

Care and Support Service

Homecare has recently embarked on an exciting and challenging new project that innovatively combines our accommodation, care and support services.

This project was developed in response to a clearly identified increase in the number of vulnerable homeless individuals seeking to access housing, support and care management services within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. A significant number of these individuals presented with a high complexity of need, crossing physical health, mental health, older people and learning disability boundaries. Caseload analysis also revealed that a significant number of these individuals encountered difficulties in maintaining

tenancies due to mental health, addiction issues, and challenging/antisocial behaviours.

Given that residential and nursing homes are more attuned to the needs of the elderly, who rarely present with multi-complex needs, they are unable to address and/or manage such complexity of need. Likewise, traditional providers of temporary accommodation focus on providing support services but are ill-equipped to manage personal care issues, resulting in tenancies not being obtained or maintained. This group of identified individuals clearly fall through a gap in provision in terms of accessing services, finding suitable accommodation and sustaining tenancies. In response to this need, Homecare has developed its existing services to include a unique peripatetic care, support and accommodation scheme tailored to the specific needs of each individual. It is envisioned that this peripatetic care and support scheme will supplement and support existing services, working with the individual at home in a familiar and safe environment, thereby providing a seamless and comprehensive service which would prevent the recurrence of tenancy and other issues. In addition, by supporting this client group to live independently while accessing appropriate services, the peripatetic care and support service will prevent the inappropriate use of acute, nursing and residential services.

Launched in January 2008, this project has already proved a worthwhile and rewarding experience.

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