £60—a huge difference!

Red Tape

Not so good news for Christine Mitchell of **Oakville Nursing and Domiciliary Care** who decided to change her business into a Limited Company.

CSCI tells ICG ...

If a service registered with a Responsible Individual chooses to become a Company Limited by Guarantee the whole legal status of the organisation changes, as do the potential benefits and risks to those involved.



In re-registering the service CSCI follows the law as it would apply to any sort of company deciding to take a similar route. CSCI has no choice in this matter.

ICG is to hold regular meetings with CSCI. Our first meeting will be in December 2004.

Your letters ...



CRB Checks - help or hindrance?

A couple of years ago, after a rigorous checking of a Carers application, we would, if the interview was successful, offer a Carer work through our agency. Our rejection rate was quite high but we felt happy with the standards we had set for ourselves.

When the announcement came that we were going to be able to access Enhanced Disclosures for all Carers we felt that this was the final safeguard.

We religiously put all existing Carers through in the correct time frame and followed the rules to the letter for all new applicants.

Eighteen months on, we feel totally disillusioned. The increases in cost, the non portability of Disclosures, the length of time that the checks take, (it took 8 months for one of my office staff to get the clearance despite being born and bred in the same County and truthfully, today we have had one returned that was sent October 2003). There are problems with accessing POVA in the 10 days as promised and meanwhile we have excellent new Carers waiting round for their Disclosure, who cannot work, and go elsewhere, out of the care industry because they need to earn a living.

Agencies are having to flout the rules, using Disclosures from other companies because they feel they have no choice, applying for POVA for carers but using them after ten days whether they have had a reply or not and using new carers before Disclosures come back.

My agency is a Registered Body for the CRB and as a result of this we had an inspection. The result of this was that we now have to issue to every applicant a copy of our care policy on "The Recruitment of Ex-offenders" and we have also had to secure to the floor the cabinet that holds the CRB documentation. (Presumably it is inconceivable that thieves would just gemmy the cabinet open and take the contents!)

With the possible future requirement of Carers having to be registered with the Social Care Council, we should ask ourselves if there will be any Carers round to interview.

Angela Gifford

Proprietor

Able Community Care

See page 8 for practical tips on completing CRB forms

Update on letters in Issue 1— Delays in reassessment —Ashfield Court

NYCC responds:

We very much regret the delay in reassessments. This is due to care management shortages which are current throughout the county. We apologise for the problems this has caused and we are doing all we can to remedy the situation.

We have been giving priority to those who need to enter the care system from any situation where safety and wellbeing is at greatest risk. Providers complete a standard form to request a reassessment and return it to the SSD Manager. If an extended delay is anticipated then the Team Manager may be able to backdate any change in fee levels resulting from reassessment. This is in extreme circumstances and decided on a case by case basis. Not all reassessments result in increased fees.

In order to address the situation we have appointed Reviewing Officers and they are working on the backlog. We ask providers to let us know if the increased needs of a client is causing them financial difficulty so that we can prioritise this work.

Independent Care Group



The voice of independent care providers in York and N Yorkshire

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HARROGATE
HG2 8QP.

ICG represents independent care providers in York & North Yorkshire including care home providers for all client groups, domiciliary care agencies and extra care house providers, in the private and voluntary parts of the independent sector.

**CALLING ALL CARE PROVIDERS—
THESE ARE CHALLENGING TIMES if
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With this issue—look out for the ICG special offer on a **Quality Management System** specifically designed to help care homes meet the Care Standards. QM System for Home Care also available from Required Systems
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ICG Board

At its AGM on Tuesday 12 October the Board of ICG was elected as follows:

- *Mike Padgham (Chair)
- *Keith Ludlam (Vice Chair)
- *Tony Conroy
- *Karen Shann
- *John Fisher
- *Gill Gallagher
- *Phil Burgan
- *Nancy Gray
- *Jim Lawson
- *Andrea Clark
- *Harry Larcombe
- *Alan Summarsell
- *Richard Inman (Co. Sec)

Get free workforce development help from NYCC and CYC

North Yorkshire County Council is sharing its National Training Grant (NTS) and Human Resources Strategy Development Grants (HRDS) for the next two years with the independent sector (including the voluntary sector).

The NTS Grant has been used to employ additional NVQ assessors and ensure a higher number of NVQ registrations—through the take up of these free places. The HRDS Grant is being focused on Management Development training equipping managers in people skills to enhance recruitment and retention of staff.

If you wish to know more about how you can access these benefits, call **Tim Clark on 01904 752 381** or **Richard Ashman on 07980 013 499**.

City of York Council circulates copies of its quarterly training calendar to all contracted independent sector providers who can book free places on courses. Access to the Social Care Information and Learning Services website is also available. There is a waiting list.

For more information call **Carol Greenhalgh on 01904 554 525**.