

Culture and Communities Committee

10am, Tuesday 13 November 2018

Recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 16 August 2018

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Report number	
Wards	All

Sandra Mair

Chair, Social Work Complaints Review Committee

Contact: Louise Williamson, Committee Services

E-mail: louise.p.williamson@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4264

Recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 16 August 2018

Summary

To refer to the Culture and Communities Committee recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee on consideration of a complaint against the social work service within Health and Social Care.

For decision/action

The Social Work Complaints Review Committee has referred its recommendations on a complaint against the social work service within Health and Social Care to the Culture and Communities Committee for consideration.

Main report

1. Complaints Review Committees (CRCs) are established under the Social Work (Representations) Procedures (Scotland) Directions 1996 as the final stage of a comprehensive Client Complaints system. They are required to be objective and independent in their review of responses to complaints.
2. The CRC met in private on 16 August 2018 to consider a complaint against the social work service within Health and Social Care. The complainant and the service representatives attended throughout.
3. The complainant remained dissatisfied with the Council's response to her complaint regarding the social work service provided to her adult son in relation to the possibility of a vacancy for care and felt that her complaint should have been fully upheld.
4. The complainant felt that very little had taken place in terms of completing an assessment, identifying a suitable resource and planning for discharge prior to the allocation of a social worker and that this had negatively impacted on her son and that confusion surrounding discharge planning and waiting lists for suitable accommodation had added to this.
5. Members of the Committee were then given the opportunity to ask questions of the complainant.
6. The presenting officer apologised for the service the family had received which he felt had fallen below that which they would wish to provide. He indicated that as there had been an ongoing investigation into aspects of the behaviour of the complainant's son, this would have had an impact on decision making in terms of discharge planning

7. He stressed that the carrying out of a risk assessment was important to assist with the identification and allocation of suitable accommodation.
8. Members of the Committee were then given the opportunity to ask questions of the presenting officer.
9. Following this, the complainant and the presenting officer withdrew from the meeting to allow the Committee to deliberate in private.

Recommendations

After full consideration of the complaint the Committee reached the following decisions/recommendations:

That the complaints be upheld for the following reasons:

- 1) The Committee felt that opportunities were missed to minimise delays throughout the assessment and support planning.
- 2) The Committee recognised that other parties were involved in delays in assessments however the Mental Health Officer as the lead manager and wider team should have managed the process better to minimise delays.
- 4) The Committee felt that although there was no evidence that the referral to inpatient rehabilitation negatively impacted on the search for suitable community accommodation the Committee accepted the complainant's recollection of a conversation with the Social Worker that it would impact negatively was accurate.

However the most likely reason for the delay was the failure of the Department to allocate a single Social Worker with ongoing responsibility for the care management of the complainant's son.

Background reading/external references

Agenda, confidential papers and minute of the Complaints Review Committee of 16 August 2018.