



Adult Social Care

Market Position Statement

Update November 2018

To be read in conjunction with
Market Position Statement March 2018

The detail contained within this Market Position Statement is reflective of that which would be included in an Adult Social Care Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

National drivers of change

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 placed a new duty on local authorities from April 2018 to help prevent homelessness for all families and single people, regardless of priority need, who are eligible for assistance and are threatened with homelessness. The council is working with all partners to implement this new duty which gives more focus to early intervention and prevention of homelessness.

The Act also introduced a duty to refer from October 2018 requiring specified public authorities in England to notify Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) of service users they think may be homeless or threatened with becoming homeless in 56 days. The public authority must have consent from the individual before referring them and the individual should identify which LHA they would like to be referred to, as they would if approaching a housing authority directly.

A number of public services have this new duty placed on them including:

- Accident and emergency services provided in a hospital
- Urgent treatment centres
- Hospitals in their capacity of providing in-patient treatment
- Social service authorities

National and local policy context

Transforming Care

The Transforming Care programme is led jointly by NHS England, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Local Government Association (LGA), Health Education England (HEE) and the Department of Health (DH).

NHS England have set out a programme of work with these national partners to improve services for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, who display behaviours that challenge, including those with a mental health condition. This will drive system-wide change and enable more people to live in the community, with the right support, and close to home.

The Transforming Care programme is focusing on addressing long-standing issues to ensure sustainable change that will see:

- More choice for people and their families, and more say in their care
- More care in the community, with personalised support provided by multi-disciplinary health and care teams
- More innovative services to give people a range of care options, with personal budgets, so that care meets individuals' needs
- Providing early, more intensive support for those who need it, so that people can stay in the community, close to home
- For those people that do need in-patient care, ensuring it is only for as long as they need it

Care and Treatment Reviews are for people with learning disabilities and or autism who are in hospital because of a mental health problem or because their behaviour is seen as challenging to services. It is also for people living in the community who are at risk of an admission to a learning disability or mental health hospital.

Sunderland participated in the North East fast track programme and a Local Implementation Group (LIG) was set up to oversee the implementation of the Transforming Care agenda. Representatives from the Sunderland LIG attend the North Regional Implementation Group (NORIG) which meets monthly to have an oversight of the wider footprint of the Transforming Care programme across the region.

Housing strategy

The Housing Strategy for Sunderland 2017-2022 was published in September 2017.

One of its main priorities is to support vulnerable people to access and maintain housing. Everyone has the right to access a good quality home to allow them to lead a fulfilling and independent life.

We believe that communities must respond to the needs of all its members, including those who are vulnerable, in order to be strong, inclusive and sustainable. We recognise that vulnerability is not necessarily permanent and therefore provision for a range of general needs and specialist support services to ensure people lead healthy and happy lives is important. Our residents can be vulnerable for a range of reasons.

Our vision is for a greater choice of good quality homes which meet the needs and the aspirations of our residents, so individually and as a city we can grow and prosper. These homes will be based in thriving neighbourhoods where everyone feels part of their community.

The Housing Strategy sets out a clear direction, over the next four years, to offer more choice in housing by developing new homes and improving existing homes and neighbourhoods. It also commits to supporting our most vulnerable residents to access and maintain good quality housing which meets their needs. The delivery of the Housing Strategy is dependent on close partnership working. It is a strategy for the whole city.

The strategy is a framework; setting direction for everyone involved in housing - residents, ward members, housing associations, developers, government bodies, regulators, investors, private landlords, charities, voluntary groups and the council - to provide the right type of homes that are needed. This in turn provides the foundation for our residents to reach their potential and contribute to the prosperity of the city.

Quality

We focus on ensuring that the quality of service provision for all customers is maintained at a high standard, in doing this we work closely with partners and providers alike.

The Commissioning Team meet regularly with representatives from the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, the Care Quality Commission, Community Integrated Teams nurses, Adult Social Care staff and representatives from Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. These forums provide the opportunity to discuss the quality of registered and non-registered services, share information and actions and plan how to respond to developing issues. The Commissioning Team also has a planned programme of contract management and relationship management meetings in place to monitor both contracted and non-contracted providers.

Sunderland Quality Standards Model

Since 2009 Sunderland City Council has operated a Quality Standards Model, this is an assessment model used in the monitoring of Older Person's residential and nursing homes which results in each care home being awarded a standard which equates to a fee level, linked to the outcome of this assessment and the overall rating of the home awarded by the Care Quality Commission.

Quality ratings for the 48 homes within Sunderland for 2018/19	
Rating	Number of care homes
Gold	39
Silver	9
Bronze	0

Quality Framework going forwards

The Commissioning Team have developed a Quality Framework which focusses on the quality of care being provided in all regulated services across the city

The framework is flexible and will be reviewed and revised as necessary in order to monitor the quality of service delivery across the full range of service areas. The tool used will be adapted as appropriate and providers will be expected to work cooperatively with the council to deliver any improvement actions identified.

Accommodation based services for older people

Residential and nursing care, extra care accommodation and retirement/sheltered accommodation.

Nursing and Residential Care

There are 31 providers working across the 48 homes, with a mix of single ownership, regional based providers and a number of national based providers.

There are currently:

- 48** registered care homes
- 2107** places, all operated by the independent sector.
- 3** care homes providing nursing care only
- 24** care homes providing residential care only
- 21** care homes providing both nursing and residential care
- 44** care homes providing support to older people with dementia related needs
- 3** care homes providing support to younger people under 65 with disabilities
- 2** care homes providing support to people with enduring mental health

Care homes based on locality					
Locality	Total number of homes	Total number of beds	Residential care only	Nursing care only	Dual registered residential and nursing
Coalfields	11	465	6	0	5
Sunderland East	9	275	5	2	2
Sunderland North	11	502	4	1	6
Sunderland West	12	589	6	0	6
Washington	5	273	3	0	2

The council currently purchases approximately 74 per cent of all places on behalf of Sunderland residents.

The remaining 16 per cent of places can be accounted for by:

- People who buy their services directly (self-funders)
- Other Local Authorities

Occupancy Levels at the end of October 2018

5 Care homes with 100% occupancy

3 Care home with less than 60% occupancy

Total of **87%** occupancy across the city

The number of new admissions to care homes in Sunderland for people aged 65 years and over has remained stable over the last three years, with admissions to nursing care remaining the same and a slight increase in admissions to residential care.

Year	Nursing care admissions	Residential care admissions
2015-16	114	342
2016-17	116	361
2017-18	116	373

Market issues

Demand for residential and nursing care overall has remained stable over the previous three years although there is a shift towards dementia care, continuing health care and support for people with challenging behaviour.

Recruitment remains an issue, in particular permanent nursing staff.

We are seeing an increasing number of people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health issues growing older and therefore becoming more in need of formal support.

The availability of community nursing and other support services available to the sector has been enhanced as part of the All Together Better Vanguard programme. This has resulted in fewer admissions to hospital and A&E attendances from care homes and an increased average length of stay.

Current Extra Care provision

There are 12 extra care schemes across the city operated by five Registered Housing Providers, providing 851 apartments:

Locality	Total number of schemes in each locality area	Total number of apartments
Coalfields	2	95
Sunderland East	3	165
Sunderland North	2	183
Sunderland West	3	290
Washington	2	118
Total	12	851

The schemes are developed by partnership arrangements with the extra care providers and each scheme is responsible for commissioning its own care provision.

Sheltered Housing Schemes

There are 22 sheltered housing schemes across the city operated by six registered housing providers, providing a range of accommodation including:

1, 2 and 3 bedroom flats, studios and bungalows

These are primarily for over 55's although consideration may be given for tenants under 55 years with a medical condition and some are specifically for over 60's.

At the current time the occupancy across all the schemes is 96%.

Locality	Total number of schemes in each locality area	Total number of 1, 2, 3 bedroom flats, studios and bungalows
Coalfields	3	162
Sunderland East	3	302
Sunderland North	8	442
Sunderland West	3	247
Washington	5	105
Total	22	1258

The commissioning team are working with existing providers to consider ways of remodelling this provision to ensure it will continue to meet the housing, care and accommodation needs of individuals.

Services for people with learning disabilities

Residential homes, supported living schemes and hub and satellite schemes.

Registered homes

Homes which are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide the regulated activity of “accommodation for persons who require personal care”.

There are currently 20 small group registered residential homes for people with learning disabilities that are directly commissioned by the council. The care and support is delivered by five social care providers and the homes can accommodate up to 97 people. One of these is used as a 6 bedded assessment unit.

The council is working in partnership with two social care providers and the relevant landlords to take forward a deregistration programme of their small group residential homes that support people with learning disabilities. One home has been deregistered in 2018 with a plan in place for another 9 to deregister by the end of the year. Upon deregistration the service model will change to that of supported living and the care delivered into the schemes will be registered with CQC.

Supported living schemes

Supported living is a combination of care and support and accommodation. Supported living is designed to support individuals to be independent, have choices and take control of their lives.

There are currently 43 supported living schemes across the city that provide accommodation and care and support for up to 181 people. People will have an individual allocated room but will share communal space in the main part of the property.

Supported living with individual tenancies

There are currently 31 people being supported in supported living schemes where they hold an individual tenancy, supported by 5 social care providers.

Hub and satellite

These properties enable people to be supported to either live in accommodation where staff are available at all times, within the hub or to live on their own in satellite properties, where they can receive support from staff that are based at the hub. The hub can either be a staff base or a staff apartment.

There are 15 hub and satellite properties for people with a learning disability, which provide care, support and accommodation for up to 15 individuals. The care and support is delivered by 1 provider.

Supported living with hub and satellite

There are 10 schemes, which consist of self-contained apartments; these schemes provide care, support and accommodation for up to 74 people.

The current demand for care and accommodation solutions for people with learning disabilities is high and the council will continue to welcome engaging with providers regarding potential cost-effective solutions that the market could offer.

Services for people with mental health needs

Supported living schemes

Supported living is a combination of care, support and accommodation. Supported living is designed to provide to support individuals to be independent, have choices and take control of their lives.

There are 2 supported living schemes for people with mental health needs that have care and support delivered by one provider. Of these schemes one is a dedicated 6 person all male scheme and the second a 4 person scheme which is currently an all-male scheme but can take either male or female service users.

Hub and satellite

These properties provide support to people to live in accommodation either where staff are available at all times, within the hub or to live on their own in satellite properties, where they can receive support from staff that are based at the hub. The hub can either be a staff base or a staff apartment.

There are 27 hub and satellite properties for people with mental health needs which provide care, support and accommodation for up to 27 people. The care and support is provided by one social care provider.

Supported living with hub and satellite

There are 2 schemes, which consist of self-contained apartments. These schemes provide care, support and accommodation for up to 17 people.

The current demand for care and accommodation solutions for people with mental health needs is high and the council will continue to welcome engaging with providers regarding potential cost-effective solutions that the market could offer.

There are currently 20 people with a mental health diagnosis who have been assessed as requiring housing care and support over the period of January 2018 to January 2020. The individuals have been added to the council's Commissioning Intentions Database which will be used to explore and scope existing accommodation options as and when the person requires it, this may result in the need to develop new accommodation in the future.

Services for people with physical disabilities

This consists of core and cluster schemes which offer people the opportunity to live in accommodation where staff are available at all times within the core property and receive support at various planned times from support staff based at the core property.

There are 3 of these schemes for people with physical disabilities which provide care and support to up to 20 people, these have a core site for staff located on the same site as the cluster properties, and the care is delivered by one social care provider. In the future the council will be carrying out review of the core and cluster service model.

The current care and accommodation offer in the city for adults with physical disabilities is limited and this often results in placements being made out of the city. The council would welcome engaging with providers regarding potential cost-effective care and accommodation solutions that the market could offer.

There are other supported living schemes and residential services that operate within the city that are not commissioned by the council that predominantly support people with learning disabilities and autism.

There are currently 3 people with a physical disability who have been assessed as requiring housing care and support over the period of January 2018 to January 2020. The individuals have been added to the council's Commissioning Intentions Database which will be used to explore existing accommodation options as and when the person requires it. This could result in the council requiring alternative accommodation options to what is already available

There is one scheme that can offer accommodation and care and support for people with a learning disability, mental health needs or physical disabilities. This scheme comprises of 12 self-contained apartments and 12 self-contained one bedroom bungalows, with associated communal space. The care and support is provided by one social care provider. This accommodation offers a blended model of traditional care and support with the option of using assisted technology for 24 people.

Out of city placements

There are 17 people with a learning disability, autism or Asperger's who are part of the Transforming Care Programme of work who are currently receiving active treatment within an out of city hospital setting.

Of these 17 people scoping exercises have been carried out, whereby service specifications have been developed and service models have been confirmed, the council has identified housing and care and support providers.

Two of the remaining ten people have had a new service specification developed which will be used to carry out scoping work to identify the type of accommodation they require.

Transitions

Services for both adults and children continue to work together to understand the needs of young people who are nearing the age of 18 years in order to support them to prepare for adulthood and seek appropriate care, support and accommodation options to promote independence.

A Transition Management Group has been established that has multiagency partnership buy in and is chaired by Adult Social Care. This forum provides oversight and governance in relation to cases that are being considered under transition arrangements.

Care and support at home

The council has various arrangements in place for the provision of care and support services across a number of service areas and contracts/frameworks, each of which has been procured on an individual basis.

To become more efficient and effective in how care and support services are procured a Flexible Procurement Agreement (FPA) is now being used. The council will 'call off' specific service requirements, where there is a need to procure care and support services provision.

The FPA is for the provision of personal care and support services for people living in their own homes and will cover services that support people who are:

- Are aged 18 years and over
- Are living within their own homes
- Who have care and support needs arising as a result of frailty; a physical disability; a sensory impairment; a mental health need, including dementia/cognitive impairment and a learning disability

The FPA consists of:

- An overarching service specification setting out the core service provider requirements for care and support services provision. The overarching specification sets out the fundamental core quality requirements, which providers will need to demonstrate their ability to meet
- Overarching framework terms and conditions
- The ability to undertake 'call offs' for specific service requirements, of which each will be underpinned by a detailed service specification relevant to the contracted service
- A formal contract management process

The benefits of this approach are:

- It enables the council to have in place an overarching framework through which 'calls off' for future care and support services provision can be procured, without the need to undertake a full procurement process each time a requirement arises as this will, in part, already have been addressed
- It mitigates the risk of any potential off-contract spend, whereby individual service specific requirements can be called off

The FPA allows providers to bid to become part of the framework at any time. 'Bidding rounds' initially open up every 30 days and then 90 days thereafter, any bids received in each period will be validated by the council and if successful the providers will become part of the FPA.

The council's approach to dealing with homelessness

The council has a statutory duty to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within the city. The council adopts an early intervention strategy to help find alternative accommodation for potential homelessness. We continue to develop partnerships with housing providers across all tenures, including the private rented sector, to enable permanent safe accommodation for homeless applicants. The council and its partners work to enable all people to access and maintain a good quality home by connecting them to services across health, education, training and employment, and provide the support they need to live happy, independent lives; especially those facing barriers and less able to help themselves.

The council's financial position and the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act means that we need to review our service offer. A 'whole system' change in approach is required to ensure that we continue to meet our statutory duties whilst introducing new ways of working that will be more sustainable in the long-term and ultimately lead to improved outcomes for residents. This means there needs to be a greater emphasis on partnership work, prevention and early intervention and a move away from a reliance on crisis intervention.

In light of the legislative changes, the council is working with partners to review our Homelessness Prevention Strategy. The strategy will include a measurable action plan to support the objectives.

The council is working with partners to enrich our knowledge about the needs and barriers of people living within temporary accommodation within the city. There are currently 6 hostels which can accommodate over 200 people. As part of the strategy there will be a review of the use of temporary and emergency accommodation and pathways will be formulated to try and reduce the length of time people stay in temporary unsecured accommodation and to ensure that individuals receive the right level of support when they most need it.

As the strategy emerges it is likely that we will develop multi-faceted approaches to meeting homeless needs that is evidence and outcome based. The aspiration is to provide permanent rehousing to people experiencing homelessness, particularly those who have multiple complex needs and to link with services to tackle the root causes of homelessness.

The council also works with providers to prevent people from rough sleeping. The council undertakes a rough sleeper count/estimate in line with government guidelines on an annual basis. Last count undertaken November 2017 identified a nil return, which is verified by a national homelessness organisation as part of the reporting back to government.

Veterans

Former members of the armed forces who are homeless or threatened with homelessness are given reasonable preference through the council's Housing Allocation Scheme. Any veteran who presents as homeless will be assessed by the Housing Options Team and linked in with the Armed Forces Network/Changing Lives veterans' support and the Veterans in Crisis organisation to assist with settled accommodation.

Crisis refuge accommodation and specialist domestic abuse outreach support including IDVA provision

The council currently has a 2 year contract with 1 provider for specialist domestic abuse provision. This service provides a Crisis Refuge Accommodation and specialist domestic abuse outreach support including Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) provision which also includes a hospital based IDVA, in order to increase the safety and protection of Individuals and support them to live independently. This contract commenced in July 2017.

As well as the 10 bed domestic abuse refuge, there is 1 domestic abuse refuge operated by the contracted provider within the city that supports a further 9 people.

These refuges also provide assertive outreach support to people with complex needs including mental health and substance misuse. The council work with a number of providers, including housing and voluntary sector along with other Local Authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Priorities for Domestic Abuse programme. This includes providing a range of accommodation options for victims through refuge provision, outreach support, dispersed accommodation and support for victims who can safely remain in their own homes.

Sunderland is one of the 3 national 'Change That Lasts' pilots, working with Women's Aid. The delivery model is a needs-led, strengths-based, trauma informed way of working and includes:

- The 'Ask Me' element: which will work with the local community to change the way it acts and think about abuse by creating spaces where people who have experienced abuse can feel safe to access vital information and be directed to the help that they need the first time around
- Trusted professionals: A small number of staff in the city are trained as trusted professionals. The trusted professional intervention is aimed at public and voluntary sector services, such as substance misuse, mental health and children's services that do not deliver a specialist domestic abuse response but are likely to have an established relationship with survivors through their work. The aim of the intervention is to increase the confidence levels and skills of staff to enable them to provide a more holistic and helpful response to the survivors they are in contact with
- Expert Support Services: Expert support services is a trauma informed approach. Dedicated domestic abuse services provide the level of expertise that is crucial to facilitating long term and meaningful change for survivors

Day care and day opportunities

There has been a steady decline in the numbers of people accessing both day care and day opportunities.

Year	Day care	Day opportunities
2015-16	574	225
2016-17	525	233
2017-18	422	194

In 2017-18 422 people accessed day care services, 256 people were aged 18-64 years and 166 were 65 and over.

In 2017-18 194 People accesses Day Opportunities, 80 people were aged 18-64 years and 114 were 65 and over.

Of those aged 18-64 years the primary client group continued to be people with a learning disability. The majority of people who continue to access traditional Day Service provision are those with multiple and complex needs.

It is the council's intention to have in place a day care offer that is individualised and that maximises independence, promotes community involvement and reduces social isolation whilst continuing to reduce the demand for traditional day centres.

Short break services

	Total	18 - 64	65+
2016-17	422	178 (134 LD)	262
2017-18	409	172 (144 LD)	232

The council has a contract in place with one Sunderland provider for short break services for people with learning disabilities and two schemes were used in 2017-18 to provide short breaks.

A number of other providers in the city deliver short breaks to adults with care needs and older people and this type of support is commissioned at an operational level in partnership with the person.

There has been a decline in the number of people accessing this type of service with 409 people receiving a short break in 2017–18 compared to 422 people in 2016-17.

For those aged 18-64 years, the primary users of this service continue to be people with a learning disability. In 2017-18, 172 people were aged 18-64 years and 144 of these had a learning disability, compared to 2016 -17 where 178 people aged 18-64 used this type of service and 142 had a learning disability.

There were 232 people aged over 65 who received a short break in 2017-18 compared to 262 in 2016-17. Primarily, short break services for people aged over 65 years are provided by independent sector residential and nursing care home providers.

In the future, the council will review the short break offer available in the city and would welcome engagement from providers about how this service could continue to be offered in a more cost effective and personalised way.

Shared lives scheme

Shared Lives offers individuals a highly personalised and flexible service provided in the form of accommodation and/or care or support using dedicated Shared Lives Carers and their home as a resource. The service enables Individuals who need support, to live independent ordinary lives in a family setting and have their health and wellbeing promoted. Shared lives carers support individuals in the community in the context of a matched relationship as part of a shared lives agreement and they carry out their support in much the same way that a natural family member may provide support. One provider is commissioned to manage the Sunderland shared lives scheme.

The purpose of the shared lives scheme is to:

- Recruit and train shared lives carers
- To match individuals with suitable shared lives carers
- To make shared lives arrangements
- To provide ongoing support and monitoring of shared lives arrangements

At the end of March 2018, there were 15 carers registered with the scheme, with 15 individuals in a shared lives placement. This is a slight decrease since the end of March 2017.

The council is looking at the potential to develop the service to provide a wider range of tailored and personalised care and support to individuals with various needs. It could provide an exciting and alternative type of service provision that is truly personal and tailored to meet individual's needs and supports them to achieve their outcomes.

Direct payments

A Direct Payment Employment Support Payment is provided by an external provider to support direct payment clients who require support with the recruitment, selection and retention of personal assistants.

A payroll service is provided as support to clients who require support relating to the payment of their employees.

The council now provides a direct payment managed account service to manage direct payments on the client's behalf using a pre-paid card account. The council process all payments for direct payment expenditure.

To provide more choice and control to individuals the council is seeking to increase the number of direct payments.

To meet the increase in direct payment usage and increased demand for personal assistants an on-line personal assistant network is being developed to increase capacity within the PA market.

Other services commissioned through contracted arrangements

Sunderland Telecare

Sunderland Telecare is a service that enables people, especially older and more vulnerable individuals, to live independently and securely in their own home. It includes services that incorporate personal and environmental sensors in the home which enable people to remain safe and independent in their own home for longer. 24 hour monitoring ensures that should an event occur, the information is acted upon immediately and the most appropriate response put in action.

One provider is commissioned to provide telecare services that include delivery of a service based on responding 24/7 to alarms and sensors in a variety of home and personal settings.

Sunderland telecare service comprises of a 24 hour monitoring control room operated on behalf of the provider by the council's Customer Services Network and a number of mobile response teams which provide 24 hour responses to alarms.

Sunderland telecare service is a non-statutory service, but is a key element in assisting people to live independently in their own home.

As at the end of March 2018 the Sunderland telecare service had 4,501 customers. The service had received 1744 new referrals. The majority of the customers supported are older people and are over the age of 65 years.

In 2017/18, the telecare service received 152,022 alarms and dispatched mobile staff to 32,173 (11,556 of these calls were priority 2 i.e. personal care).

Telecare equipment is provided free on a loan basis and there is currently no charge for the installation of equipment. There were 3047 equipment installations in 2017/18.

There is a charge for the customer on their telephone line each time they use the service, equivalent to the customer making a telephone call.

Commissioning Intentions

To support people to live independently with the most personalised and cost-effective care and support solutions:

- Development of a range of early intervention solutions that includes working with voluntary and community sector partners and the role of housing in relation to homelessness
- To continue to work with the voluntary and community sector to develop low level services which promote wellbeing and prevent or delay the development of care and support needs
- To continue to promote self-care and support by developing information and improving support and advice on the options available to people who may or may not be eligible for statutory support for example the council's Sunderland Information Point website
- To have a broad technology offer in the city that will increase independence and reduce the reliance on formal support
- To ensure a range of high quality accommodation options are available to support people who have a housing care and support need
- Continue with the de-registration programme of a group of small group residential services for adults with disabilities and complex needs
- Work alongside health partners to deliver health, care and accommodation solutions for individuals within the Transforming Care Programme, with continued engagement at a regional level in the sharing of good practice and learning from others

To ensure there are services in place to support carers:

- Continue to have in place a short break offer that recognises the benefits that short breaks can have for those with caring responsibilities
- Continue to work with the voluntary and community sector to ensure support services are available for carers, including links with health colleagues regarding lead commissioning arrangements for carer support services

To have in place services that promotes community involvement and reduces social isolation for people with the most complex needs:

- To review the current offer and develop a strategy for day care that focuses on people's outcomes, social interaction and provides support for carers

To ensure that services provided in Sunderland are of a high quality:

- Work with providers via meetings and forums to ensure services are provided by an appropriately trained, qualified and competent workforce who deliver improvements in the quality of the service across the city
- Work with providers to identify training requirements based on commissioners intentions and market demand

To promote choice and variety in service provision for individuals with care and support needs:

- Continue to offer and promote the benefits of direct payments and personal health budgets as an option for people
- Build on the review of the personal assistant market to ensure that the market can meet customer demands
- To ensure arrangements are in place for services that we are statutorily obliged to provide such as advocacy, healthwatch

