

9<sup>th</sup> December 2009

**Care Quality Commission (CQC) gives first major statement on the quality of adult social care**

**This circular informs branches of the key findings on the quality of adult social care drawn together from four separate reports published by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in December 2009**

**The CQC has praised improvements but called for a new drive to eliminate poor adult social care services based on the four reports published on the 3rd December 2009:**

**Key findings are:**

- Care homes, home care agencies, nursing agencies and shared lives schemes run by councils and voluntary organisations perform better than those in private ownership. In April 2009, 87% of council services and 86% of those run by voluntary organisations were good or excellent, compared to 74% of privately-owned services.
- One in six providers are only poor or adequate and almost one-fifth of care services overall still remain poor or adequate, according to the CQC's report.
- Specifically looking at care homes and agencies the minimum standards with the lowest levels of compliance concern some of the basics of care: planning individuals care, managing medication, staff supervision and promotion and protection of people's health, safety and welfare.
- Councils must get rid of poor quality care by purchasing from providers more effectively. Commissioning and development of local markets needs to be improved where councils are constrained in their purchasing and have limited availability of care provision at the right quality and price. This will reduce purchasing a significant proportion of care from providers that have been rated poor or adequate.
- Care homes for younger adults (age 18-65) perform better than those for older people (over 65) but the latter are catching up: 82% of homes for younger adults were good or excellent in April 2009 compared to 76% of those for older

people; but that was 9% more for older people's homes compared to May 2008.

- Younger adults with learning disabilities receive better than average care, while those with mental health needs are more likely to be placed in 'poor' or 'adequate' homes.
- Only 42 councils provide care to people with moderate or low needs. The eligibility criteria may rise further as public spending is squeezed in the years ahead.
- All Adult social care providers will join the new CQC register in October 2010.

The four reports published can be downloaded at:

[An assessment of 148 councils' social care services for adults, including performance against seven outcomes set by the government](#)

[An analysis of whether councils are commissioning the best possible care, whether this is from the private, voluntary or public sector](#)

[An update on the performance of 24,000 care homes, home care agencies, nursing agencies and shared lives schemes looking at whether quality is improving](#)

[CQC's formal response to the government's Green Paper on social care, called "Shaping the future of care together"](#)

## **UNISON Response to the findings**

It is good to see that more councils are getting a better rating for their adult social care services. But there is clearly work to be done to bring standards of care up to a decent level across the whole country. The reports show that the transition to personalised social care needs to be adequately funded and regulated to ensure quality personalised services become a reality for both user and care staff.

UNISON agrees that Councils need to get rid of poor quality adult social care but not by introducing more privatisation or developing local markets where providers are driven by share holder profit and not quality of care. UNISON does not want to see the CQC becoming a cheerleader for the expansion of the private market into home care and care home services. Councils should be providing more services directly for the elderly and vulnerable adults. The move towards privatised care is part of the problem, not the solution, to improving services.

In our recent submission to the Government's Green Paper on the future of social care (**Shaping the future of care together**), we have given evidence showing how pay and conditions are pushed down to rock bottom in privatised home care. Some workers are paid on piece rates, rushing from call to call, with wages falling

to below the minimum wage. There is a lack of training and a high turnover of staff. This can be very confusing and difficult for the elderly, who should be able to rely on a regular carer.

It is right that the CQC have raised concerns over the future funding of adult social care. Social care is already seriously underfunded and combined with the pressure to provide personal budget targets councils have been forced to make more cuts to local services such as adult day centres or make additional charges for services such as meals on wheels and privatise home care services even more.

It is vital that, with budgets likely to be squeezed even further next year, this pattern does not get worse.

### **Branch action**

We have already produced a circular with a branch survey to let us know how personalisation is shaping commissioning models in adult social care services and the impact on employment conditions and service quality. Please see circular **LG/SS/28/2009 dated 28 October** to complete or fill in the attached form below. The information will help us to provide training and guidance for branches negotiating with employers on the best Personalisation commissioning models.

Please return your completed form to Allison Roche before **Wednesday 20 January 2010** by fax on 0207 551 1195 or email your answers to [a.roche@unison.org.uk](mailto:a.roche@unison.org.uk)

Best wishes,

Heather Wakefield  
National Secretary  
Local Government Service Group

Enclosure:

UNISON survey: Commissioning the delivery of Home Care Services



### Commissioning the delivery of Home Care Services

1. Your Local Authority name?

.....

2. Are homecare services being delivered by a local authority in-house service?

- Yes       No       Not Sure

2.1 What is the Percentage of home care hours or percentage of all services being delivered by the in-house service?

.....

3 Which of the following commissioning policy approaches is used by your local authority care managers when choosing the provision of homecare services?

- 'In-house first'  
 'In-house last'  
 It can vary depending on the type of service required.

4 Is your local authority involved in the joint commissioning of homecare services in:

(a) Homecare and housing services?

- Yes    No       Not Sure

(b) Homecare and Primary Care Trust (PCT)?

- Yes       No       Not Sure

5. Is the homecare service delivered:

(a) As Integrated care?

- Yes    No       Not Sure

(b) In multidisciplinary teams?

- Yes       No       Not Sure

5.1 If you answered 'Yes' to question (a) or (b), please provide more details below about the delivery method.

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6. In the table below, please tell us about which homecare services are being delivered In-house; and which are being delivered by external providers. State the model used for each service, why it was chosen and if there are any issues for concern.

Type of service delivery model used?	Service provided (e.g. day centres, meals on wheels, domiciliary care, re-enablement, adult social work services, vulnerable adults in housing, mental health)	Reasons why the authority chose the model? (e.g. cheaper, easier to monitor, tradition, geographical)	Issues and problems arising from the model? (employee terms and conditions, accountability, risk factors, poor service, professional job changes)
Local Authority Trading company (wholly owned)			
Joint Trading companies (part owned by the local authority)			
Care Trusts			
(NHS or PCT) Community Trusts			
Other Trusts			
Co-operatives			
Private Agencies			
Voluntary sector agency			

Social Enterprise			
Other			

7. UNISON is concerned that personalisation may have been used in some areas to mask cuts in the delivery of local in-house services such as day care centres. Please answer the questions below to help us understand how personalisation has affected or changed the commissioning and delivery of homecare services in your local area.

1. What is the percentage of recipients receiving Personal Budgets in your local authority?

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2. What percentage of recipients are receiving Direct Payments (cash for care) in your local authority?

.....

3. How are services with people receiving Personal Budgets being delivered? i.e. in-house or through private and voluntary contracted services.

.....

4. People who receive Direct Payments are not allowed to use their cash to purchase local authority services. Has this affected local in-house services?

Yes  No  Not Sure

5. Does your authority provide an in-house pool of personal assistants to recipients of Direct Payments?

Yes  No  Not Sure

5.1 If yes, how is this arranged?

.....

6. Has your authority replaced block contracting with spot contracting with all independent providers?

Yes  No  Not Sure

7. Has privatisation increased, decreased or stayed the same with personalisation and what are the reasons?

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.....

8. Any other issues?

.....

.....

8. Has your branch been involved in the process of commissioning and personalisation changes in the delivery of homecare services?

- YES                       NO                       Not sure

8.1 If yes:

a. How was the branch involved in the process?

.....

b. How has it affected service quality, service users, union organisation, and workers terms and conditions?

.....

8.2 Has your branch been successful in recruiting / retaining members?

- Yes                       No                       Not sure

9. Please add any further information that you think may be relevant and useful for our research.

[Empty rectangular box for additional information]

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please provide contact details for yourself, a branch officer or a steward that we would be able to talk to about how the branch was involved in the changes in the delivery of homecare services and the negative affects on the workforce. Contact details will remain confidential.

<b>Your employer</b>	
<b>Your branch</b>	
<b>Your name</b>	
<b>Your position in UNISON</b>	

<b>Your address</b>	
<b>Your telephone No.</b>	
<b>Fax</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

Please return your completed form to Allison Roche before **Wednesday 20th January 2010** by fax on 0207 551 1195 or email your answers to [a.roche@unison.co.uk](mailto:a.roche@unison.co.uk)

