

RICHMOND AND WANDSWORTH
ADULT SOCIAL CARE
AND PUBLIC HEALTH
PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER
ANNUAL REPORT
2019 - 2020



ADULT SOCIAL CARE ACADEMY
Growing, nurturing, supporting and inspiring

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** Welcome to the third annual Principal Social Work report for Richmond and Wandsworth Adults Social Care and Public Health. This report seeks to highlight the role of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) in promoting excellence in social work.
- 1.2** The report details what has been achieved during the current year and to highlight priorities for the coming year. The overall aim is to support a progressive, highly skilled, and confident Social Work workforce in Richmond and Wandsworth.

2 Background

- 2.1** The Principal Social Worker for Adults is a statutory strategic role which is required to:
- Be visible across the organisation (from elected members, senior management, frontline social workers and those who use our services)
 - Have a broad knowledge base on safeguarding and Making Safeguarding Personal
 - Lead and oversee excellent social work practice.
 - Support and develop arrangements for excellent practice.
 - Lead the career development of Social Workers
 - Support effective Social Work supervision and decision making
 - Oversee quality assurance and improvement of Social Work practice.
- 2.2** The national network of Adult Principal Social Workers alongside the Chief Social Workers provides a voice for Social Work within Government, supporting key developments in policy, education, and Social Work practice. The Chief Social Worker set out the following national priorities for Principal Social Workers during 2019/20:
- Further embed strengths based social work practice
 - Improve our evidence and research base to further validate and inform our profession
 - Promote the values and contribution of adult social work across health and care and further develop our skills.

3 Principal Social Worker in Richmond and Wandsworth

- 3.1** The Principal Social Work for Adults in Richmond and Wandsworth oversees the Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Framework and the training and development strategy for the Adult Social Care Workforce. In Addition, the Principal Social Worker has led on the service transformation in partnership with other senior managers.
- 3.2** The Transformation Programme has involved:
- Leading the culture change and workforce workstream
 - Supporting service redesign at the front door
 - Rolling out our strengths-based practice programme
 - Professional input into practice requirements
- 3.3** In November 2019, Rhiannon Cardillo, Richmond and Wandsworth's first appointed Principal Social Worker resigned and Bambi Maxwell was appointed as Principal Social Worker and commenced the role in December 2019.

4 Progress

4.1 Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

- 4.1** Supporting newly qualified staff is an important strategy for 'growing your own' workforce and retaining high quality professionals and good outcomes for service users. Richmond and Wandsworth Adults Social Services have supported 30 Newly Qualified Social Workers through the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment programme to date.
- 4.1.2** The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme provides Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS) with the opportunity to develop their practical knowledge about social work practice whilst embedding their use of theory, research, and evidence in practice. Action learning sets and a professional development workshop programme runs throughout the year to support NQSWS, co-ordinated by the ASYE manager.
- 4.1.3** The programme involves the Newly Qualified Social Workers presenting portfolios to demonstrate how they have developed their social work competence, and these are reviewed by both an Internal Moderation Panels (IMP) and regional, and national moderation processes.

- 4.1.4 10 Newly Qualified Social Workers commenced the programme at the beginning of the year, and they were joined in October 2019, by 4 students on the new fast track graduate programme into social work, Think Ahead. Think Ahead is a two-year programme that includes completion of a master's degree in Social Work whilst doing a practical placement. After the first year the students are qualified social workers and they undertake the ASYE programme during the second year, whilst also doing their final year of their master's degree.
- 4.1.5 A total of 13 NQSWs successfully complete the ASYE programme, and all remain employed in the department in April 2020.

4.2 Adult Social Care Academy

- 4.2.1 The Richmond and Wandsworth Adult Social Care Academy was established in 2018 to bring together all professional development opportunities within a coherent and holistic training and development offer to support Continuing Professional Development and career development for staff.
- 4.2.2 The Adult Social Care Academy has introduced a series of practice tools for frontline staff including: - the Practice Standards; Recording Tips; Safeguarding Adults' Roles and Responsibilities; Mental Capacity Assessment Top Tips and a Strengths- Based Practice booklet. The Adults Social Care Academy library is a valuable resource and reflective space for staff within the department.
- 4.2.3 The Continuing Professional Development Framework offers a diverse range of development opportunities including the core training and development programme, a career progression scheme which provides opportunities for professional development to staff to train as Best Interest Assessors, Approved Mental Health Professionals, Practice Educators and post graduate certificate opportunities, each year.
- 4.2.4 The Principal Social Worker has continued to provide strategic leadership to the South West London Teaching Partnership. The Teaching Partnership aspires to drive up standards of Social Work practice across the whole Social Work spectrum from undergraduate training to post qualifying Continuing Professional Development. The partnership supported 2 members of staff to gain their Masters in Coaching and Mentoring during the year.

4.3 Strengths-Based Practice Programme

- 4.3.1 A significant focus has been given to embedding Strengths -Based Practice in adult social care. This commenced with all staff attending a foundation programme Strengths -Based Practice with a specific programme aimed at managers. The programme was delivered in partnership with Making Research Count. Alongside other initiatives, the programme has aimed to transform culture and enable frontline practitioners to undertake excellent quality social care practice and support people to achieve good outcomes.

4.3.2 Collaboration with the Voluntary Sector has been enhanced during the year. A series of 'Get to know your community' sessions was delivered which afforded staff the opportunity to visit voluntary organisations and learn about their services. The Wandsworth voluntary sector event ran in June 2019, with over 20 community partners involved.

4.4 Making Mental Capacity Assessments Personal Event

4.4.1 Working effectively with the Mental Capacity Act was highlighted as a service need. A one-day Making Mental Capacity Assessments Personal event was held in October 2019 which provided over 70 participants with a comprehensive overview of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and an opportunity to develop skills and confidence in undertaking quality Mental Capacity Assessments. The event was an enormous success with guest speaker Alex Ruck -Keene leading a panel which included experts by experience. Below is a snapshot of the feedback provided by staff who attended the event.

“It was highly informative - Alex in particular”

“Issues identified from auditing were addressed in a very in depth & collaborative way. The training was brilliant & more events like this would be great.”

“Excellent training session - never have I seen such high levels of enthusiasm & engagement from all participants.”

“Really well organised it was well thought out to be relevant to practice”

5 World Social Work Day

- 5.1 In March 2020, the Principal Social Worker aimed to run a professional development event for Social Care Staff in celebration of World Social Work Day. The event was themed around Strengths-Based Practice. The aim was for staff to celebrate good practice and appreciate and learn about the vital role of human relationships in supporting people. A themed conference is held annually as a continuing professional development event for Adult Social Care Staff however due to Covid-19 the event in March 2020 was unfortunately cancelled.

6 Recruitment and Retention

- 6.1 Recruitment and retention are critical to maintain a stable workforce and to improve the quality of social work services through continuous professional development. The department has a Recruitment and Retention strategy overseen by a Recruitment and Retention Board. The Principal Social Worker leads the delivery of the strategy and reports to the Board on progress. The focus for the year has been on ensuring stability of supply of staff to fill vacancies, seeking to retain staff and to understand reasons for leaving via exit interviews and promoting professional and career development opportunities.
- 6.2 Effective induction was identified as an important mechanism to retain high quality staff that are motivated and share the values of the organisation. The Principal Social Worker oversees the maintenance of the induction framework and supports managers to provide meaningful and excellent quality induction for new staff.

7 Quality assurance and improvement of practice

7.1 The Department has a quality assurance framework which involves:

- Developing and updating practice standards framework
- Audit programme
- Learning from complaints
- Skills development via masterclasses to address practice concerns highlighted in audits
- Sharing good practice e.g. Safeguarding Adults Managers forums and reflective practice sessions for practitioners

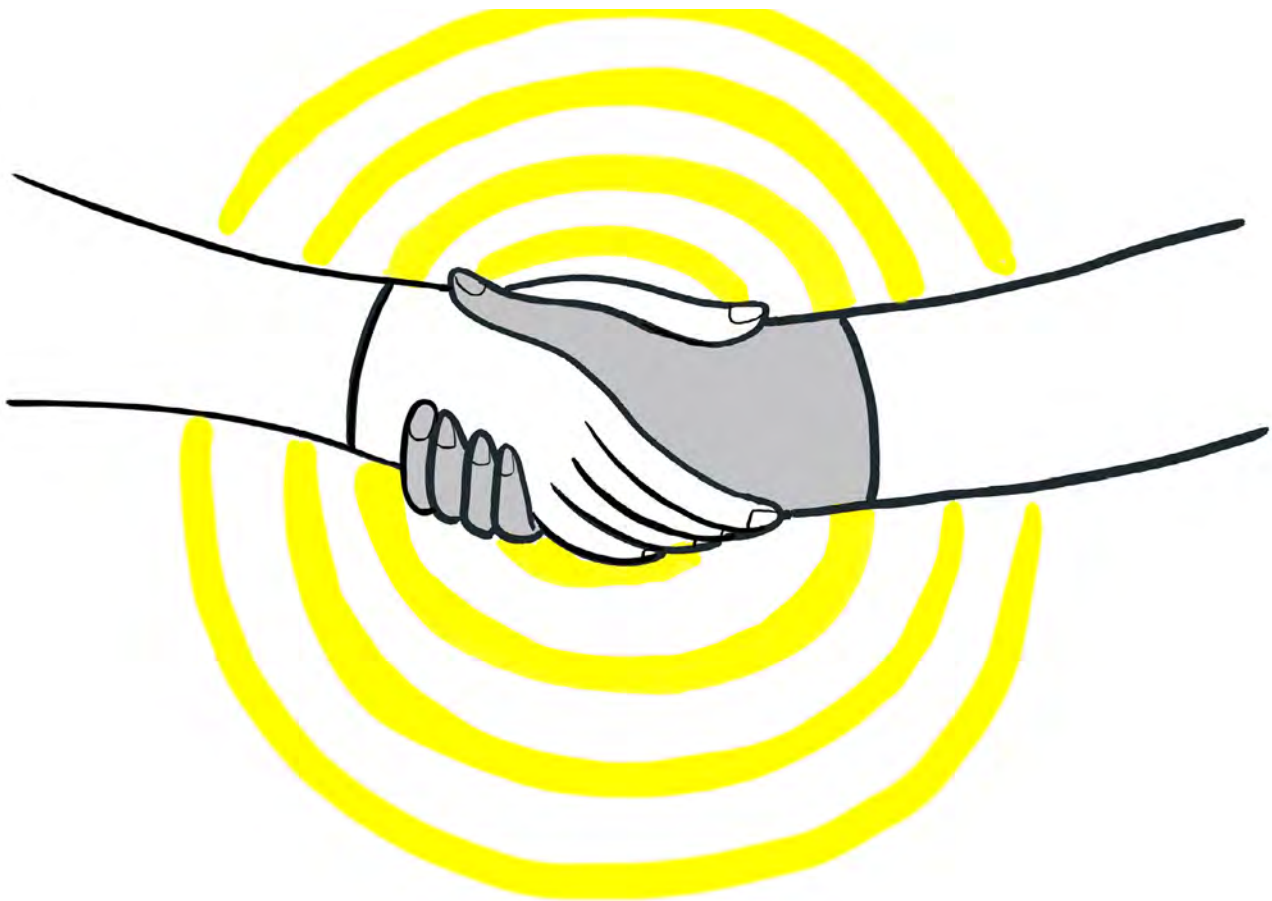
7.2 During the year, a total of 240 cases were audited by service managers, using a bespoke audit tool. Over half the cases audits (56%) were rated as 'good' and 37% were 'adequate'. Only 8% were rated as 'Requires Improvement'.

7.3 In response to the audit finding the following development opportunities were provided:

- Practice developments linked to audits
- Recording masterclasses
- Responding to complaints masterclasses for managers
- MCA consultation sessions for staff and managers
- MCA event in October 2019
- Safeguarding recovery briefing and development sessions
- SAM and Practitioner Forums
- Action learning for managers on leadership

8 Local, Regional and National Practice Leadership

- 8.1 The Richmond and Wandsworth Principal Social Worker attends the regional London Principal Social Work network and quarterly national events where the Chief Social Workers share the direction of travel for the profession and the Department of Health priorities for Principal Social Workers.
- 8.2 The Richmond and Wandsworth PSW and Professional Standards officer hosted a newly appointed Principal Social Worker from the Isle of Wight to share best practice and offer support.



9 Priorities for 2020 - 2021

9.1 The following are the priorities for the coming year:

- Quality Assurance of practice through audits and setting of clear standards on practice expectations within Adult Social Services.
- Embedding a consistent strengths-based practice model across Adults Social Services focused on consolidating work of the foundation programme
- Initiating the first Social Work apprenticeships

10 Conclusion

10.1 The Principal Social Worker provides professional leadership to the Social Work Workforce, helping to raise the profile of Social Work both internally and externally by providing the professional knowledge required to drive local and regional practice development

10.2 The progress made in 2019/20 has helped to shape the way forward for the coming year. It is anticipated that 2020/21 will enable positive progress in the way that we promote a learning culture that aims to support high quality relationship-based practice in adult social care to enable excellent outcomes for our local communities.



'Get to know your community' event at Age UK



PEOPLE ARE

RESILIENT &
RESOURCEFUL

(An excerpt from the Richmond and Wandsworth Strength Based Practice Handbook, illustrated by Sandra Howgate)



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