



Andrew Sharp
Healthwatch West Berkshire
Served via email

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Dear Andrew

Question raised at Health and Wellbeing Board on 30 May 2019

Thank you for the question you raised at the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 30 May 2019. It was agreed that you would receive a written response.

You asked:

How is the Board assured that the kind of staff behaviour seen on the BBC Panorama documentary is not happening in West Berkshire OR to any patients from West Berkshire sent out of area? (Do we also know if any residents of West Berkshire were or ever have been patients at Whorlton Hall?). What steps are undertaken to ensure this does not happen to West Berkshire Residents who are sent out of area; which Board member organisations are responsible for ensuring this is not occurring and are there any actions that might need to be taken as a result of the BBC documentary to increase assurance levels?

I have consulted with the Head of Adult Social Care and can provide you with the following answer:

'The Council recognises its duties under the Care Act to protect vulnerable adults whether they are supported within the District or in settings outside its boundaries. Our duties extend beyond the individuals we are directly responsible for, where a service is based in West Berkshire we would lead any Safeguarding/Care Quality intervention on behalf of other commissioners or self-funders. There are many services in West Berkshire the Council doesn't commission from but will work with to ensure good and safe care e.g. Thornford Park.

Where we have people placed in care settings outside of our district the host local authority would take a strategic lead for assuring the safety and quality of that service, our role would

be to ensure the needs of our people are met appropriately and safely, supporting an improvement process or making alternative arrangements where we are not satisfied. This would include checks that there appropriate recruitment mechanisms, training and staff support.

As a minimum we only place people in services rated as Good by the Care Quality Commission. Accepting that any inspection report can only reflect what was found on the day we have a rigorous Care Quality and Safeguarding function that directly engages with local care services gathering a range of intelligence to provide assurance that they are performing well. All local authorities have this type of function and therefore the Commissioning Team will make contact with the host authority to establish if there are any safeguarding/care quality concerns.

The Care Quality Board and the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) has oversight of all local services. Where there are significant concerns the Director of Adult Services will recommend a Safeguarding Adult Review to ensure concerns effective learning and improvement. The SAB annual report is shared with HWBB to ensure Board members are sighted on its work.

All local authorities will have similar arrangements, as highlighted above the host authority would take the lead in this work and Commissioning organisations would engage with this. Partnerships are critically important and therefore this work will involve close working with the Police, NHS, Commissioners, CQC and other stakeholders.

In addition, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) have a number of national networks including ones for Safeguarding, to ensure there is some consistency in how we ensure vulnerable people are safe.

No West Berkshire residents were being cared for at Whorlton Hall, it was a private hospital and therefore any admissions would be on the basis of a clinical assessment and not through the Council.

Whilst we do try very hard to ensure vulnerable people are safe there is always a risk that a service will fail.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Jones', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Councillor Rick Jones
Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board