

CSS Provider Forum

6th February 2017

City Hall

14:00 – 16:00

Thank you once again for coming to the meeting on 6th Feb. Thank you also for bringing your views: it was very helpful. We have collated main questions as we saw them from the end session and provided some responses below. Obviously, as you will be aware, some areas are restricted by the limitations of the tender and our need to progress with savings. In other areas we aim to work productively with providers to successfully implement these changes

Questions asked at the provider forum

1. Providers would like to set up 4 co-production groups for the 4 service areas under CSS

BCC is happy to organise separate provider groups to support the implementation of the new commissioning model over the next year. We agree this would be helpful in overseeing the successful implementation. We are also establishing social work champions within teams and will ensure they are engaged with this process.

2. Concerns about the low range of the price range for the service being too low and that the price bands for day services is not viable.

BCC is aware that some providers are concerned that some of the price ranges may be too low. BCC considers the range of prices published as part of the tender sufficient in order for providers to provide a service as specified under the service specification. The contract also includes a mechanism which allows BCC to review prices on an annual basis. This may be used in order to acknowledge external pressures such as increases to minimum wage.

3. Suggestion that BCC should pilot the pricing tool with providers now and start the framework in January 2018. Another suggestion was whether we could set up a meeting with social work to at least go through cases to help providers understand the process and implications

BCC have piloted the pricing tool in house with brokers and social workers. This has involved reviewing current support plans and the tool being piloted by social work teams. BCC will be using the pricing tool from week

commencing 13th February for new service users. The start date for the review of existing service users support plans is to be confirmed however providers will be involved in this process. BCC will provide further information on the process and how providers will be involved in due course. Commissioning will review the use of tool during the implementation of the contract. BCC cannot delay the start date for the framework until January 2018.

However, we will continue to review the pricing tool in terms of how it is used in assessment to address providers' concerns, particularly around consistency of application and in assessing more flexible client needs

4. Requested additional training session on DPS as not all could make the dates

BCC will notify providers of any additional training session. BCC will also create a video tutorial of the DPS placement process. This will be available of the BCC commissioning webpage, along with the DPS guidance.

5. Review initial new clients coming through system and to review operational working of DPS

The commissioning team will continue to be heavily involved in implementing the new commissioning model, working with social workers, brokers and providers. Through this involvement commissioning will review the process to assess how the new model is working and identify any areas for improvement or further development.

6. Please confirm what is happening with national Living Wage

We have reviewed the price ranges to assess whether National Living Wage can be accounted for within the range or if the range needs to be extended. The price ranges have been set and will now be subject to ongoing updated from 1st April 2017.

The approach to subsequent price reviews linked to National Living Wage is still being finalised. The commissioning plan will outline the mechanism for reviewing the price ranges on an annual basis, to account for annual increments but also any changes to external factors, such as the National Living Wage.

7. Can we have more detail of the exceptions that may be made

The exceptions are detailed in the commissioning plan document section G.

8. Is BCC considering the impact of other reductions in council, e.g. Community Transport

We are currently considering the impact of other reductions in the council. However due to the financial position the Council is currently in, there may be impacts that the council cannot mitigate. Despite this, we are still working to consider the impact and thinking creatively to find solutions involving key partners where appropriate.

9. There seems no differential between really complex cases on DPS that may cost £1000's a week and someone that may need three hours.

Whilst we understand providers views on this, the process set up by BCC has to ensure that all providers under CSS are treated fairly and transparently. The process as set out in the commissioning plan is therefore applicable to both small and large packages of care and support.

10. How can we be assured that social work assessment will be consistent? Will there be an appeal process?

We have worked in partnership with care management to review the way in which social workers conduct assessments with service users, to ensure that assessments are more consistent and to improve the quality of information provided. In 2016-17 a training programme has been rolled out across all social work teams. As a result social work assessments now focus on enabling service users to work towards outcomes. If a provider disagrees with the social work assessment of the individual, the provider can communicate this back to the social worker and broker.

As a result of this meeting, we have discussed with care management who are now in the process of identifying social work champions in each team to help develop consistency

11. Understand before the framework that people will be on old regime. How about people currently being assessed by a specific provider but not yet placed?

TO BE CONFIRMED

Individuals referred to a CSS service before 13th and have been assessed by the provider, will continue on the previous process (i.e. providers previous rates and brokerage process). If a referral to a CSS service has been made but they have not yet been assessed by the provider, the placement will continue on the new process (i.e. new price ranges and new brokerage process).

12. How will assessments allow services to be delivered flexibly?

Social work assessments are changing and focus on the outcomes the individual wants to achieve with support from the commissioned provider. Support hours will be flexible to need and the service user will have a say in when and how their support is provided. The price ranges enable support plans to be created flexibly, including different levels of support which an individual may receive. In addition the commissioning model allows for support plans to include 'variable hours' which are essentially additional 'banked' hours which can be used where service user needs can fluctuate. This is to be determined by the social worker.

13. Does BCC have suitable qualified social workers to assess individuals with dual sensory loss?

Yes the council has suitably qualified social workers.

14. Suggestion that brokers meet with providers face to face to discuss the pricing tool as part of phase 1, rather than relying on telephone/email contact only

We will consider this request and inform providers in due course.

15. Request for regular communication following go-live (forums, focused sessions for each lot, written updates etc). At forums, providers would like to see other teams represented where relevant, in particular brokerage and care management.

We will consider this request and intend to continue the provider forum ensuring that the meetings provide useful and meaningful information

16. At what point will individuals have a revised financial assessment? Some providers expressed concerns that this would not be undertaken in the required timescales; view that this needs to be done at the same time as any adjustment in rate

We will consider the timescales in due course.

17. Providers still struggling to understand how the pricing tool will be applied in practice. Some case studies to show service user needs and how the tool is applied would be welcome

The pricing tool will be completed by social workers during the support planning process. The pricing tool considers a number of factors such as staffing ratio, risk and other factors and correlates this to a need band. Each need band equates to a price range. This information can be found in the service specification. During the support planning process, social workers will complete the pricing tool in order to broker the appropriate service. The

pricing tool will correlate service users need into different need bands (i.e. x number of hours at intermediate 1, x number of hours at standard). This information will then be used to broker a service using the DPS. An example of how the pricing tool will be used is available in the Commissioning Plan document.

18. What happens when an individual is receiving shared support at the standard band and one service user goes into hospital? Providers concerned that if they don't price this in at the outset their business model will not be sustainable if they have a lot of service users admitted to hospital.

The payment mechanism document states what BCC will do if a service user goes into hospital and how payment will be considered.

19. Response times for DPS not fully understood; guidance needs to explain that 48 hours is the typical response time but this will be set for each individual based on the specific needs

48 hours will be the typical response time set by brokerage. The time scale may vary depending on the type of placement being requested and the urgency of the placement.

20. Can providers see the list of which providers are on each lot of the framework?

BCC will publish a directory of services and publish this on the website in due course.

21. Can the draft forms for the DPS be shared so providers can see what they need to complete for each placement advertised on the DPS?

The draft forms have been attached with this FAQ document.

22. Providers have resubmitted bids. When will they find out the results?

BCC evaluate tenders in rounds. At the moment each round closes every Friday 12 noon. BCC are in the process of assessing how many resubmissions have been sent in order to estimate the time it will take to evaluate, moderate and inform providers of the outcome. As soon as this piece of work has been completed, BCC will notify individual providers via ProContract.

23. Can providers have case studies of application of the tool asap?

An example is provided as an appendix to the Commissioning Plan

24. When will price reviews happen? In what order?

BCC will confirm when and how the price review of existing services will take place in due course. The order of the reviews is described in the Commissioning Plan document.

25. If there is disagreement at price review meeting, what is the process/ means for resolution? Is there a tolerance?

BCC will work with providers during the review of care/support packages. This will either be through dialogue with the brokerage team or individual social workers. These reviews will look to assess the individual's needs to ensure that it is reflected in the service provided. BCC will work in collaboration with providers during this process. If in the instance there is significant disagreement between the BCC and the provider, which cannot be resolved this will be escalated to senior management in the Authority.

26. When will/ should there be a provider/ BCC communication piece to service users and families about changes?

BCC will be posting a letter to service users in due course to inform them of the changes in CSS. In addition BCC will issue supporting guidance for providers to support them in ensuring that service users understand about the changes. BCC understand that it is a challenging time for both providers and service users and want to provide appropriate support during this transition.

27. What about the charging policy for CSS service users? If the price of care changes, presumably SU contribution changes?

Correct service user contributions may change.