

Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA) Form



Area for Assessment	
<i>Name of service or function etc</i>	<i>Reablement Service</i>
Which Service does this affect?	<i>Reablement Service</i>
Summary of findings	
Main conclusions on likely impact of the function on different equality groups (protected characteristics):	
<p>Solihull MBC offers a reablement service to all people at point of discharge from hospital and any community referrals received from the social work teams. The reablement service is provided for up to 6 weeks. Currently the Reablement Service is structured across the North and South of Solihull with operational management being provided through three specific service areas within Provider Services. The Service Managers at Roundmead, Greenhill Way, and Brookvale are responsible for the provision of these services within their area. There are 4 Reablement teams that operate from Roundmead covering the North of the Borough, two teams based at Greenhill Way covering Shirley and two at Brookvale covering Central & Rural area and one Borough wide team.</p> <p>People must match the eligibility criteria for reablement prior to the service being confirmed.</p> <p>The existing staff contracts of a set number of contracted hours per week were not enabling the service to manage the unpredictable peaks and troughs of demand for the reablement service. This resulted in staff at different times having no or little work or an excess of work, the teams based in the North of the Borough suffered more frequently from a lack of work and the teams in the south from an excess of work. Where demand exceeded capacity vulnerable people needing support to maintain their independence were denied an opportunity of having a period of reablement that would enable them to remain as independent as possible in their own home.</p> <p>Currently, Reablement front line staff are able to claim over their hours at the end of a week if they have worked more than their contracted hours at a time of high demand and also claim payments for down time the week demand is low. It is difficult to cover calls at Weekends and Bank Holidays, as many front line staff are on contracts that limit weekend and bank holiday working. Social Workers may not consider our internal Reablement service, for people that may need it, as we can not cover always cover all the calls needed for a package of Reablement. People who need the service may not be offered it. Some front line staff are asked to cover calls more often than others as Line Managers know that they will not refuse to work and may work more than their fair share of weekends and bank holidays or carry out calls at short notice. The cost of this service is higher when compared to the same service produced by externally provided care providers</p> <p>As a consequence of the service review, to improve the current situation, it was proposed that the service needed to look at the staff contracted hours in order to ensure that the service was more efficient and effective to meet service user demand before looking at possible redundancies. The proposal was to use annualised hours contract. This is a contract which allows the number of hours worked to be agreed between staff and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. The hours are then worked in variable quantities over the year allowing flexible working.</p> <p>This Fair Treatment Assessment was designed to assess possible equality implications on staff of the proposed changes to their contracts. By undertaking this FTA we are seeking to ensure that the new proposal, when implemented, is fair to all staff, by addressing any areas of unfairness in our plans.</p>	

13 % of our staff are from ethnic minority origin. This compares well with the Borough proportion of 14% (2011 Census).of the population being from an ethnic minority background. There is an over-representation (99%) of women in our Reablement staff group. 77% Of our staff are aged over 65 years with 8% aged over 65. Only 1% of our Re-ablement assistant staff fall in the 18 to 24 year age group. None of our staff have declared a disability but we recognise that staff may declare a disability at any time. Only 17% of the Re-ablement staff declared their sexuality, the majority (16%) of who are heterosexual.

The FTA was completed following group and individual consultation meetings with staff affected by this function. The consultations included staff Trade Union Representatives, service managers and supervisors. In addition support and advice was sought and provided from Human Resources, and Equality & Diversity Officer.

Our FTA showed that we have an ageing staff. Historically it has been difficult to recruit to Domiciliary Care positions such as Reablement Assistant. The majority of Reablement Assistants have been employed in Care with us for many years – many for over twenty years. They have a vast amount of knowledge and skills to give to new staff joining and are highly regarded by service users. The profile/characteristics including age of the service users constantly fluctuates and the Reablement Assistants are well placed by virtue of their age and experience to work well with these Service users. In order to attract more staff who are in the 18 to 24 age group, we continuously make contacts with Schools and Colleges to encourage students who want to work in care to apply for work placements in Care.

The majority of the staff group are female (99%). Historically it has been very difficult to recruit to this job role. Very few job applications are received from males. We need to understand fully the reasons behind this so that we plan better for future recruitment of staff into the service.

84% of our Reablement staff describe themselves as white British compared to 13% who describe themselves as being from an ethnic minority background. Of these 7% are from the white Irish background. Through our fair recruitment policies, we will endeavour as far as possible, to have a staff group representative of our client population. Efforts are made to respect and accommodate the cultural, religious and ethnic beliefs of staff. Equality and Diversity training is currently offered to all staff. We will continue to increase the diversity of staff, by making sure that future recruitment will be more creative and proactive, reaching out to different communities to encourage them to apply for positions in the service.

Our staff are from diverse faiths, religion and beliefs. Those who practice their religion/faith or congregate with others on a weekend, for the purposes of practising their faith/religion, may find working on weekends under the new way of working disturbing the practice of their religion in this manner. However, the introduction of annualised hours will minimise this impact by providing the flexibility that makes all staff to work some weekends so that those who want to practice their religion/faith are not wholly tied to working all weekends; they may still have some weekends free to practice their faith. Other staff who were on weekend contracts may find that they are able to take some weekends and practice their faiths more on a weekend. The introduction of the new annualised hours should therefore not have any adverse impact on the staff's ability to practice their faith/religion or belief.

No staff declared a disability. We recognise staff may declare a disability at any time. Where a member of staff is finding it difficult to carry out a particular part of their job role, line managers will always check if the incapacity is likely to be permanent. The nature of the work does mean that Reablement Assistants have regular Manual Handling and Hoist training as this is an important part of the job role. Where a disability is declared and it has a negative effect on them carrying out their job role line managers will look at allocating work that the person is able to do. If over time it becomes clear that the disability is having such an impact that reasonable adjustments are not working other options will be discussed with them in line with SMBC policies. This may mean that their contracted hours are reduced to a level that they are able to work to. This new way of working may have an impact if some staff who declare a disability can not carry out all the tasks; then they are limited in the way that work is allocated to them. They may find themselves short of work and this may ultimately have a detrimental impact on their hours used, as they may not be able to use them all over the period. However, as the management of any declared disability will be according to the Council's policy and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we do not envisage any adverse impact arising as a result of the introduction of annualised hours.

Despite having a high number of staff (80%) who have no declared sexuality, there was no evidence from this assessment, that the introduction of annualised hours could adversely affect anyone of a particular sexuality.

We recognise primary carers as those who look after their relatives, disabled children under 19 years or children under 16 years of age who live at the same address. Managers will know which members of staff are primary carers and will always take this into account when giving calls/packages of care to cover. We have

always worked with Primary Carers when setting out work rotas. Line Managers are aware of times when staff are unable to respond to work requests. Line Managers do at times call on all staff including Primary Carers if the work load has increased. Primary Carers can refuse the request to work. The differential impact may be that Primary Carers may not be able to work all their annualised hours for the period. However as they will be asked to work more on weekends and this should negate any differential impact as Primary Carers will be able to work on any 5 days out of 7 to achieve their hours. The worse case scenario will be that their annualised hours are reduced to a level that they can work to without an adverse impact on their caring responsibilities. This could mean that they would work less annualised hours, in order to fit their paid work, into their primary caring responsibilities if needed.

Wherever possible the needs of informal carers will be met through individual, time limited agreements between themselves and their line manager. Line managers are aware of the potential issues for informal carers. These were highlighted by Reablement staff during the consultation period. These are about needing time at home to care for family members on an ad hoc basis. Reablement staff would have asked for annual leave or Flexi leave or even unpaid leave - if they needed time to look after a family member. Informal carers may ask to reduce their hours/days worked to accommodate their informal caring roles on a long term basis.

Annualised hours would enable Reablement staff to use their time more flexibly and give them more choice about whether to reduce their hours in the long term or make them up over a longer time period. Annualised hours working gives them more choice.

This may have an impact on those who are married/or are in civil partnerships and they want to spend more time with their partners at the Weekends and Bank Holidays. As the service is required seven days a week staff who were on a Monday to Friday contract with Week ends on a rota may find that they could work weekends more frequently than before. However the allocation of weekend work will be fairer as everyone will be on the same contract. Other staff who were on weekend contracts may find that they are able to take some weekends with partners more often. The Annualised Hours working will be overseen by the Service Managers of the three areas on a daily basis with regular meetings (weekly in the short term) to resolve any issues and to ensure flexible and consistent approach by all managers

To ensure consistency and fairness in the implementation of the annualised hours way of working, guidance for service managers will be developed and implemented across the Reablement Service.

Our assessment concluded that the introduction of annualised hours of working will have more positive impacts for staff as well as for service users. Although there are few negative impacts, these do not adversely impact on any staff group. We will continue to develop and retain the in-house a service fit for the future that is able to meet the changing levels of demand. Staff will be enabled to enjoy a better work life balance at times of low demand, rather than being engaged in activities or tasks not in keeping with their skill level. The annualised hours ensures that all staff are treated equally in relation to working week-ends, split shifts and bank holidays

Actions :

Actions required to address negative impacts identified or to better promote equality, human rights, cohesive and sustainable communities and safeguarding issues.

Action	Outcome	Timescale
Understand reasons for low job applications from males.	Increase gender diversity to ensure that service users throughout the Borough have a greater gender choice of carers to use when required.	September 2012
Advertise any vacant posts in a variety of areas or ways.	A more diverse workforce. More Reablement Assistants will be recruited	August 2012

<p>Develop and implement guidance on annualized hours.</p>	<p>The Annualised Hours working will be overseen by the Service Managers of the three areas on a daily basis with regular meetings (weekly in the short term) to resolve any issues and to ensure flexible and consistent approach by all managers</p>	<p>October 2012</p>
<p>Agree and implement the final proposal to change to annualised hours.</p>	<p>Service would meet the needs of vulnerable adults in Solihull.</p> <p>Increase in take up of service with no reduction in staff.</p> <p>Better use of staff time.</p> <p>Decrease in unproductive time</p> <p>Reduction in unit costs making us more competitive in the open market.</p>	<p>September 2012</p>
<p>Deliver refresher training on SMBC policies and procedures for staff undertaking recruitment in the Reablement service following the transfer of Adult Social Care from the Care Trust to SMBC.</p>	<p>Recruitment staff are equipped and confident when recruiting staff from under represented Black and Ethnic Minority groups and those with a protected characteristic</p>	<p>December 2012</p>
<p>Date Assessment signed off</p>	<p>13th August 2012</p>	

