



Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 0915104
Date 24 September 2015

Care Homes

Request and response in 'blue':

1. Have the changes to the CQC regulations affected the provision of care services? **No**
 - a. If care homes have been negatively affected, has this change contributed to business provider failure, service interruption or business closure? **No**
 - b. What part of the change in regulation has the most significant effect on care service provision? **There has been no significant impact on care provision.**
 - c. If care homes have not been affected by the change in regulation, what are the other challenges being faced? **We have open dialogue with the Wolverhampton Branch of West Midlands Care Association. Wolverhampton Council has not been made aware of any specific challenges being faced by care homes across the city.**
2. Does the CQC market oversight regime cover care home in your borough? **No.**
 - a. If yes, how has this affected care homes in your borough? **N/A**
 - b. If no, how has the local authority made provision to ensure needs of the care homes are being met? **Wolverhampton Council has open dialogue with the Wolverhampton Branch of West Midlands Care Association. Wolverhampton Council has no reason to believe that the needs of care homes are not being met.**
 - c. What expectations do the care homes have of the local authority and are these expectations being met? **Wolverhampton Council operates an 'open door' approach to all Providers across the City. We are not aware of any unmet expectations.**
3. Does Wolverhampton Council have a Provider Concerns Policy? **No**
4. What are the typical warning signs of affected businesses in distress e.g.

Financial, Safeguarding or Quality?

Financial – The Council uses Dunn and Bradstreet Business Credit Report – this flags up any changes any changes to financial risk that might affect a business and act as an early sign of a business in financial distress. Key measures include business failure score, late payment of accounts due and financial strength of the business

Safeguarding - An increase in the number of safeguarding referrals may indicate issues surrounding the quality of care delivered. Large scale strategy meetings are held that look at safeguarding issues across the home rather than specific cases. These meetings are designed to identify trends and weaknesses in the delivery of care across the home. These meetings will inform the decision to suspend any home until working practices can be proven to have improved, for example in the application of a safe medication policy.

Quality – Typical warning signs of a business in distress will often result in falling quality of care; sometimes as a result of the Providers failure to recruit and retain staff. Quality of care is monitored by the Council's Contract Compliance and Monitoring Team. Where appropriate an action plan is agreed with the Provider to address any quality concerns noted as a result of the quality and compliance visit. This is then monitored by the team to ensure compliance with appropriate recommendations.

5. What is the main cause of business closure?
Financial. We are unable to comment further as this is a commercial decision made by the proprietor
6. What external assistance do you feel care homes would benefit from, to help prevent service interruption, business failure and business closure?
We are unable to comment on the external assistance a care home might require as this would be for care homes to determine for themselves.
7. If a provider alerts the council by providing formal notification of business distress, what are the necessary steps to mitigate the problem?
This would be dependent on the nature of business distress.