

CareCubed plays key role in negotiation of Adult placements

Case study: Leicestershire County Council

The Challenge

- Understanding whether uplift requests are reasonable.
- Getting providers and social workers on board with using CareCubed.

The Solution

- Embedding CareCubed into processes.
- Taking time to meet with providers and train staff.

Why CareCubed?

- CareCubed is the only nationally recognised benchmarking solution used by commissioners and providers.
- CareCubed provides a transparent basis for negotiation.
- The CareCubed team provide comprehensive training, implementation services and support to ensure benefits are maximised.

Results

- Structured processes embedded, assisting the Council now and ongoing.
- Cost avoidance achieved.



Leicestershire County Council went from intermittently using CareCubed's predecessor, the Care Funding Calculator, to building CareCubed firmly into its processes over a five-year period. Now that CareCubed is firmly embedded into its processes for working age adult placements it is starting to really see the benefits. Cost avoidance has occurred, but the biggest advantage has been giving the council an independent starting point for negotiations.

In April 2024 Leicestershire CC decided it would not apply inflation increases to any high-cost working age adult placement without a CareCubed calculation as part of its person-centered review process. It decided that if CareCubed found the fee already being paid was above the CareCubed midpoint for the forthcoming year then it would not apply an increase.

Dave Pruden, Lead Commissioner for Older Adults, explains: "Previously every working age adult placement would have had an annual increase and that would put pressure on our budgets. Last year we said that for every residential working age adult that has a fee over £1,500 we weren't going to put an automatic increase in, we would do a review, and the inflationary increase would be dealt with in the context of that review," he says.

"There is now an escalation process which is followed if CareCubed highlights that the provider is already being paid substantially high fees, which includes considering alternative homes for the resident."

The escalation process is well structured with negotiation milestones, which means that if a provider says they are not being paid enough, there is now a staged clarification process which then allows both parties to collaborate.

Pruden explains that before using CareCubed it was difficult to understand whether costs given by a provider were reasonable. "It is not unusual to have been paying £2,500 a week and for a





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**Dave Pruden,
Lead Commissioner for Older Adults**

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On one occasion, a provider requested an increase amounting to a nearly £1,500 a week on a joint-funded placement between adult social care and health. The provider was adamant an increase was required, or it could lead to the placement being at risk. Following a full review of the placement, and an up-to-date CareCubed being completed, extensive discussions took place between the lead commissioner, review team leader and the provider. The CareCubed calculation was shared with the provider to be open and transparent which led to an agreement avoiding costs exceeding £59,000 for the financial year, but also further on-going costs, as the council believes the provider would have continued to ask for large increases on-going.

Pruden adds that CareCubed has given a basis for negotiation which providers accept because it is an independent tool which some have adopted themselves. “Here is a tool which is being used up and down the country which hasn’t been built by the council, it is independent, and the council has said it will stand by it. When a provider has a really high fee which is outside the range it gives the commissioners in the organisation the confidence to say we should really consider whether we pay this, and it gives us strength of argument with our colleagues from the care pathway who would always rightly be concerned about safety and stability. We don’t want to move residents. There is a point at which we must, but we go there as a last resort,” he says.

Next, the organisation plans to look at how CareCubed can be used in supported living. It is also encouraging the Integrated Care Board to use it for joint-funded placements and has also recently adopted CareCubed Children’s. “What is becoming clear to the whole organisation now is that CareCubed is something that is here to stay. It plays a really important role. It brings too many benefits to say we are not going to stick with it,” Pruden concludes.