

Adult social care providers Sector Leadership Group

Terms of Reference

The **Sector Leadership Group** brings together senior representatives of the adult social care provider sector in the areas covered by Dorset Council and by the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The group meets periodically with senior managers from the two councils, the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Dorset Integrated Care System (ICS) and it discusses the big, strategic issues which affect the sector, for example:

- Workforce
- How adult social care and health services can work together more effectively
- What type of adult social care services people will want in the future

The aim of the group is to ensure that adult social care providers are represented and can contribute when the big strategic decisions are taken. Its remit is to discuss issues which affect all parts of the adult social care provider sector locally and represent the views of the whole of the sector on any working groups, as appropriate. All provider members will uphold the CPA Principles of Engagement. It does not replace ongoing contractual engagement by the two councils and the CCG with the providers from which they directly commission services. Other functions could include agreeing who should represent the sector in other settings, for example at senior ICS meetings; and being a link to the sector if there were a local or national emergency.

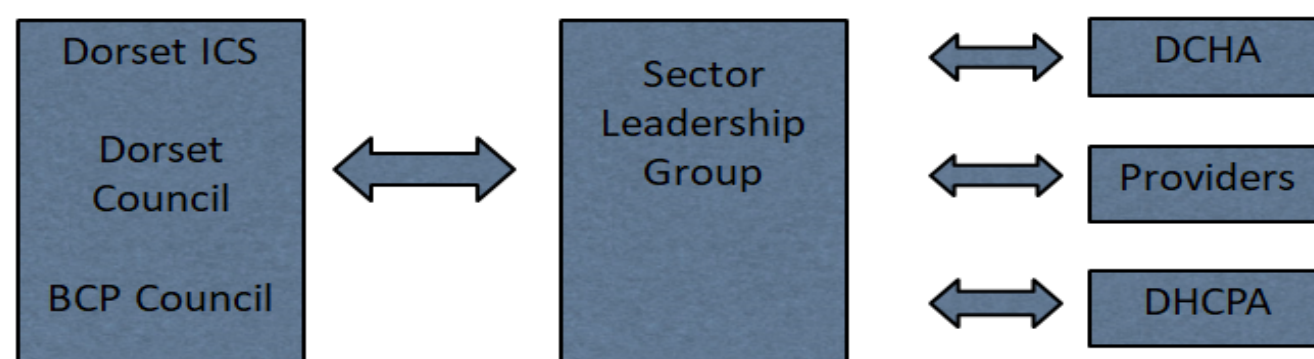
What will the group look like?

The group has between 6 and 10 members from across the sector. The Dorset Care Homes Association and the Dorset Home Care Providers Association each nominated one member, and volunteers were sought to fill the remaining places. The group includes:

- At least two members who are from small providers, and at least two who are from larger providers
- Providers who support older people, people with learning or physical disabilities, and people with mental health issues
- Providers of residential and nursing homes, supported living and homecare; and ideally extra care, day services and/or other unregulated support

The group works closely with the two local care associations and links directly with providers who are not current members of one of the associations. This diagram summarises the overall proposal.

The Dorset Sector Leadership Group



Practical and administrative support for the group

Practical and administrative support for the group is provided by Partners in Care, Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. This includes:

- Arranging meetings and taking minutes
- Compiling a mailing list, and sending out information for the group
- Being the way that people can contact the group between meetings
- Putting information about the group and its work on to their website
- Helping group members move things forward between meetings, for example by drafting letters, reports or funding proposals

Meetings

Once the group has started meeting, it will be able to make its own decisions about the arrangements for its meetings.

When will meetings be?

There will be four meetings a year, and possibly one or two extra meetings at the start. Skype meetings or teleconferences could also be used for shorter discussions.

Who will chair meetings?

Viv De La Fuente is the current Chair for the first year.

How will agendas be decided?

In its first couple of meetings, the group will agree what issues it will discuss and work on in its first two years of operation. The plan for the first year should be quite detailed, but the second year plan would be an outline only.

Any other issues suggested for discussion should be sent to the group via Partners in Care. They and the chair of the group will discuss and agree the agenda for each meeting at least two weeks beforehand. The agenda and any papers should then be sent out at least five working days before each meeting.

Papers for discussion at meetings

Group members will be volunteers, with busy jobs elsewhere, and long papers for them to read should be avoided. Short papers with bullet points, and possibly pictorial or graphical summaries, would be preferred to formal, lengthy written reports. Partners in Care and/or the chair will review any papers prior to circulation and, where necessary and appropriate, will ask for shorter summaries or alternative formats.

Membership of the group

Who can be a member?

Membership of the group is open to the managers and directors of organisations which provide adult social care services in the area of the two councils. Members of the group will need to be able and willing to focus strategically on the whole sector. Often, but not necessarily always, they will therefore be more senior manager and directors. The initial contact will be with organisations with a CQC registration in the area, and with known day services. Providers operating in the area but with registered offices elsewhere, and providers of other unregulated services, may also be included on the mailing list on request.

How is membership decided

The two local care associations each nominated one member, and volunteers were sought to fill the remaining 4 to 8 places. Partners in Care and the consultants who supported the formation of the group reviewed expressions of interest for the group's initial membership.

Liaison with the councils, the CCG and the ICS

The two councils, the CCG and the ICS jointly nominated a lead senior officer to liaise with the group on behalf of all of the statutory sector organisations. The lead senior officer would, for example, discuss upcoming group meetings with the chair, agreeing which senior managers would be most relevant to meet with the group to discuss a particular topic, and taking responsibility for making that arrangement. Topics which the statutory sector organisations wished to discuss with the group, or to seek feedback on, would be channelled to the group via the lead senior officer and chair.

Information, communication and transparency

The group will be expected to operate in an open and transparent way, and to be pro-active in sharing information and seeking feedback. Partners in Care will be key to ensuring that the group has the support and systems it needs to do this.

The group's arrangements will include the following:

- Meeting agendas will be published online at least five working days before each meeting.
- Minutes will be taken and, following approval by the chair, will be published along with papers discussed at the meeting.
- Minutes will aim to give an overall summary of discussions and decisions. However, they won't aim to record everything that is said, and they won't usually record what is said by individual members.
- The chair may decide that a particular part of the minutes or a particular paper should not be published. However, this should only occur exceptionally.
- Group meetings will not be open to the public. However, the group may decide to invite individuals or groups to a meeting for a particular discussion.
- The group will also be expected to plan proactive communications to the sector, for example in the form of an occasional email update, which Partners in Care would help to draft and circulate.
- The group will agree an annual report, also with assistance from Partners in Care. The annual report will be discussed with the ICS and published by Partners in Care, ideally along with a response to the report from the ICS.

Meeting attendance

The two group members nominated by the care associations will each be asked to nominate a deputy to attend meetings and to represent their association if they were unable to do so themselves. However, for other members, membership of the group will be personal, rather than being on behalf of their organisation. Therefore, if a member was unable to attend a meeting, they would not be expected to ask a colleague to attend on their behalf.

The Care Provider Alliance's Principles of Engagement

The Care Provider Alliance has published guidance called the "Seven principles for the engagement of individual providers on behalf of the wider sector." The guidance suggests how providers should approach any situation in which they are acting as representatives of the wider sector; for example in relation to the possibility of a conflict of interest occurring.

The guidance follows the Seven Principles of Public Life:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership
- Accountability

All group members will be expected to be aware of and work to according to these principles.

The status of the group

The Sector Leadership Group is an informal group brought together for the purposes of engagement, consultation and discussion. It has no legal status in its own right, and it has no decision making capacity apart from decisions about how the group itself should operate.

Publication of information related to the group

All publicly available information will be published by Partners in Care on behalf of the group. This includes meeting agendas, minutes, other papers, reports, email updates etc. Partners in Care is therefore legally responsible for the content of anything that is published and has the right to decline to publish anything that it does not feel is appropriate.

Personal data

Partners in Care will be the data controller for all personal data whose processing is necessary for the operation of the group; for example the group's mailing list and any email communication. The extent to which members of the group need to process personal data as part of their role as members should be minimised. Where it is necessary, Partners in Care will provide members with suitable guidance.

Use of funds

Partners in Care will hold any funds granted to support the operation of the group. It will be expected to consult with the chair and other group members on the use of any such funds, but all decision making will remain with the Partners in Care.

Insurance

Group members are advised to check that their employer's insurances will cover their time and activity as a member of the group. Partners in Care will be responsible for any insurances needed for meetings of the group or for any other events the group may decide to hold.

Resolving any problems

The Sector Leadership Group is an informal grouping whose successful operation relies on all those involved working together in a flexible and cooperative way. There is every expectation that those who are members or who are involved in other ways will embrace this, and that the likelihood of any problems occurring is low. It is, however, always prudent to consider in advance how a problem would be resolved if it did occur.

Any concerns about the operation of the group, or about the actions of individual members, should be raised with the chair. If the concern involves the chair, or if the chair is unable to resolve the issue, it should be raised with the Partners in Care manager. The Partners in Care manager would then work with those involved to try and find a resolution which may involve asking a colleague to do any more detailed work needed.

In the unlikely event that a complaint is raised about the conduct of a group member in connection with their role as a group member, it would be referred for investigation under the complaints procedure of the group member's employer.

Ultimately, The Partners in Care manager would have the ability to suspend recognition of the group by the statutory sector organisations, or to suspend input to the group. However, either action would only be considered as a last resort, and should be fully and openly documented.

Review

The operation of the group, and these terms of reference, will be reviewed annually. Any changes to these terms of reference would require the agreement of the lead senior officer and, as far as the changes affected their role, Partners in Care. However, the desire of all parties is to support the independence of the group's role. The expectation is therefore that any reasonable amendments suggested by group members which maintain the essential role, purpose and nature of the group, would be agreed.