

NEW FOREST DISABILITY INFORMATION SERVICES – JUST GOT HOME

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Demand for hospital discharge services and disabled adaptations is demonstrably increasing in the district.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Housing and Homelessness Services Portfolio Holder to provide additional funding to New Forest Disability Information Services (NFDIS) to expand the Just Got Home (JGH) Scheme, currently run from Lymington Hospital only, to include Fordingbridge Hospital for a 6-month trial period at a cost of £9,750.
- 1.3 Approval is also sought for a £10,000 annual increase to the current funding that NFDIS receive for the JGH scheme run from Lymington Hospital.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year the NFDC Private Sector Housing (PSH) Team receive Better Care Funding (BCF) from Central Government, via Hampshire County Council (HCC) to support the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) across the district. This fund is provided is distributed to district councils as part of a joint county wide plan.
- 2.2 This funding is provided to enable vulnerable individuals to stay living independently within their own home, preventing them from becoming homeless or having to move unnecessarily into a less independent institutional setting, with the objective of:
 - Facilitating timely hospital discharge
 - Reducing admissions to residential care homes
 - Reduce the cost of providing domiciliary care
 - Contributing to the wider prevention agenda of housing, social care, and health authorities by facilitating improvements in individual's wellbeing, and reducing hospital admissions.
- 2.3 In order to meet these duties the Portfolio Holder has previously agreed a partnership with NFDIS under a Service Level Agreement (SLA), NFDC has grant funded 2 schemes. These are:
- 2.4 **Just Got Home Scheme** – One day a week NFDIS visit Lymington Hospital to meet with patients, soon to be discharged, who would require advice, aids, adaptations and help co-ordinating services in order to facilitate a timely discharge from hospital, and to remain safe within their property. Contact and home visits are then carried out once the patient has been discharged from hospital.
- 2.5 **Independence Matters Scheme** – To raise the profile of the services offered under the PSH team's Financial Assistance Policy and increase awareness of how the Council can assist disabled persons within the community, primarily through the funding of disabled adaptations. Awareness events include drop in sessions around the district, adverts in local newspapers and a series of presentations to GP Surgery Staff.

- 2.6 These schemes help the Council meet the duties of the BCF, our strategic homelessness priorities and allow the PSH Team to concentrate on the technical aspects of delivering aids and adaptations to vulnerable people within the district. Without these schemes it is unlikely that we would meet the requirements of the BCF and meet the needs of vulnerable people in the district.
- 2.7 The PSH Team currently provide NFDIS with:
- £19,625 for the Just Got Home Scheme and;
 - £20,000 (maximum) for the Independence Matters Scheme.
- 2.8 NFDIS have requested an additional £10,000 to be able to continue with the increased demand of the Just Got Home Scheme from Lymington Hospital. In 2018 they worked with 90 clients, whereas in the first 9 months of 2021/22 they have already dealt with 300+ clients.
- 2.9 This uplift would make the service more responsive and sustainable and allow NFDIS to employ an additional 0.5 FTE outreach worker to deal with the increased demand.
- 2.10 Due to the success of the JGH scheme at Lymington Hospital, NFDIS with the support of local Councillors and the PSH Team, a pilot scheme will be launched at Fordingbridge Hospital for a period of 6 months at a cost of £9,750. The scheme will only provide support to New Forest Residents.
- 2.11 If the scheme proves to be successful, the intention would be for the scheme to be made permanent.
- 2.12 The additional funding of £19,750.00 will be taken from the BCF budget allocated to NFDC.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The enhanced scheme will provide services to a greater number of residents in the district. The benefits will be monitored via an updated SLA and quarterly meetings between both parties.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost for funding this request is an additional £19,750.00 which will be funded from the BCF budget from HCC.

5. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are none arising from this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The enhanced scheme is likely to enhance the access to services for residents with protected characteristics.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That an additional £10,000 annually is provided to NFDIS in the form of a grant to expand the Just Got Home Scheme at Lymington Hospital from April 2022. £29,625 will be provided to NFDIS annually.
- 8.2 That £9,750.00 is provided to NFDIS to launch a 6 month trial of the JGH Scheme at Fordingbridge hospital from April 2022.
- 8.3 If the trial is successful a further £9,750 is to be provided to fund the scheme in Fordingbridge for the remaining half of 2022/23.
- 8.4 If the trial is successful £19,500 is to be provided to NFDIS on an annual basis to fund the JGH scheme In Fordingbridge.

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT

I agree to the recommendations of this report.

Sign: Cllr Jill Cleary

Date: 14 March 2022

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Background Papers:

Public Documents

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Date on which notice given of this Decision – 14 March 2022

Last date for call in – 21 March 2022