

Workshop: Efficient, effective and with economy? NAO audit of Transforming Care

Co-presenters: Ashley McDougall & Viv Cooper

The **aim** of this workshop was to understand how the National Audit Office will carry out the Learning Disability inquiry, what evidence they require for their report – and how this approach can be utilised in the Transforming Care work.

The **objectives** were to:

- Consider different sources of evidence
- Discuss evaluation criteria & the NAO timetable
- Provide the NAO with input about current Transforming Care work
- Discuss how NAO audit processes can be adapted and used to track progress at an individual, operational and strategic level

Outcome

- Two key **action points** agreed and brought to the plenary Action Planning session

Background

The National Audit Office (NAO) scrutinises public spending for Parliament, to help Parliament hold government to account and improve public services. The audit work has two main aims:

- Reporting audit results to Parliament, to help to hold government departments and other bodies to account for how they use public money.
- Value-for-money work – reporting on whether departments and other bodies have used public money efficiently, effectively and with economy.

The NAO does not question government policies but examines objectively and independently the value for money with which departments and other bodies implement those policies.

In February 2015, the NAO published “Care services for people with learning disabilities and challenging behaviour” (<http://bit.ly/2dGFZNq>) which was highly critical of the work post Winterbourne View, the lack of both understanding of the scale of the challenge and the mechanisms required to address these, and the lack of progress achieved. Due to these significant concerns, a follow up report will be published in early 2017, and evidence for this is currently being collected.

General Discussion

- Ashley McDougall ran through the scope and aims of the National Audit Office study outlining the context and methodology. For more information please see the slides from the presentation available on the CBF website.
- The group discussed where professionals would fit into the methodology of the study. It was established that the NAO is not auditing professionals on the quality of their decision making but rather assessing whether the right processes are in place i.e. is anyone keeping track of the number of readmission into in-patient care etc.

- Education and residential schools were highlighted as an area of concern for the Transforming Care Programme as funding from Education in childhood is not carried over to adult services. NAO currently undertaking a second strand of work for children and young people in protective services and highlighted that this issue may fall under this study.
- The group discussed where data was collected from within local authorities as often the figures were different from Clinical Commissioning Groups to Contract Teams etc.
- Some group members outlined that their local authority were not in a position to assess the need for inpatient provision/beds as the community support is poor and results in otherwise preventable placement breakdown. The lack of community support means there is greater need for inpatient provision.
- The link between lack of support for people with mild learning disability and contact with the criminal justice system was made.
- Discussed workforce in relation to front line staff needing additional support. If this was included in plans then it is more likely to be followed through with
- Explored the information available on spending. The group asked if it was possible to get a breakdown of how much Clinical Commissioning Groups were spending and on how many people. There are still perverse incentives as bigger provision is cheaper than bespoke, person-centred care.

Actions

Two key priority actions to feed back to the CB-NSG, LD Professional Senate and other stakeholders.

Action	Who	When
1a. Encourage stakeholders to submit evidence to the inquiry	CBF, CB-NSG and LD Professional Senate All stakeholders;	October 2016
1b. Disseminate and consider actions from final report	CBF to circulate details of how to submit evidence to this work to CB-NSG Members	March 2017
2. Use NAO findings relating to provision to review 'Driving up quality code' & its implementation	Provider Task Force/Voluntary Organisation Disability Group/Learning Disability England	March 2017

Further Information

More information about the study can be found here:

<https://www.nao.org.uk/work-in-progress/local-support-for-people-with-a-learning-disability/>