

Solihull Adult Social Care Principal Social Worker Annual Report 2023-2024



This annual report highlights the role of Solihull's Principal Social Worker (PSW) and details the work achieved by the PSW during the year and outlines the priorities areas of work for 2024-25.

The Care Act 2014 alongside the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) states that the PSW should:

- Be visible across the organisation, including to people who use care and support services.
- Lead, support and oversee excellent social work practice.
- Lead and support the career development of Social Care Practitioners
- Oversee quality assurance and improvement of social work practice.
- Have a broad knowledge base on safeguarding and Making Safeguarding Personal.
- Advise the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) and/or wider Council in complex or controversial cases and on legislation relating to social work practice.

Abbii Henry has been the Adults Principal Social Worker since March 2022. She has worked for Solihull Adult Social Care for over 20 years in various roles and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role. She is passionate in representing and promoting the uniqueness of social work, as well as continuing to promote and develop excellent social work practice.

Achievements in 2023-2024

Strength Based Practice – driving culture change.

Contributed to the Care at Home retender to incorporate strengths-based principles and approaches.

Chair of strengths-based leaders' group – sharing good practice, developing practitioner's toolkit, raising awareness of strengths-based practice amongst teams.

Improvements in process of recording of a person's identity data (religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity).

Developed a strengths-based dashboard to measure the impact of the approach and practice.

Review and refresh of practice suite ensuring that strengths-based principals are intrinsic throughout practice guidance.

Contributed to the refresh and of the carers assessment practice guidance.

Chair of the Direct Payments Champions Group to drive and promote good practice and performance.

Research

Production of reports to inform and drive practice; 'Covid Absence and Ethnicity Report', Caseloads, Allocations and Processes and Supervision and Mitigating Factors.

Contribution to the Social Work Health Check Survey, which was completed by practitioners.

Introduction of British Journal of Social Work resource for practitioners.

Engagement and Co-production

PSW is a member of the Involvement Oversight Board that co-ordinates directorate engagement activity.

PSW is a member of the Clinical and Care Wisdom Group.

Supporting teams to review and refresh their Team Engagement Plans to support achieving high performing teams.

Regular meetings with Stronger Communities Directorate.

Attended and supported at Later Life events, Carers events (Carers Rights Day and SHP).

Joint CHC Engagement event with Birmingham and ICB (Feb/Mar)

Part of the Joint Health and Social Care Squires Stroke project group.

Contributed to the development of the assessment online portal.

Raising the PSW Profile

Continuing to meet regularly with frontline practitioners and managers both virtually and face and face.

Active member of Regional and National PSW ADASS Group with attendance at ADASS Spring Seminar 2024.

Introduction and embedding of updated induction pathway: including facilitating in-person induction session, with key presentations from the Wellbeing Team, Occupational Therapy, Safeguarding and Commissioning.

Collaborated with People and Organisation Development team to lead support sessions for practitioners around preparing for CQC Assurance.

Contributed to a peer review undertaken in North Yorkshire Local authority as part of a panel of senior leaders.

Contributed to a practice review undertaken in Shropshire Local authority.

Learning and Development

Supported a successful Staff Development Conference with the theme of Working Together for Success, which included 29 sessions with nationally recognised speakers and was attended by over 412 people across the sessions.

Mentoring a newly appointed PSW from the West Midlands region.

Collaboration with the People & Organisational Development Team in reviewing and refreshing of the training offer for Practitioners.

Collaborating regularly with Childrens PSW and Principal Occupational Therapist to develop and share practice.

Contributed to the development of a 5-year Directorate Workforce Plan.

Collaborated with the Council's People and Organisational Development Team to implement a Social Work Academy in ASC.

Reviewed the career and development pathways.

Apprenticeships, Assessed Supported Year in Employment (ASYE)

Supported with recruitment to the social work apprenticeship programme.

Collaborating with the People and Organisational Development Team in reviewing the ASYE programme to ensure it continues to meet the needs of newly qualified Social Workers.

Facilitating support and reflection sessions for apprentices.

Professional Standards and Practice Development

Supporting Social Workers to meet the re-registration requirements for Social Work England; including organising two sessions led by the regulatory body's Regional Engagement Lead, as well as leading on peer reflection sessions.

Providing opportunities for practitioners to access training to evidence continuing professional development (CPD), including access to Care Knowledge, The British Journal of Social Work and the West Midlands Teaching Partnership platforms.

The PSW is the single point of contact (SPOC) for any adult fitness practice referrals and attends the recently formed SPOC forum.

Encourage practitioners to complete LGA Employee Standards survey and providing summary reports to senior leaders..

Implementation of the updated mental capacity assessment form to strengthen the enabling and involvement of people in decisions.

The PSW and Safeguarding Board Business Manager researched, developed, and introduced a risk enablement panel practice guidance.

Quality Assurance of Practice

Embedding the revised practice audit tool across Service Delivery teams to ensure that practitioners' learning and development are in line with best practice. This included widening the scope of case audits to include Emergency Duty Team, carers assessments and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. Independent auditors have also been introduced to support as part of the case file audit process to achieve further assurance of practice and process.

Continued implementation and oversight of the quality assurance framework to provide evidence-based assurance.

Oversight of supervision activity across adult social care and facilitating related surveys to obtain practitioners' experiences.

Peer review summaries that provide feedback to teams - evolved our quality standards to support peer to peer audit assurance and strengthened reflective practice with teams.

Review and refresh of practice guidance suite including carers assessment, mental capacity assessment, respite, caseloads and allocations and risk assessment.

Introduction of Tri-X platform to support local and national guidance for practitioners.

Contributed to preparations for CQC Assurance including identification of 50 cases and development of the4 case file template.

Impact

Practice

There continues to be notable improvements in the quality of practice standards and recording which is reflected in the quarterly audit evaluations.

The Quality Assurance Framework outlines the positive strides taken so far whilst recognising and targeting the areas where improvement is required. Improved knowledge and skills of auditors following the case audit training for managers. Practitioners' application of strength -based practice and clearly hearing the voice of the person in assessments and reviews continue to be of a high standard, including improvement with increased engagement between ASC practitioners and the Community Development Team.

A culture of engagement whereby practitioners and managers have been able to influence change has contributed to the co-production of practice guidance and principles as evident in the work relating to respite practice guidance, caseloads and allocations, and case recording guidance.

Practitioners have taken the opportunity to provide valuable feedback relating to their views and experiences of frontline practice, through periodic surveys and staff engagement sessions.

Staff sessions facilitated by the DASS and ADs has provided positive feedback.

Partners

Collaboration with our health partners has contributed to shared training opportunities, in particularly with relation to access to continuing health care training.

Operational meetings have also enabled interagency disputes to be resolved at the earliest opportunity, with network meetings between Health and ASC also providing opportunities to build positive relationships.

The Carers Lead Officer has contributed to positive increased engagement with carers and The Carers Trust in delivering support and services.

People we support

Analysis of client's surveys inform that identified outcomes are being consistently met, along with the people that we support being kept informed.

The number of compliments received also illustrates of how the relationships between practitioners and the people we support have had a positive impact relating to the service being received. Increased engagement with carers and the people we support has provided further assurance that individual outcomes are being met. All of which supports and enables the wellbeing of individuals which builds upon their strengths and existing support to achieve their independence in ways that meet their needs. Further work related to improving the uptake of services for carers is underway and will be taken forward as a priority for 24/24

Joint engagement sessions has provided opportunities for people that utilise health and/or social care to be 'heard' and influence change.

Priorities for 2024-2025

Develop our peer-to-peer audit assurance more widely.

Research and plan to expand the apprentice programme to include a programme to gain skills, knowledge, and experience and readiness for the apprenticeship programme. This will also support to improve recruitment and retention within our workforce.

Collaborate with the Council's POD Team to implement and embed the Solihull Social Care Academy.

Review ASYE programme and second year of supported employment to ascertain impact implement a research culture and approach across teams, to drive and inform practice.

Embed and review usage of the online resource tool, Tri-x, in supporting practice and improving performance outcomes.

To oversee the Carers Lead in achieving the areas identified in the [Solihull Carers Strategy 2022-2027](#) including implementing case file audits for carers assessments undertaken by the Carers Trust.

Introduction and embedding of the End-of-Life practice guidance and staff training.

Encourage use of Direct Payments amongst practitioners and explorative innovative and more creative use of DPs.

Introduction and embedding of the risk enablement panel guidance which further provides support for practitioners in certain cases.

Launch and embedding of the risk assessment guidance and training to ensure appropriate application of risk assessment practice.

Review and develop attraction strategies to improve recruitment of qualified practitioners including links with universities and job fairs.

Further develop clear career pathways to progress qualified practitioners, supported by both on and off the job development opportunities and support.

Promotion of opportunities to maximise numbers of practice educators across the directorate and development of practice educator standards.

Support improvements to the CHC pathway with a focus on staff training and guidance and joint work the ICB.

Oversee the Joint Squire strokes project in ASC.

Supporting the expansion of practice to strengths-based, incorporating into a service delivery framework.