

**Report of Head of Service Access and Care Delivery**  
**Report to Director of Adult Social Services**

---

**Date: 11 June 2015**

**Subject: SKILs Service – Service Developments**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

---

**Summary of main issues**

1. The reablement 'SkILs' service provides short term home care intervention, for approximately six weeks to work with people to regain skills and independence following a period of illness or impairment, or to contribute to an assessment where daily support is needed to fully understand what a person's needs are.
2. The teams were established through a restructure of the in house Community Support Service and were operational city wide by January 2012.
3. The size of the SkILs service was modelled using national best practice guidance supplied by CSED in combination with local authority data on expected service volumes.
4. It has been demonstrated in Leeds that on average the annual (in year) saving on long term support from an accepted referral to SkILs is £1,300. The increased use of reablement is part of ASC's strategy to manage demand on the community care budget to reduce pressure on the home care budget by a further £340k in 15/16. The SkILs service is required to increase the number of referrals accepted from 50 to 55 per week from April 2015.

5. This report sets out the case to create 5 additional posts in SkILs. These posts are 3 Business Support Assistant posts (B1 grade - 1 per area x 37 hours) to ensure the C1 Support Administrators can meet increased demand for data collection and reporting. Additionally 2 additional C1 graded posts are needed to create a Supervisor for the additional (13<sup>th</sup>) Neighbourhood Team, and to ensure each of the 3 areas has a peripatetic Support Administrator to cover leave and other absences.
6. These 5 posts can be funded from the existing budget and will increase the capacity of SkILs to contribute to preventing admissions and supporting hospital discharges.
7. To work efficiently the service needs to have greater autonomy to be able to make changes, within agreed parameters, to a customer's care plan. This will enable the service to respond more quickly to changing needs and help reduce the length of time customers are in reablement and transition services.
8. More fundamental changes need to be explored to extend the service to full operational activity 7 days a week and to consider changes to processes and care management involvement at the end of reablement.
9. To make best use of the service resource the service could also develop its current role and explore ways of using staff "downtime" in a productive way by supporting people to restart, or start for the first time activities outside the home. The proposal for a reablement bed base can also consider how the community based SkILs service can support customers moving between bed base and home.

## Recommendations

2 The Director of Adult Social Services is recommended to approve:

The establishment of three Business Support Assistant posts (grade B1) to undertake clerical and administration duties and be the first point of contact for the SkILs team and for these posts to be permanently added to the SkILs structure.

- 2.1 The establishment of an additional Supervisor (grade C1) to work in the 5<sup>th</sup> neighbourhood team in the West and for this post to be permanently added to the SkILs structure. (Options Appraisal paper available).
- 2.2 The establishment of an additional Support Administrator (grade C1) to act as a peripatetic and support alignment to neighbourhoods teams and for this post to be permanently added to the SkILs structure.
- 2.3 For the service to take forward work to achieve greater autonomy in specific areas so the service can respond more quickly to service users changing needs.
- 2.4 For the service to consider the options and financial impacts of moving to being fully operational 7 days a week and, with care management colleagues, to recommend changes to improve the process for customers leaving reablement.
- 2.5 For the service to make proposals to develop the role of SkILs in supporting customers in and out of bed based services and in activities outside of their home to improve outcomes for customers and make use of available staff downtime.
- 2.6 Implementation will be by the Head of Service Access and Care Delivery and will commence in July 2015.

### **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To provide information on the current staffing structure and demands upon the Support Administrators.
- 1.2 To provide information as to why additional staff are required to meet demand and to align with Neighbourhood Teams.
- 1.3 To obtain agreement for work to be carried out to propose full operational delivery 7 days a week and changes to processes for customers exiting reablement.
- 1.4 To propose productive ways of using staff downtime and improving the customer experience.
- 1.5 To make proposals which ensure the service continues to meet CQC outcomes whilst coping with increased workloads and demands.

## 2 Background information

2.1 The SkILs service was established through a restructure of the in house Community Support Service and has delivered a city wide reablement service from 2012. Amendments to the original service sizing, including addition of a Quality Assurance team, were agreed by DLT in summer 2013. The Collective Agreement, signed in February 2013, established that as Community Support Assistants left SkILs through ELI or other routes, workers from the long term generic service would be provide the “switches” to maintain the size of SkILs. With the Council’s ELI offer and the age profile of the in house home care workforce this has meant there has been continual changes to the SkILs team workforce and the service still carries vacancies through staff leaving which are still to be replaced. The Support Worker element of the service is currently sized at 157.99 FTE.

The current SkILs structure is shown in the chart below:

WNW	ENE	South
1 x SkILS Manager	1 x SkILs Manager	1 x SkILs Manager
4 x Supervisors / SkILs Teams @ 450 contracted hours per team FTE 12	4 x Supervisors / SkILs Teams @ 450 contracted hours per team FTE 12	4 x Supervisors / SkILs teams @ 450 Hours FTE 12
1 x Peri Supervisor	1 x Peri Supervisor	1 x Peri Supervisor
1 x Business Team Manager (City-wide Technical Business Support)		
2 Support Administrators	2 Support Administrators	2 Support Administrators
2 Peri Support Administrators		
1 Service Manager (Quality Assurance)		
1 Business Manager (Quality Assurance and Out of hours)		
1 x Quality Assurance Officer	1 x Quality Assurance Officer	1 x Quality Assurance Officer

- 2.2 The size of the SkILs team was initially modelled using national best practice guidance supplied by CSED in combination with local authority data on expected service volumes, the latter drawn down from ESCR and CCC data and more recently (July 13) service referral data and reports. Team sizes were based on the number of customer hours and frontline staff working at 50% productivity.
- 2.3 The service size was reviewed in 2013 as some additional posts (mainly B1 grade Support Workers) were needed to enable the service to increase the number of accepted referrals from 45 / 50 per week. At that time the judgement was that an additional 682 weekly hours (headcount of 26 staff on 26.24 a week) of B1 time were required. The service also had 147 hours a week of vacant posts, for example from leavers through Stage 3 Attendance Management.
- 2.4 SkILs recruited 336 hours from the long term service and those posts were deleted. The SkILs budget still has funding for 279.72 B1 hours which is funding staff working in the long term service pending the transfer of these hours to SkILS.
- 2.5 Following savings of 296 vacant B1 hours being taken from the SkILS budget, there remains 185 vacant B1 hours to cover the cost of the 5 posts described in this report (see para 4.4.1).

- 2.6 Since the re-sizing was agreed the service has been required to provide additional reporting on its activities, including referral acceptance rates and reports on activity on each pathway so service contribution to discharges can be identified. This information isn't reliably available from ESCR. As a result the service now logs, maintains and reports from a comprehensive spreadsheet. In the absence of other recording systems the spreadsheet is now used by the performance team to produce data that is a required locally and nationally. The spreadsheet commenced in July 2013 and records information relating to around 50 referrals per week which also details the stage that each referral is at until its conclusion. This is an additional duty for Support Administrators as inputting and maintaining a spreadsheet was not a requirement when the service was initially sized or revised in 2013.
- 2.7 The service is expected to further increase the numbers of accepted referrals to 55 per week in order to meet its Budget Action Plan for 2015 / 2016.

### **3. Main issues**

3.1 The main issues the service needs to address are:

- Meeting the Budget Action Plan by increasing the number of accepted referrals
- Service efficiencies and increased productivity
- Contributing fully and effectively to initiatives in the city to avoid hospital admission, support timely discharges and improve the health and well being of older people and people with long term conditions
- Requirements around integration and alignment to neighbourhood teams.
- Ensuring the health and wellbeing of staff by them having manageable workloads and by them feeling productive and engaged.

### **3.2 Requirement for 3 Business Support Assistant (B1) Posts**

The main duties of the Support Administrators are to plan and programme the staff using Staff Plan, create customer and staff records, record and maintain the referral/request for service log, complete spreadsheets and record staff sickness and annual leave. In addition Support Administrators take all customers and staff calls as well as cover customer visits due to staff absence and respond to requests for service via the capacity line. It has become apparent that these staff are unable to full fill their duties as they are constantly distracted by phone calls and taking referrals. Support Administrators are required to work shifts between 07.00am – 17.00pm which means there are times of the day when there is only one Support Administrator on duty in each area.

The proposed Business Support Assistant posts will work alongside the Support Administrators. They will take on administration duties allowing Support Administrators to concentrate on planning staff and maintaining the referral spreadsheet. The spreadsheet data is crucial for reporting and producing performance data including managing the number and length of time service users are in the service and transition.

The service has recently undertaken a 'role and responsibility' exercise and identified Support Assistant duties which could be taken from the Support Administrators to enable them to concentrate their time more fully on the key activities mentioned above. This includes being the first point of contact for customers and staff in order to reduce the number of calls going to Support Administrators

These posts will be recruited using a standard B1 Business Support Assistant post (Appendix 1), initially via Better Business Management and the Talent Pool and, if that is not successful, to internal advert which will include B1 Support Workers in SkILs and other elements of the Community Support Service.

### **3.3 Requirement for an additional Support Administrator - Peripatetic**

When the SkILs team was originally resourced modelled the number of Support Administrators was set at two per area.

When the service was reviewed in 2013 the service recruited an additional two Peripatetic Support Administrators to cover for leave and other absence across the city.

Teams are now larger and with the additional demand on Support Administrators as described in 3.1 above the service has now identified that it requires an additional peripatetic Support Administrator so that it can align each one within each area to ensure adequate cover for absences and increased activity as 55 new referrals a week are accepted. This proposal will also support alignment to the NTs.

This post is currently considered to be "in scope" for Better Business Management and the first recruitment route will be via BBM/Talent Pool. If that is unsuccessful recruitment will be via internal advert including B1 support workers in SkILS.

### **3.4 Requirement for an additional Supervisor to support alignment to Neighbourhood Teams**

The SkILs service currently has 12 teams that cover across the city. It is known that there will be 13 Neighbourhood Teams in the final model. It is proposed that each of our Supervisors will align to a neighbourhood team and develop links and partnership working with Adult Social Care and Leeds Community Health (LCH) staff in Neighbourhood Teams.

The service carried out an options appraisal in November 2014 to consider how SkILs could work with 13 NTs.

The options that the service has considered include:

Leave the SkILS team boundaries as they are in the West and have 2 of the 4 supervisors each covering 2 NTs.

Allocate one of the peripatetic Supervisors to the 5<sup>th</sup> team in the West.

To create an additional Supervisor (C1) to support the fifth team in the West of the city.

Options 1 and 2 could create barriers which, in turn, could reduce the number of referrals into the service and the potential to put customers directly into long term services un-necessarily. It could also hinder the process of customers discharging from the service at the right time which could result in customers moving into transition services. This would impact on capacity for new customers.

To enable the service to align fully there is a need to recruit an additional Supervisor (C1) to support the fifth team in the West of the city. Without this post the service would not be able to align in the same way as the other two areas.

The recruitment to this post will be by the Talent Pool initially and if that is unsuccessful, recruitment will be via internal advert including B1 Support Workers in SkILS.

### **3.5 Autonomy to make minor changes to a customer's reablement plan**

Following initial assessment the care manager identifies the customer's personalised outcomes. The service, together with the customer, agrees a delivery plan based on the goals and targets that have been identified. A weekly progress report is sent to the care manager. What the services finds, on a frequent basis, is that the customer would benefit from minor changes to their plan being made as and when their needs and / or progression changes. Currently the service is required to wait for instruction from the care manager before such changes can be made. Typically these changes could be reduced visits / reduced length of visits / change in medication level / trying equipment or community meals.

Agreement in principal has been reached by Heads of Service in Access and Care for SkILs supervisors to train as 'trusted assessors' for telecare (they can already access basic equipment) and to be able to make referrals for the community meals service. This will mean these services are in place earlier in the reablement programme so that their impact on the long term support needed is clear.

SkILs supervisors and managers could make minor changes (for example changes in support hours and times) as and when needed within agreed boundaries and parameters. This would enable the service to provide better feedback to care managers.

With this greater autonomy the exit hours would be a realistic reflection of the customer's needs as the service would have had the opportunity to try different approaches and equipment to enable them to gain their independence. This could also be monitored to see if it results in customers remaining independent for longer post SkILs.

### **3.6 Development of the service offer**

#### **3.6.1 7 day a week admissions to reablement**

Although the service supports customers 7 days a week, 8am to 10pm, there is no capacity at weekends for a service supervisor to carry out an initial visit and put arrangements in place for services to start. With initiatives such a "Discharge to Assess" being piloted in the near future, along with the existing need to move people swiftly from hospital and to be able to put services in place to prevent

admissions it is essential that consideration is given to making the service fully operational 7 days a week.

### **3.6.2 Improving Processes for Discharge from reablement**

The service model involves people being care managed by a registered or unregistered social work team member, or sometimes an OT, at the entry into SkILs, during the reablement programme and at exit. At exit the customer may need no further service, need signposting into low level support or need a package of care to meet eligible needs. At any one time there are around 100 people in “transition”, who have completed active reablement but are awaiting actions by social work/OT to agree exit and develop an ongoing support plan, and for a provider to be identified. These customers continue to be supported by the SkILs staff and therefore limit the service capacity to pick up new work. There is an urgent need to identify more efficient routes out of reablement to allow the growth of the service within existing resource.

To improve the customer experience and make sure the service is focussed on people who can benefit from active reablement; options need to be considered for how the service itself can contribute more to the exit of customers at the end of reablement. This includes reducing hand offs between the service and care management. Any changes in responsibility of staff in the service would require careful consideration of their current job descriptions and of any impact on grading.

### **3.6.3 Inclusion of out of home activities in to reablement**

The SkILs service currently works with customers on personal and domestic daily living activities within the home. While they will encourage people to think about the contact they have with the local community and activities they want to participate in, they do not actively support people with leaving to home to undertake social or domestic activities of daily living in their communities.

SkILs programmes could include supporting people to restart, or start for the first time, activities outside the home. This could include to go shopping, make links with local community and faith groups or other social activities.

There is potential for this enhancement of service to be delivered more flexibly using time that is currently considered “down time”. In a reablement service with rapid turnover of customers, unexpected available time occurs when planned hospital discharges don't take place, or when visits that are programmed in are reduced or cancelled.

The service could also look at ways of supporting customers with transition to and from bed based services into their home. A separate report on proposals for a reablement bed base is being led by Head of Service Care Delivery.

In addition to improving outcomes for customers by considering their goals for social activity these developments would reduce downtime for staff which is disruptive for staff engagement as well as being inefficient.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**



- 4.1.1 The Business Support Assistant (B1) posts have previously been agreed but the establishment and recruitment was not taken forward at that time.
- 4.1.2 The C1 post/s are additional to those already on structure.
- 4.1.3 The establishment of the 5 additional posts has been discussed with the Trade Unions on 18 May 2015 and no issues have been raised.
- 4.1.4 Briefing the TU conveners on the further developments proposed commenced on 1 June 2015 and will be carried forward through the Strategic and Routine Business meetings.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 An Equality Diversity Cohesion and Integration Screening Tool has been completed and is included at Appendix 3.

## **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 City Priority Plan 2011-2015 – best City for Health and Wellbeing: Increase the proportion of people with long term conditions feeling supported to be independent and manage their condition.
- 4.3.2 Council Business Plan – this work contributes the target to increase the number of people successfully completing a programme to help them relearn the skills for daily living: Increase proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after leaving hospital into rehabilitation services; increase the percentage of service users who feel that they have control over their daily life.
- 4.3.3 Best Council Plan 2015 – 20 – this work contributes to the Better Lives programme and to the breakthrough project of making Leeds the best place to grow old.

## **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 SKILS has a projected underspend of £500k for 14/15. £188k of this is related to staff who were expected to transfer from the long term service but have not moved. This underspend therefore balances a pressure on that budget. Of the remaining £312k, £114k is allocated for the recruitment of the 5 posts described in this report, leaving a £198k underspend which has been removed from the budget for 15/16 as efficiencies.
- 4.4.2 Given the removal of £198k from the budget (8 FTE B1 posts) it is essential that the 7.6FTE B1 staff are transferred from the long term service in order that there is capacity to meet the Budget Action Plan performance of 55 new customers a week accepted.
- 4.4.3 Appendix 2 shows the total SKILS staffing budget for 15/16, and the budget re profiled to account for these 5 posts.
- 4.4.4 Recruitment to the B1 Business Support Assistants and the C1 Peripatetic Support Administrator will offer opportunities for staff at risk, including as part of BBM, and allow for deletion of posts elsewhere in the Council.
- 4.4.5 Business Support Assistant (B1) posts will work Monday – Friday and will not attract enhanced pay. As a result we will, in effect, be able to recruit a 37 hours admin

worker for the same cost as a 30 hour SkILs worker and use the resource in a more productive way to improve efficiencies and productivity.

4.4.6 Recruitment to the C1 supervisor post will create an opportunity for staff at risk in the Talent Pool and allow for deletion of a post elsewhere in the Council.

4.4.7 Any additional costs associated with proposals in 3.6 are yet to be established.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 The decisions in this report are significant operational decisions and are not subject to call in.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

##### **4.6.1 Request for B1 Business Support Assistants**

If Support Administrators are not able to concentrate fully on staff programming customer visits could be missed. Equally there could be omissions on the referral spreadsheet which could result in incorrect reporting. If Support Administrators do not have adequate time to plan and programme staff it could affect capacity for new referrals coming onto service. As a result targets may not be met. Due to the excessive workloads of the Support Administrators their health and wellbeing is currently affected and there is a real risk that we will not be able to support key tasks and future I.T. requirements.

##### **4.6.2 Request for Additional C1 Supervisor and C1 Support Administrator**

If we are unable to fully align Supervisor teams to the neighbourhood teams they could lose trust in the service and stop referring because relationships have not been developed in the same way as other areas.

The West could have customers in transition services for longer because Care Managers may not know which supervisor to have discussions with. This would affect capacity for new customers.

If we do not have adequate cover for Support Administrators absence then key activities like planning staff and inputting onto the request for service log will be compromised. This could lead to missed visits; incorrect recordings restricted access to the capacity line and delayed starts of new packages. This would increase downtime and in turn reduce productivity.

##### **4.6.3 Development of the service**

Without full 7 day working SkILs cannot fully contribute to initiatives to improve outcomes for people with long term conditions.

Improving the process for exiting reablement with reduce the risk of people not being able to benefit from the service because of other customers being supported by the SkILS teams while awaiting ongoing service. The use of the SkILS service to support people in transition is not in itself cost effective and failure to pick up the target number of new customers will impact on the Budget Action Plan.

If the service does not consider ways of using downtime effectively then the productivity of the service will reduce, staff moral will not be high which could impact

on staff attendance. This will have a direct impact on service ability to take new referrals and to meet the Budget Action Plan.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 The establishment of three Business Support Assistants, (B1), is critical to relieve the workload of the support administrators and enable them to concentrate on key activities crucial for effective planning and reporting.
- 5.2 The current resource of peripatetic Support Administrator is inadequate to provide cover during absence and increased service demand.
- 5.3 The service will not be able to align with neighbourhood teams in the West without a 5<sup>th</sup> Supervisor.
- 5.4 The service needs to have increased autonomy so it can respond to the changing needs of customers when needed and reduce the length of time customers are in the service.
- 5.5 The service needs to find a way of making inevitable staff downtime productive.

## **6 Recommendations**

The Director of Adult Social Services is recommended to approve:

- The establishment of three Business Support Assistant posts (grade B1) to undertake clerical and administration duties and be the first point of contact for the SKiLs team and for these posts to be permanently added to the SKiLs structure.
- The establishment of an additional Supervisor (grade C1) to work in the 5<sup>th</sup> neighbourhood team in the West and for this post to be permanently added to the SKiLs structure. (Options Appraisal paper available)
- The establishment of an additional Support Administrator (grade C1) to act as a peripatetic and support alignment to neighbourhoods teams and for this post to be permanently added to the SKiLs structure.
- For the service to take forward work to achieve greater autonomy in specific areas so the service can respond more quickly to service users changing needs.
- For the service to consider the options and financial impacts of moving to being fully operational 7 days a week and with care management colleagues, to recommend changes to improve the process for customers leaving reablement.
- For the service to make proposals to develop the role of SKiLs in supporting customers in and out of bed based services and in activities outside of their home to improve outcomes for customers and make use of available staff “downtime”.

Implementation will be by the Head of Service Access and Care Delivery and will commence in July 2015.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four

## 7.1 Community Support Service Reablement Reconfiguration 20 June 2013

### 7.2 Appendices

1. Job description B1 Business Support Assistant
2. SkILs Budgeted Structure 15/16
3. Equality Impact Assessment

---

years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.