

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Department of Health's Care Services Efficiency Delivery (CSED) newsletter. This newsletter will provide all 150 Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities an update on the progress of the CSED programme and what Councils can expect from us over the coming months. We anticipate this newsletter will be published on a monthly basis.

The CSED programme has been established to support implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Review of Public Sector Efficiency, led by Sir Peter Gershon. The objective of the CSED programme is to deliver real efficiency gains and support the improvement in the overall quality of person-centred care services. The Programme covers the full range of Adult Care Services, embracing Care Homes, Extra Care Housing, Domiciliary Care & Direct Payments.

The CSED programme is sponsored by the Department of Health's Care Services Directorate with programme implementation and delivery accountability under the leadership of the department's Commercial Directorate.

Programme update

The CSED programme is gathering momentum and we have received positive feedback from our Council visits. As of 1 January 2005, we had completed 17 Council visits spanning the country, and other visits are currently underway.

In addition, we have almost completed the two associated workstreams of market research, where we have conducted extensive interviews with service providers, voluntary organisations and end users; and economic data analysis, which provides a macroeconomic view on efficiency and applies latest statistical techniques to quantify efficiency opportunities.

Since commencing our first visit in October, we have continuously reviewed our work methodologies and now believe that we can achieve an understanding of the key elements of some Councils' care delivery systems within a shorter visit whilst maintaining the robustness of the programme. The experience we have gained through the Council visits so far means we can now focus our efforts in key areas and limit our focus in others, thus allowing us to eliminate duplication. In addition, we have created consistency in our data set. We believe this is an efficient way to take the CSED programme forward, with fewer burdens on Councils during this busy period.

As we embark on our next set of Council visits, our focus will evolve from generating efficiency ideas, to testing and refining these ideas and creating a robust body of data and evidence to substantiate our project proposals. By March 2005, we will be identifying a set of projects that are practical, pragmatic and deliverable.

In some cases, we may identify Pathfinders and seek Councils' help in piloting these solutions. More details on the emerging projects will be available in the next edition of this newsletter as the CSED programme progresses.

Craig Muir
Assistant Director
Care Services Directorate

Dan Brandenburger
CSED Programme Director

Feedback from Council visits

'This has turned out to be a positive and valuable exercise where both sides can learn the value of greater efficiency. The visiting team have been well prepared, thoughtful, appropriately challenging and a joy to work with'

**Director of Social Services, Blackburn with
Darwen**

'Thank you very much for the sessions. You have given us something to think about in developing the way forward'

**Head of Policy and
Development**

'You have really captured a feel for the service in the very short time you have been here'

**Director of Adult Care
Services**

Programme approach

The work of the Programme is carried out via three workstreams focussing on overall efficiency improvements and improving the quality of care.

Council visit workstream

We have been engaging with social services departments of Councils to understand the status and potential for additional efficiency improvements. We are visiting a representative set of Councils based on criteria such as geography, size of Council, type of Council and CSCI performance rating.

The objective of the Council visits are:

- To understand issues and challenges facing Councils to achieving additional efficiency improvements
- To initiate efficiency partnerships between Councils and CSED
- To identify and share best practices with Councils.

Market research workstream

This workstream is aimed at developing perspectives on the current and future state of adult care services by capturing the viewpoints of users, service providers and voluntary bodies. We have now completed the following three activities:

- Interviews with 26 care providers and five supplier trade associations
- Survey of over 1,000 care providers
- Desk analysis of best practices in Arizona (USA), Denmark and Spain.

Economic data analysis workstream

This workstream is using quantitative techniques to evaluate opportunities for efficiency gains. As well as conducting standard cost analysis, we are using two reputable statistical techniques which have been applied in other UK government departments such as health, police services and highways. These statistical techniques operate by reviewing input and output variables to generate an efficiency level and the analysis can be used to estimate a top-down figure for efficiency improvements within service units at Councils.

Moving forward

Focussing on the three workstreams, the CSED team take the various findings and develop ideas which are assessed using an Idea Critique Framework. If the idea is viable and offers sizeable efficiency opportunities, a Strategic Outline Case is developed which considers the initiative in more detail.

We anticipate forwarding the first of these Strategic Outline Cases to the Programme Steering Board next month. Both the ADSS and LGA are represented on the Steering Board. The CSED team will then develop the roll-out plan, and in some cases pilot projects (Pathfinders) may be involved. Look out for next month's newsletter where we plan to share more details about what some of these Pathfinders projects may involve.

Questions and answers

Q: Is the Council visit an inspection?

No. CSED is independent of all organisations with inspection responsibilities and no specific information is shared outside the Programme.

Q: My Council is not on the list to be visited – will we be disadvantaged later on?

No. We will be sharing the set of projects for efficiency improvements with all 150 Councils. In addition, we will be seeking Pathfinders from all 150 Councils, not just the Councils being visited.

Q: When will we know more about these projects and Pathfinders?

We are actively managing the pipeline from generating ideas through to practical projects and we expect these projects to be put forward for Steering Board approval shortly. Continue reading future CSED newsletters to stay up to date with future projects.

Q: My Council is interested in finding out more about the CSED programme – who do I contact?

CSED welcomes your feedback – email us at csed.info@dh.gsi.gov.uk