

A Closer Look

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Overview

The borough of Barnsley covers 127 square miles and is split into two geographically distinct areas, one highly urbanised and the other rural with disparate locations. With a population of over 225,000, of which 21 per cent are over 60 years old, the council currently employs 238 adults services care management staff operating across 8 teams including a Hospital Social Work Team, Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Older People/Vulnerable Adults teams to deliver adults’ social care support.

A desire to improve efficiencies and the customer experience of adults within its care drove Barnsley Council to begin the tender process to replace its legacy adults’ social care system in 2008.

Intuitive Social Care

It was imperative that the new case management system was intuitive and supportive of the day to day practice needs of Barnsley’s social care workers. In addition, it had to meet a number of other key deliverables:

- Flexibility to integrate with additional IT and finance systems
- Mobile-enabled to allow remote working for social care workers
- Support connected working by integrating across multiple social and health care teams
- Enable online service user access
- Highly secure, yet configurable for various access levels

Practitioner Feedback

Through discussions with other Local Authorities about current systems on the market, Barnsley identified five suppliers to demonstrate their case management solutions to a selection committee.

Barnsley felt it essential to involve practitioners in the 'test drives' of each system under consideration, to ensure the new system would enable them to do their job to the best of their ability. The feedback from frontline staff on Liquidlogic's Adult Social Care System was very encouraging, and it was deemed to be the best overall solution, in terms of functionality and usability when compared to its competitors.

Martin Farran, Executive Director, Barnsley Adults & Communities, comments, "Liquidlogic not only delivered on all our requirements for a new case management system, but Liquidlogic's Adult Social Care System also received positive feedback from our social workers during the evaluation. The overall response was that the system was clear and concise, allowing them to capture and provide information in a logical and practical manner."

System Integration to Support Individual Budgets

Barnsley Council is a pilot for the government's Self Directed Support and Individual Budgets CAF programme. The Council is successfully using Oxford Computer Consultant's ContrOCC finance system to manage social care budgets, whilst integrating it with their existing finance system responsible for corporate ledger and payments.

"That Liquidlogic could integrate with ContrOCC was a deciding factor for Barnsley," continues Farran. "The ability to integrate with our finance system will improve administrative efficiency and provides a platform to support the evolution of social care across the borough, in tandem with the Government schemes."

Early Benefits

Liquidlogic's Adult Social Care System has now been rolled out to 238 users in Barnsley's Adults' Social Services across a variety of teams from adult social work practitioners to learning disability specialists, hospital social work teams and even personnel based in the local hospice.

Key features of the process driven software include the ability to view all cases on one screen and access to a clear chronological history for each case, highlighting when tasks were completed. Additionally, alerts and tasks can be automatically sent to other staff and users within Case Notes.

Previously, a number of spreadsheets had been used to hold and calculate financial data but this is now managed by the ContrOCC financial system, which is fully integrated into Liquidlogic's Adult Social Care System. Amongst other functions ContrOCC is able to display information relating to Individual Budgets.

To ensure a single go-live date for the new integrated system, Liquidlogic and OCC worked closely to install both systems simultaneously.



Linking Social Care with Health

The Council has also worked with Liquidlogic on the Personal Demographics Service (PDS) project and is now able to match in real-time an individual's NHS and social care record through NHS number validation on the national Spine. Part of the Department of Health Social Care Personal Demographics Service Early Adopters (SCPEA) programme, this initiative sits at the core of Barnsley's aim to provide seamless health and social care delivery, improving people's outcomes and independence through better control and governance.

This permission-based, real-time validation means at a very basic level that individuals no longer have to be asked for their personal details every time they are visited. More fundamentally than that, though, the solution allows carers to ensure that they are talking about the same person across health and social care and critically prevents duplication or inaccuracy across care records. Moving forward, this will enable relevant information and assessment data to be shared electronically with the individual's consent, in order to achieve a greater level of seamless care.

Final Word

Farran concludes, "We know that there is a demand from our service users for instant access to information and this will only increase with future generations. We are confident that our approach, supported by a reliable and progressive IT provider like Liquidlogic, will serve the Council and our service users' needs both now and in the future."