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04/02/10

Dear Tracy

Thank you for your reply to the LINK recommendation contained in the PACE report on Neurological services.

The LINK Steering Group members would like to make the following comments on the recommendation:-

**The LINK recommends that the OSC monitors regular reports on the numbers of Home Care staff that have undergone the differing types of training required to care for people with neurological conditions.**

The LINK Steering Group members discussed the problems that were identified by the OSC in meeting this recommendation and have devised an alternative approach.

The LINK has discovered that all Home Carers, whether they are employed directly by the Council or by Home Care agencies, and non-nursing staff employed in residential and nursing homes should receive training to meet the National Minimum Standards.

The standards are part of the Care Quality Commission assessment and include the following Common Induction Standards (CIS) that have been developed by Skills for Care:-

- Understanding principles of care
- Understanding the organisation and the role of the worker
- Maintain safety at work
- Communicate effectively
- Recognise and respond to abuse and neglect
- Develop as a worker

Each of these standards must be met within a period of 12 weeks before a worker is deemed 'safe to leave' i.e. is able to work unsupervised.

Further statutory standards specifically for first aid, moving and handling, food hygiene, safeguarding and health and safety must also be undertaken and many workers are encouraged to undertake NVQ level 2 in Health and Social Care for Home Care Workers. However, these standards do not include training on aspects of care for people with a specific condition.

The LINK carried out a small survey of Home Care providers and Care Homes in the York area and discovered that some, but not all, provide additional training for staff on specific conditions. It appears that the biggest barriers to this are the costs and the difficulty in finding organisations to deliver the training.

The LINK has contact with a large number of local voluntary groups (mainly linked to national charities) and local charities and some have stated that they would be willing to provide training free of charge. The LINK has now written to all Home Care providers, Residential and Nursing Homes in the area asking them if a list of free training providers made available via the LINK office would improve matters. This proposal has received a positive response as most providers wish to improve staff performance and the LINK is now in the process of collating a list of voluntary organisations willing to provide free training. Although this training may not include a great deal of Anatomy and Physiology about conditions it will be in the main be provided by the people who have the condition or their Carer so they will be able to give the Home Carers information that they cannot gain from books or formal training courses.

The actual training will need to be agreed between the agencies and voluntary/charitable groups concerned but it is hoped that a record of the numbers of staff who attend as well as an evaluation of how it will improve Staff's performance at work will be gathered by the LINK. It is hoped that this information will be helpful in the commissioning process for Home Care services and for public information for those who are undertaking personalisation of their care. The LINK also proposes to publicise this scheme to the CQC and Department of Health in the hopes that it will be adopted as best practice for other areas.

Thank you for your help in this area and please do not hesitate to contact the LINK if you require further information.

Yours sincerely

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Lesley Pratt, Vice-chair

York LINK