

Equality Impact Assessment



Hampshire
County Council

Working Differently – Restructuring Social Work Community Teams Older Adults and Younger Adults

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Department: Adults' Health and Care

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Context

As part of Adults Health and Care's (AH&C) on going transformation programme an overall efficiency target was set of £55.3 million for Transformation to 2019 (T19). Given the scale of the savings target Cabinet agreed that the department could be given an extended deadline to deliver the savings in full. Whilst circa £43 million has been achieved to date some savings are yet to be realised, specifically, the £4.052 million of workforce savings. Since 2018 a significant amount of work has been undertaken within the Working Differently project to identify new ways of working and potential new structures to realise the workforce savings. Of the many suggestions proposed, following extensive engagement with the workforce, 12 key changes to ways of working have been identified and these are currently being implemented, resulting in a reduction in the time required to undertake some work activity. This Equality Impact Assessment is focused on the proposed changes to the social work community teams in Older Adults and Younger Adults.

Description of current Service / Policy

The Community Teams in Hampshire are currently structured as:

- 22 area specific teams and 1 peripatetic team for OPPD,
- 2 Learning Disability area teams and 2 countywide Learning Disability teams,
- 7 Mental Health area teams and 1 AMHP hub.

The Teams employ 572 staff, of which 412 (72%) are full time, 101 (18%) are male, and 469 (82%) classify themselves as white British.

Geographical impact* all of Hampshire

Description of proposed change

Having engaged extensively across the department, the Working Differently project team identified there was considerable duplication and a lack of consistency across key roles within the community teams. This intelligence has been used to shape the future structure of the community teams within AH&C. Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy (EVR) will be offered because the proposed restructure will create new community teams which will broadly align to either the North or the South of the county, and/or be county-wide. As such there is a proposal to reduce the number of teams and hence the number of managers, specifically 2.89 full time equivalent (fte) I grades and 12.68 fte G grades. In addition, whilst no qualified social workers or senior practitioners will be put at risk there is an intention to change the skill mix within the teams and hence the ratio of qualified and unqualified staff. Whilst turnover could be relied upon to deliver these changes it has been agreed that there is scope to accept a small number of EVR applications to enable the desired skill-mix to be achieved earlier. The staff eligible to apply would be limited to managers in Older Adults, Learning Disability and Mental Health. In addition, there would be scope to accept a small number of EVR applications from Qualified Social Workers and Senior Practitioners in Older Adults and an even smaller number of Social Workers in Mental Health.

No final decisions will be taken until after the formal staff consultation has concluded, which is currently scheduled for the 12th of February 2020. However, it is hoped that this approach will have the effect of reducing or potentially removing the need for any formal ring fences.

Engagement and consultation

The Working Differently project team has undertaken significant engagement with staff at all levels within the department in Older Adults, Younger Adults, Quality and Governance and all HQ functions. Departmental Management Team (DMT) shared the key principles of the new structure with staff, particularly managers in October 2019, with the expectation that a formal staff consultation will commence in January 2020. Prior to the formal staff consultation an Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy (EVR) Window will be opened.

Statutory considerations

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers impacts on staff

Age - Medium

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Age - impacts

The profile confirms that 25.64% of staff potentially affected are aged 55-64, with a further 1.26% aged 65+ (total 26.9%). This is comparable with the department profile i.e. 25.20% are aged 55-64 and 2.8%% are aged 65+ (total 28%). Although comparable with the profile it does mean that approximately a quarter of the staff in scope would be affected.

Age - mitigation

One of the key methods of reducing the impact of the restructure on staff aged 55 or over will be the offer of EVR. If staff aged 55 or over are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) they can access their occupational pension without the actuarial reduction incurred through voluntary early retirement. In circumstances where staff are aged 55 or over and are not members of the LGPS the redundancy policy allows staff with longer service to have their redundancy pay calculated on their length of service if this is advantageous. When considering the EVR applications care would be taken to ensure that the impact of accepting an EVR application does not have a disproportionate effect on the age profile.

Disability - Medium

Disability - Impacts

Of the total cohort of staff potentially affected a total of 6.14% are recorded as having a disability compared the departmental figure of 3.10%. Therefore, this is clearly an area that will need careful consideration to ensure EVR decisions do not have a disproportionate impact on staff in this area. Of particular note are the managers in Older Adults West where 14.3% of managers are recorded as having a disability (albeit this figure is likely to have been impacted by the relatively small number of employees in this cohort).

Disability - Mitigation

The EVR application form includes a free text box that enables staff to include the reason they are requesting EVR. This would be reviewed carefully to see if applications are being sought because of ill-health or disability related reasons. If this is the case this would be followed up with a face to face discussion to determine whether their application has been influenced by their experience of working with a disability to determine what could be done to mitigate this.

Every opportunity would be provided to staff to ensure they can have a 1:1 meeting with their manager to discuss the impact of the restructure on their work in the future, this could include changes to location and the office environment. Managers will be

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urged to be particularly aware of the need to discuss reasonable adjustments to support staff undertake their role in the future. To support managers in this regard a checklist is currently being developed to ensure consideration is given to how changes in to the working environment and working hours may impact individuals at work.

Gender - Medium

Gender - Impacts

Currently the gender profile for those staff in scope is 84.60% female and 15.40% male. This is broadly comparable to the department profile which has a workforce that includes 84.34% women and 15.66% men. Given the significantly larger number of female employees the EVR process and the restructure is likely to have a greater impact on the female workforce.

Gender - Mitigations

Staff will be given as much opportunity as possible to be actively involved in the staff consultation to ensure that any disproportionate impact can be addressed. In addition, a significant amount of engagement has taken place prior to the consultation with the staff affected being actively involved the proposed structure and the new ways of working. As noted above EVR applications would be reviewed to ensure they do not inadvertently impact on the current gender profile.

Ethnicity - Medium

Ethnicity - Impacts

Of the staff potentially affected 7.2% are recorded as being of black or of multi-ethnic origin. In one team, specifically the managers in the North and North East of the county in the Older Persons, 15.4% of the staff are recorded as being of black or multi-ethnic origin.

Ethnicity - Mitigation

As noted above consideration would be given to every EVR application with the intent of ensuring staff are not disproportionately impacted. In addition, the on-going focus on regular communication and meetings with staff throughout the consultation process would provide an opportunity for staff to raise any issues specific to their circumstances. Given no final decisions can be taken in relation to EVR until after the formal staff consultation has concluded this additional time would provide managers with an opportunity to gather intelligence about the impact of the changes on the staff affected.

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Sexual Orientation – Neutral

Religion and Belief – Neutral

Gender Reassignment – Neutral

Marriage and civil partnership – Neutral

Pregnancy and Maternity – Neutral

Other policy considerations

Poverty – Neutral

Rurality – Neutral

Part-time Staff

Part-time staff - Impacts

Of the staff impacted by the proposed structural changes, 56.3% are female and full-time and 13.5% are male and full-time, hence the total full-time workforce is 69.8%. 28.4% are female and part-time and 1.9% are male and part-time, hence the total part-time workforce is 30.3%.

This profile is broadly comparable with the department profile, where 67.94% are full-time and 32.12% are part-time.

Part-time staff - Mitigation

As noted above the free text box of the EVR application will enable staff to record any specific reasons they may have for applying for EVR including any family care issues they may feel are pertinent. The panel assessing the EVR panel would take care when reviewing the applications to identify any trends or patterns that might suggest more applications are being pursued by staff who work part-time rather than full-time for example.

In relation to the consultation process itself ongoing meaningful engagement with staff will ensure that specific issues that might influence an employee's choice to work full or part-time will be taken into account in any decision making in relation to the staff consultation.

Pay Grade

Pay Grade - Impacts

32.2% of the staff potentially affected are at grades F and G, 55.8% are at D and E grades and 8.2% are at A, B and C grades. This compares to a department profile

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where 41.21% are F and G grades, 34.99% are D and E grades and 18.91% are at A, B and C grades.

Pay Grade - Mitigation

Although the % of staff recorded at D and E grades is significantly higher in the cohort impacted by the restructure (55.8% compared to 34.99%) a decision has been taken not to put any staff D or E grade staff at risk so they would not be impacted by the EVR decisions. They may be impacted by the location changes but as noted above meetings would take place as part of the consultation process to ensure senior management understand the potential impact to staff. The locations proposed have been identified through a detailed analysis of service user demography and staff home addresses. The intention being to develop an accommodation strategy which best meets the needs of both services users and staff. Further flexibility would be afforded through the deployment of satellite sites that would reduce the need for staff to work from their hub destinations and the continued flexible working ethos enabled by the recent roll out of hybrid and/or lap top IT hardware. Additionally, F grades would not be put at risk either (including staff currently working as Senior Practitioners who are paid F+) although there would be some limited opportunities to agree EVR for those staff in Older Adults and Mental Health to enable skill mix ratios to be delivered more quickly.

Additional Information

After a preliminary decision-making process has been undertaken a further review of the EIA data will be undertaken. The purpose of the review will be to ensure that the impact of the EVR decisions does not have a detrimental impact to the staff in the scope and the current departmental profiles. If this analysis indicates that the decision-making process has had a negative impact further consideration will be given to the decisions taken.