



Argyll & Bute
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[REDACTED]
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Health and Sport Committee
T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Date: 14 November 2017
Your Ref:
Our Ref: CW/SC
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Care Home Sustainability

I am writing in response to the questions detailed in your email of 26 October 2017.

What impact does the recent announcement of the closure of 12 residential care homes have on your area?

None, as none of the residential care homes are based within our Partnership's boundaries, however, should any of the resident's or their families wish them to move here then this will impact on the number of vacancies we have for residential placements within the area.

Are there concerns regarding the sustainability of residential service provision (in your area)? and if so, how could they be addressed?

The Council on behalf of the HSCP currently contracts with 14 independent care home services for older people, providing a total of 451 beds for residents. 8 of these care homes also provide nursing care. Spend in this area is significant, approx. £7.3m per year.

The fragility we have is due to the limited numbers of providers, i.e. we have limited choice in localities and if a provider closes this inevitably results in clients moved out of locality. We also have providers who cannot get the economies of scale that large care homes can and this impacts on the financial viability of their business model. One of our smaller sized care homes in a very rural locality was unable to be sustainable due to its business model (it was reliant on self-funders). The HSCP came to an agreement with the provider to support them financially in the short term to allow time to develop an alternative care model, this was at a significant cost to the HSCP and the provider, but shows the commitment of the HSCP to not move people out of area and to work with our commissioned care providers.

Similar to all providers within the care sector, recruitment and retention of suitably trained/qualified staff continues to be significantly challenging within Care Homes, particularly in the rural localities of Argyll and Bute. Following an exercise completed by our partnership, providers advised that the inability to recruit and retain staff has resulted in the huge financial pressures of consistently having to use agency staff.

Due to the continued difficulties with the recruitment and retention of qualified nursing staff, one of our partner care homes have varied their registration to allow SVQ4 staff to cover when nursing staff are not available. During 2016/17, they did not require to use any agency staff. Feedback has been positive and work is beginning to look at rolling out this model across the area where it is appropriate, to deal with the availability of staff and capacity and demand

Due to the age, functional suitability and restrictions in capital funding for new build care homes, we believe the solution is enhancing the care at home sector to shift the scale of and profile of acuity of need delivered by our care home providers.

To this end we are actively exploring progressive care housing solutions, to meet current and future need. This shift in the “pathway” of care requires a refocus of resource into more aids and adaptations, conversions of vacant housing stock as well as specialist new builds. This will better align increasing need/demand with care at home and residential care capacity over the next 3 years and into the future.

Flexibility in the use of housing resources, both extant infrastructure and existing funding streams is essential to deliver this. The HSCP current service demands and pressures will not support releasing additional resource to meet this requirement. Support from the Scottish Government in flexing the housing resource use would be a significant advantage in Argyll and Bute.

Occupancy rates across the independent and HSCP estate have been consistently high over recent years (see attached information). There has only been one recent closure, which was instigated by the Care Inspectorate. The HSCP have developed robust contract and supplier management arrangements which allow for good partnership working, ensuring sustainability of service provision is identified and managed accordingly. The allocation of designated link workers for individual independent homes has been a particular success.

The sustainability of our own services in terms of the cost compared to commissioned services and whether providing services in-house is sustainable in the longer term with the shift to a greater care at home presence is another issue that requires to be addressed. Our H&SCP along with our colleagues elsewhere in Scotland are continuing to provide in-house care home services, the costs of which continue to be greater than that compared to the independent sector and we are potentially not making best use of our combined partnership assets.

We will be reviewing and developing the next iteration of our commissioning strategy/plan for care provision, alongside drafting our market facilitation plan with Scotland Excel. We will work with Scotland Excel to draft our market facilitation plan so that it can then be shared with other HSCPs, containing information about lessons learned and good practice.

The development of the NCHC has been of particular benefit to smaller, rural authorities like Argyll and Bute, through the provision of standardised rate, quality standards, workforce matters and improvements, regardless of location. However, utilising the national agreement does not preclude the development of local variations, to the NCHC, to meet the particular needs of Argyll & Bute residents.

A key element within the reform agenda for the NCHC is the development and agreement of a robust “Cost of Care” Calculator which is endorsed by all stakeholders. Work to date, on the calculator, indicates that the approach adopted by HSCP’s has delivered a fair level of funding support to providers.

It is in our interest and our local suppliers’ interest to maintain a national contract and rates, whilst recognising there is a need for the flexibility of local variation. If we moved away from a nationally agreed rate there would require to be a difficult process to negotiate rates with individual providers, this would undoubtedly be a costly exercise for HSCPs. These negotiations would also be difficult

for the providers to ensure they secured an appropriate rate tailored to their individual requirements. In addition it may be difficult for providers to justify the higher rates charged to self-funding clients.

The national workforce plan will hopefully address the issues around recruitment and retention of qualified staff, ensuring we have sufficient numbers of nurses and that the caring profession is promoted at the earliest stages of education as a career, together with ensuring there is flexibility and creativity supported by the Care Inspectorate as to how services are delivered.

The HSCP will continue to work closely with our commissioned care providers to work collaboratively to ensure we can deliver the care capacity and quality required across localities in Argyll and Bute.

Yours sincerely



Christina West
Chief Officer, Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership

Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership

Care Home Summary

All CH	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Mid Argyll	51	49	47	46	49	48	51	49	49	50	49	51	50
Kintyre	54	54	55	57	55	56	54	53	52	50	53	50	50
Islay	14	14	13	13	13	15	15	16	15	14	14	15	15
MAKI TOTAL	119	117	115	116	117	119	120	118	116	114	116	116	115
Lorn	87	84	84	84	82	80	81	81	82	83	86	84	82
Colonsay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mull	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tiree	6	6	6	6	7	7	12	11	11	10	9	9	9
OLI TOTAL	97	94	94	94	92	89	94	93	94	94	96	94	92
Bute	50	49	49	48	49	54	50	52	52	51	52	51	50
Cowal	146	149	145	151	156	154	152	156	155	157	159	157	157
CB TOTAL	196	198	194	199	205	208	202	208	207	208	211	208	207
Helensburgh	154	155	153	144	145	149	147	147	148	155	150	151	146
OVERALL TOTAL	566	564	556	553	559	565	563	566	565	571	573	569	560

<i>Residential</i>	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Mid Argyll	25	25	24	23	24	24	25	24	25	25	24	24	23
Kintyre	6	7	7	9	7	7	7	6	5	5	5	4	4
Islay	6	7	7	7	7	9	9	10	9	9	9	10	10
MAKI TOTAL	37	39	38	39	38	40	41	40	39	39	38	38	37
Lorn	25	21	22	22	20	20	21	21	21	21	22	21	20
Colonsay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mull	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tiree	4	4	4	4	4	4	9	8	8	6	5	5	5
OLI TOTAL	30	25	26	26	25	24	30	29	29	27	27	26	25
Bute	28	26	25	22	21	21	19	19	19	19	19	17	17
Cowal	82	87	82	87	85	85	83	84	85	82	78	67	67
CB TOTAL	110	113	107	109	106	106	102	103	104	101	97	84	84
Helensburgh	36	36	38	36	34	36	36	36	35	38	37	38	38
OVERALL TOTAL	213	213	209	210	203	206	209	208	207	205	199	186	184

<i>Nursing</i>	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Mid Argyll	16	14	13	12	14	13	15	14	14	14	14	16	16
Kintyre	32	33	34	36	36	37	36	36	36	35	40	38	38
Islay	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
MAKI TOTAL	52	50	50	51	53	53	54	53	53	52	57	57	57
Lorn	37	38	37	36	35	35	33	33	38	39	39	38	37
Colonsay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mull	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tiree	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
OLI TOTAL	41	42	41	40	38	38	36	36	41	43	43	42	41
Bute	18	18	19	22	24	28	26	29	28	27	27	26	26
Cowal	40	37	38	39	41	42	42	42	40	43	47	52	52
CB TOTAL	58	55	57	61	65	70	68	71	68	70	74	78	78
Helensburgh	117	118	113	107	110	112	110	110	112	116	112	112	107
OVERALL TOTAL	268	265	261	259	266	273	268	270	274	281	286	289	283

Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership

Care Home Summary

<i>Enh Residential</i>	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Mid Argyll	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10
Kintyre	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	2	2
Islay	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
MAKI TOTAL	17	17	16	17	17	17	17	17	16	15	14	14	14
Lorn	25	25	25	26	27	25	27	27	23	23	25	25	25
Colonsay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mull	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tiree	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OLI TOTAL	26	27	27	28	29	27	28	28	24	24	26	26	26
Bute	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	5	7	6
Cowal	8	8	8	8	12	9	10	12	13	13	15	19	19
CB TOTAL	12	13	13	12	16	13	14	15	17	17	20	26	25
Helensburgh	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OVERALL TOTAL	56	58	58	58	63	58	60	61	58	57	61	67	66

<i>Spec Dementia Care</i>	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Mid Argyll	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kintyre	12	10	10	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	6	6	6
Islay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MAKI TOTAL	13	11	11	9	9	9	8	8	8	8	7	7	7
Lorn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colonsay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mull	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tiree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OLI TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bute	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cowal	16	17	17	17	18	18	17	18	17	19	19	19	19
CB TOTAL	16	17	17	17	18	19	18	19	18	20	20	20	20
Helensburgh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OVERALL TOTAL	29	28	28	26	27	28	26	27	26	28	27	27	27