

Independent expert calls for a minimum three-year view

David Roe, Senior Consultant at LaingBuisson, calls for commissioners to take at least a three-year view (and preferably longer) to investing in the development of individual capabilities, rather than being unduly constrained by the annual

budgeting process, in establishing personal budgets for individuals with learning disabilities and mental health issues.

Speaking at Optima Care's recent Breakfast Briefing entitled 'Achieving Clinical Outcomes in Practice', David said that only by longer term planning for the development of individuals - by focusing on how they can truly become as independent as possible and geared to better meeting aspirational life goals - will it be possible to work progressively and more effectively towards delivering better outcomes, whilst reducing support budgets, in line with lessening needs over time.

David commented: "Support providers are currently in a very difficult position when they are continually being tasked with achieving better outcomes and wellbeing with more restricted funding. The only way to achieve this on a wider scale is to have the flexibility to invest.

"Social Service departments now have a great new opportunity, working much more closely with Health Services, through integrated health and social care commissioning, to look at both prevention and investment together. Just as they can plan their overall spend over a three-year comprehensive spending review council budgetary timeframe, they should be capable of applying this thinking at the individual personal budget level, to achieve 'more for less', in the medium term.

"This is the only way in which I can see commissioners and providers working more cohesively and effectively together, given severe ongoing budget constraints. However, this cannot simply become a process that is applied to the support of individuals. It is vital for the individual to be at the heart of this process, in a truly personalised

way, working with them, rather than just for them.

"Above all, it is important to understand that ambitious plans should be grounded with realism. Not everyone will be able to move rapidly forward at the same pace; there will still be real limits for many, necessitating close monitoring of achievement against goals, and trying new approaches and techniques, in supporting people, if sustainable savings are to be made."

Also speaking at Optima Care's event was the organisation's Consultant Clinical Psychologist Dr Heleen Malherbe who looked at the dilemmas faced by providers when aiming for clinical outcomes where individuals with multiple diagnoses are concerned.

Dr Malherbe highlighted the benefits of the Emotional Problem Scales as an outcome measure and announced that this approach, which has been used with success at Optima Care's step-down setting The Chilterns, will be rolled out across all of the organisation's services. "The Emotional Problem Scales allow for the measurement of behaviour every 6 months with the focus on the 30 days preceding the assessment. It also includes the opportunity for self-reported outcomes.

"The results are interpreted by a psychologist and then discussed with the staff team involved to gain their insights and interpretation. It's a useful, well-validated and effective 360 degree tool that will allow for measurable data comparisons over time," adds Dr Malherbe.

Richard McKenzie, Chief Operating Officer at Optima Care, also announced the launch of the provider's new therapeutic model of care Shine. Richard commented: "In line with all the recent and current industry changes - the latest NICE guidelines, the NHS 5-year Forward View, the Care Act and Kent Accommodation Strategy - we wanted to design a model of therapeutic care that helps meet all requirements, that is well supported by validated outcomes data, yet is simple to understand by all - staff, the people we support and their families - and, over and above everything - puts the individual at the centre of everything we do and helps ensure that personal goals are met."

www.laingbuisson.co.uk

Target Healthcare REIT Limited acquisition of care home in Kingston-Upon-Hull

Target Healthcare REIT Limited and its subsidiaries ("the Group"), the only listed specialist investor in UK care homes, has announced that it has exchanged contracts to acquire a purpose-built care home in Kingston-Upon-Hull for approximately £6.2 million including acquisition costs. This transaction is in accordance with the Group's investment policy.

The home, Alexandra Court Care Centre, is a modern, three-storey property comprising 84 bedrooms with full en-suite bathrooms including wetroom showers. Each floor benefits from a number of large resident lounges, dining rooms and "quiet rooms" and the property also includes two treatment rooms and a hair-dressing salon.

The tenant is Arrow Healthcare Limited who will engage the services of specialist elderly care home operator, Healthcare Management Solutions, to operate the home under a management services agreement. The rent payable under the lease comprises a base rent subject to annual RPI-linked uplifts and incorporating a cap and collar, as well as a share in the profits of the care home. The income to the Group is forecast to represent a net initial yield in excess of 7%.

Completion of the transaction is expected within the next three months upon registration of the incoming tenant with the Care Quality Commission.

Kenneth MacKenzie, Managing Partner of Target Advisers LLP, commented: "We are delighted to announce the acquisition of this home, adding as it does another quality property to the Group's growing portfolio as well as further expanding the tenant base. We continue to assemble a pipeline of quality transactions on behalf of the Group and currently have approximately £15 million of deals in non-binding legal negotiations. These transactions, when completed, will see a significant proportion of the equity raised in March invested."