



## CABINET – 22ND JANUARY 2014

**SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT OF APPROVED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS (AMHP'S) – PAYMENT OF MARKET SUPPLEMENT**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the current position concerning the number of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP's) employed by the County Borough and the issues in relation to the recruitment of staff and the impact upon service sustainability. To request Cabinet agree to implement the proposals to address the recruitment and retention difficulties by introducing a market supplement.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Social Workers working within the Mental Health Teams are required to qualify as an Approved Mental Health Practitioner in order to undertake assessments for individuals to be compulsorily admitted to hospital. It takes away the requirement to get agreement either from the individual or a member of their family.
- 2.2 To qualify as an AMHP a Social Worker must have relevant experience and attend a 6 month part time course at Swansea University supplemented by support from the Authority in terms of providing a mentor/assessor. They also operate with a reduced caseload during the period of training/assessment.
- 2.3 Under the Mental Health Act 2007 the Authority is expected to provide sufficient resources to ensure assessments under the Act are carried out within a reasonable timescale.
- 2.4 The service has experienced a very poor response to advertising vacancies over the past few years and has been unsuccessful in appointing people to key positions on a permanent basis where an AMHP qualification is required. This has impacted on service delivery, development of integrated CMHT functions and the overall capacity to effectively respond.
- 2.5 The report links to the Recruitment and Retention report submitted to Cabinet in July 2011 which highlighted the recruitment issues, faced in the Directorate particularly in Children's Services and the Mental Health teams.
- 2.6 The report makes recommendations to respond to this position and reduce any future risks to the Authority.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The External Homicide Review published in June 2011, was critical of the allocation of a part time AMHP as the CMHT's Community based Care Coordinator. Allocation within the CMHT was made on the basis of prevailing AMHP capacity and HIW were concerned with the lack of one consistent AMHP Care Coordinator. This was evident in attendance and participation in statutory Mental Health Act S117 After Care Planning Meetings and Mental Health Review Tribunals detracting from the quality and robustness necessary in discharge planning and risk assessment and management that contributed to a homicide by a mental health service user.
- 3.2 The Mental Health Act 1983, Code of Practice November 2008, advises that the local Social services authority must ensure that a 24-hour AMHP service is available.
- 3.3 The Service Improvement Plan, Ref 11, states " Workforce: Adult services retain staff in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications, training, experience and skills".

### 4. THE REPORT

#### 4.1 Caerphilly Assessment levels

- 4.1.1 The level of demand for Mental Health Act Assessments in Caerphilly over the past ten year period remains consistently high compared with some neighbouring Local Authorities, which is reflective of the demographic need of the population of the County Borough.

Year	No of AMHP Assessments
2003 - 2004	219
2004 – 2005	260
2005 – 2006	246
2006 – 2007	208
2007 - 2008	241
2008 - 2009	203
2009 - 2010	237
2010 - 2011	235
2011 - 2012	266
2012 - 2013	194

- 4.1.2 Caerphilly Borough continues to have the highest number of formal admissions to hospital under the Mental Health Act by comparison with our neighbouring Authorities. As a consequence there is an impact on Social Work / AMHP resources to fulfil the duties and undertake the follow up work associated with the use of the Mental Health Act. Each assessment takes a minimum of 4 hours and AMHP's have to respond quickly to this demand as well as carry out their other duties.

#### 4.2 Recruitment

- 4.2.1 The following table details the recruitment activity for the Mental Health Teams over the past 3 years. It shows the response rate to be poor with vacancies not being appointed to on a number of occasions. The advert for two Senior Practitioners and two Senior Social Work positions in the CMHT's in October 2012 resulted in five applications in total. Of these applicants two were internal with only 1 appointment being made. It can be clearly seen that we have failed to appoint any external candidates from Jan 2011 onwards.

<b>External Advertisements</b>	Jan 2011	Apr 2011	Aug 2011	Oct 2012	Feb 2013 (2 adverts)
<b>Number of AMHP/Senior Posts</b>	2	1	1	4	3
<b>Number of applications</b>	5	2	0	5	2
<b>Number shortlisted</b>	1	1	0	2	2
<b>Attended Interview</b>	1	0	0	2	2
<b>Outcome</b>	Appointment made (internal)	No appointment made	No appointment made	1 appointment made (Internal).	1.5 appointments made. (1 internal 0.5 Fixed Term)

- 4.2.2 The low number of qualified AMHP's currently employed is having a clear impact on the capacity and sustainability on the way in which the authority is able to discharge its statutory responsibility in responding to the need for Mental Health Act Assessments. It is a key component in the skill set necessary within CMHT's to assess and manage those presenting the highest levels of risk to themselves or others and the service. Additionally the Senior Social Worker will maintain their practice as an AMHP. The service has not been able to recruit on a permanent and substantive basis to the North CMHT's Senior Social Worker post for over twelve months. To ensure CMHT service delivery does not fall below the standards expected both internally and externally, two AMHP qualified Agency staff are currently employed in the key roles of Senior Social Workers. However, the supply of Agency staff is very limited and it is not a resource we can rely on in the future.
- 4.2.3 In February 2013 further external advertisements were made in order to recruit to 2 Senior Social Worker vacancies, 1 in each of our 2 CMHT's and a Senior Social Work Practitioner in the North CMHT, which the service has been unable to fill for a considerable period of time. All posts require the AMHP qualification. The results outlined in 4.2.1 evidences the trend over recent years with continuing poor response to external advertisements for Mental Health Social Work vacancies requiring the AMHP qualification with only 2 internal applications received and no external enquiries or applications made. The service currently has vacancies for the positions of Senior Social Worker, Senior Social Work Practitioner and Social Worker North CMHT.
- 4.2.4 In terms of recruitment of experienced AMHP's the service has been able to appoint 1 external AMHP to a management position with a practice component during the past three years, although this appointment was at a Grade 11 reflecting the Management responsibility.
- 4.2.5 The table below shows the current headcount and trained AMHP's within the Mental Health Teams.

<b>Team</b>	<b>Social Worker</b>	<b>Snr Social Worker Practitioner</b>	<b>Team Manager</b>	<b>Current AMHP</b>
South CHMT	3	3.5	1	5.5
North CHMT	4	3.5	0	0.5
Assertive Outreach	0	2	1	3
Others	0	3	0	1
Older Peoples MH Team	7	5	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>

- 4.3 Caerphilly Borough continues to invest in training new AMHP's each year to ensure there are sufficient resources to fulfil the Local Authority's statutory responsibility. The training to achieve the qualification is intensive and demanding over a period of six months. In order to support the candidates and ensure the qualification is achieved a reduced workload is required which impacts on the capacity for service delivery. In addition it has been necessary to provide a dedicated Supervisor/Practice Teacher to enable the candidates to receive the required support and oversight of their development. In order to achieve this a part time Senior Practitioner post has been deployed to undertake this role.
- 4.4 There is a great deal of responsibility and pressure on the AMHP's in their role without any additional reward and it is not uncommon for some staff to suffer from 'burn out' leading them to seek alternative roles either within the Authority or outside. Whilst we have only lost 2 staff in the last 2 years, the loss places additional pressure on the others with little prospect of recruiting replacements. At the time of writing this report another AMHP has submitted their notice.
- 4.5 The drift of AMHP's away from the CMHT's and the inability to recruit qualified AMHP's to vacancies has resulted in our local CMHT's being unable to sustain the response to the need for Mental Health Act Assessments. The service has long maintained the principle belief that a local response achieves the best outcomes for people needing to be assessed for admission to hospital by way of the Mental Health Act. In late November 2012 this system had to be reviewed, as there was insufficient capacity to provide a local CMHT response for assessments under the Mental Health Act. As a consequence a centralised Borough wide AMHP service response was put in place across Adult and Older Adult services to make best use of the very limited resources currently available to meet the needs of people in the County Borough.
- 4.6 The recruitment of AMHP's is an issue that is experienced by other Authorities across England and Wales. A number of our neighbouring Local Authorities have introduced retainers/market supplements as a means of managing their local circumstances in relation to the recruitment and retention of AMHP's. These payments range from £600 to £2,000. A further concern with regard to workforce planning is that the two students and six qualified AMHP's all reside in Local Authority areas that offer greater remuneration in the form of market supplements or retainers for service.
- 4.7 Although Caerphilly Borough continues to train AMHP's the Authority has needed to employ two Agency staff to fill the key roles of Senior Social Workers. These appointments are critical to the sustainability of providing Integrated Community Mental Health Team services and ensuring staff are adequately supervised and supported to oversee the management of risk in service delivery. It is evident that there are continuing risks to the service in the light of the low response to vacancies over the past few years and the resulting need to fill key posts requiring an AMHP qualification with Agency staff. The consequent risks to the sustainability of the AMHP service and the Integrated Management of CMHT's in Caerphilly Borough is apparent and requires further investment.
- 4.8 The proposals being considered for the market supplement are: -
- a) A flat rate of £2,500 per annum (estimated cost £35k plus on costs) or
  - b) Applying a 7.5% supplement to the salary (estimated cost £36k plus on cost)

These amounts reflect the difference between our pay rate for AMHP's and what is being paid in Authorities, which compete locally for these skills in the labour market.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Eqla screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified.

- 5.2 All corporate HR recruitment and selection have been impact assessed however, and this report clearly notes that everything was done to recruit by conventional means prior to considering the payment of a market supplement.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Caerphilly currently employs 11 qualified AMHP's equating to 9 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. The proposed number required to provide sufficient resources is 15 FTE's. NB. The additional number of AMHP's does not equate to an increase in staffing numbers within the team, it will increase the number of AMHP qualified staff currently in the team or recruited in the future.
- 6.2 The additional cost of these proposals ranges from £35k to £36K as outlined in 4.8. The cost of this would be met as a cost pressure within the Adult Services Budget.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 A specific piece of work will be done by HR to ensure payment is linked to the AMHP rota and is not transferable to another post should staff member secure an alternative post.
- 7.2 HR would also ensure that any proposed payments would not subject the Authority to any Equal Pay risks. (See appendix 1 for CCBC guidance issued December 2008 in relation to the payment of market supplements).

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 All comments are included within the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 It is recommended that a Market Supplement be applied to Social Workers, Senior Social Workers and Senior Practitioners employed to undertake the functions of an Approved Mental Health Professional in daytime operational hours of service by considering the options outlined in 4.8. The effect of this will be monitored and evaluated after a period of twelve months to determine the impact upon the recruitment and retention of Approved Mental Health Professionals. The conditions of the Market Supplements Policy apply as detailed in Paragraph 1.4 and will be regularly reviewed.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 Caerphilly continues to experience significant difficulty in recruiting AMHP's in order to fulfil and sustain responsibilities under the Mental Health 2007.
- 10.2 There are continuing risks to the service in light of the continuing low response to advertised vacancies resulting in key positions unfilled on a permanent and the corresponding need to fill these posts requiring the AMHP qualification with Agency staff.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000, Mental Health Act 2007.

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Background Paper: Cabinet Report dated 18th July 2011 - Recruitment & Retention

Appendices:

Appendix 1 CCBC SS Market Supplements Policy December 2008