Lancashire County Council Homecare Services Provider Forum

Email for Caroline Cosh and Carol Hargreaves: lancshomecareforum@gmail.com

Date: 4th November 2026

Time: 0930-1200 hrs

Location: County Hall in the Council Chamber – (Pitt Street reception)

Attendees:

Caroline Cosh	Chair	Clifton Homecare Limited
Carol Hargreaves	Deputy Chair	Masterstaff
Lancashire County Council representatives		

Note – due to meeting being face to face it will not be recorded.

Agenda:

Time	Agenda item	Lead
0930-0950	Introduction from chairs and LCC commissioning	Caroline Cosh and Carol Hargreaves (providers invited to put email on register if they are not receiving emails from the lancshomecareforum@gmail.com email) Introductions from Caroline and Carol Updates recently such as Oliver Mcgowan training, Anyone not currently receiving updates through the mailing list or inbox should make contact to be added to the distribution list.
	Update on chair – submissions of interest	There had been no expressions of interest in taking over the chairing of the forums. Anyone interested in undertaking the role should contact Karen or LCC for further information
	Previous forum actions and provider working group - summary.	It was noted that the Working Group has not met since August and emphasised that the group is important from a provider perspective. Concerns were raised that progress on developing case studies had stalled and that a Working Group meeting should be scheduled in January to address recurring challenges faced by providers and to ensure provider views continue to be represented. Jonathan Leonard advised that a review of Prevent is being undertaken lead by Jon Soros, Interim Head of Service for Quality, with a focus on considering the issue from a practitioner's perspective and examining current

		practice. Members were invited to submit examples of good practice and potential case studies via email to support this work and facilitate the sharing of learning across the sector.
	LCA update and upcoming events	It was reported that the Lancashire Care Association (LCA) has been established with support from Liz Williams, and information leaflets have been produced to promote the association. Members were informed that three key areas of focus have been identified, with task-and-finish groups planned to drive progress in each area. One priority is improving the image of social care to support recruitment and retention, and a media company has been engaged to assist with this work. A further priority is training, with plans to establish a training hub to enable providers to share learning, resources and best practice. The third area relates to the financial challenges facing the sector, and a planning meeting is scheduled to consider the impact of rising costs and potential responses. Members were also advised that the first webinar will take place on 17 November, with a Market Insight event planned for March.
	NHS working group update	The group was established earlier this year and has held two meetings to date, focusing on the key issues and challenges facing providers. Through these discussions, several priority themes have been identified, including oversight, quality, financial pressures and recruitment. Members discussed a provider letter formatted from the working group and issued to the ICB, which had received a positive response from providers. It was emphasised that providers want to be actively involved in decision-making processes and consulted on developments, rather than being informed of decisions after they have been made. It was noted that the group will meet again in the coming weeks to continue progressing these areas of work and to further explore the challenges affecting the sector.

	Provider engagement sessions across different sectors to gather intelligence, understand pressures and support co-design of future service models. **Recommissioning and review activity** for community equipment, carers services, direct payments, short-term support and related service areas. **Co-production hub and digital collaboration space** so that residents, carers, partners and providers can influence commissioning decisions more easily. **Brokerage redesign** and operating model work to create a more consistent, strategic approach to sourcing support and managing market capacity. **Ongoing** contract reviews, fee uplift governance, high-cost packages, block utilisation and market sustainability.	

0950-1020	Cold weather - necessary actions for providers and flu	Wendy Mackley – Senior Health Protection Practitioner Wendy.Mackley@lancashire.gov.uk Flu and Cold weather updates with advice of what providers can do. NHS Winter vaccination programs are available for eligible groups. Leaflets are available if you wish for them to be provided to you. Advice and Information around Flu was given. Cold weather advice and information given. Can set up UKHSA and Met office weather warnings and health alerts. Wendy to come back in May for Hot weather Opportunity for Flu vaccine bus, Wendy agreed to investigate this further and provide an update. Infection prevention Flu Vaccine, A survey was sent earlier this year and got 25 responses. Figures of how many staff were vaccinated from a provider. This is higher than the national average. Just a message for providers and their staff to increase their vaccine uptake. Promote the free vaccine offer.
1020-1100	LCC to provide relevant updates.	89,000 commissioned home care hours, representing an increase compared to the previous year. It was reported that there has been a reduction in spot commissioning for short-term Care at Home services, with a greater focus being placed on block contract arrangements. Attention is also being given to supporting transitions from short-term services into longer-term packages of care where appropriate. Current market data shows that there are 132 active contracts with Lancashire County Council (LCC), supporting 7,824 people with an average package size of 11.5 hours. Only four providers are currently utilising travel CPLIs. The average time taken to arrange short-term packages is three days, whilst the average timescale for home care packages is 8.8 days. Staffing changes within LCC were noted. Karen has taken up the role of Strategic Lead for Commissioning Market Management, and Neil Harrison will become Care at Home Senior Commissioning Manager from 23 November 2026. Members were advised that a recent commissioning transformation has taken place.

		An update was provided on KPI performance data, which has been collected since May and is now considered more robust and reliable. The KPI dashboard is refreshed weekly. Current figures show that 64% of providers are achieving 95% or above, while 82.5% are achieving 90% or above against the relevant indicators. A draft process for quality assurance calls and follow-up activity has been developed and is being implemented. Acceptance rates for care packages were discussed. The average acceptance rate currently stands at 39%, with 10 providers accepting more than 90% of packages offered, whilst 27 providers accept 10% or fewer. It was reported that the average award rate for packages accepted is 15%. A later update noted that the average award rate of all packages offered is currently 4%. Members received an update on the Trusted Review Pilot, which has now been rolled out. Providers were advised that staff details, roles, qualifications and evidence of completed training will be required. Individual email addresses will also be needed to facilitate system access. Capacity issues have been identified and referred back to managers for consideration. Members were also informed of changes to inbox naming arrangements. Providers requested greater visibility regarding waiting times for both care assessments and financial assessments, as this information would assist with service planning. Feedback from providers indicated that hospital discharge processes appear to be improving and are becoming easier to navigate. Members were advised that hospital teams are returning to work on-site within hospital wards. A request was made for representation from hospital discharge teams at future Lancashire Care Association (LCA) meetings. An update on Round 3 activity will be revisited next year. Members were informed that the next phase of developments will go live on 9 November A presentation was provided on changes to brokerage arrangements within LCC. The service is moving from a

		service-first approach to a person-first approach, aligning with the Living Better Lives principles, co-production models and personalised care. Feedback from more than 700 people informed the redesign and highlighted the importance of personalised, flexible support rather than a one-size-fits-all model. The service previously known as Care Nav has been renamed Care Brokerage. Brokerage staff will spend more time discussing individual goals and outcomes with people to ensure support is tailored to their needs. Training for Brokerage Officers is scheduled to take place on Monday. An update was provided on the Visits Module, which will introduce electronic processes in place of manual systems. Following a successful pilot with two providers, the project is now moving into its second phase. Members were advised that cost assurance work within Adult Social Care remains ongoing. It was reported that the Carers Assessment process is currently being redesigned. A review of Direct Payments is also underway. An update was provided on Extra Care Housing, where there are currently 17 sites across the county operating under two different service models. Six contracts are due to end in May 2028, and consultation work will need to be undertaken to inform future arrangements. Finally, discussed current care package arrangements, including the use of 45-minute visits, and whether 45-minute care packages could be developed and commissioned more widely in the future.
1100-1120	Agenda items for 2027 forums – what do providers want/ need from the forums?	Please let us know which topics you would like covered next year and whether there are any specific speakers or organisations you would like invited to present
1120-1150	NHS Professionals International – providing details on displaced worker and international worker recruitment service	4,403 sponsor licences have been revoked this year, with 1,545 revocations occurring in Q1. Revocations can occur without a Home Office audit taking place and are currently at a record level. The Regional Support Programme operates across the North West, helping providers recruit internationally and offering support where a sponsor licence has been revoked or is at risk of revocation. Common areas of support include:

		Home Office delays Home Office audits Sponsor licence revocations Displaced workers Compliance requirements Sponsorship Management System (SMS) support Providers are encouraged to seek support before an audit takes place, as a sponsor licence revocation cannot be overturned once it has been issued. There are currently 1,800 displaced workers who have been registered and screened. A Displaced Worker Recruitment Pathway is in place to support employers in recruiting displaced workers. Services available through the programme include: A web portal Online training Telephone consultations Support with recruiting displaced workers
1150	Meeting Close	
	Dates for 2027 Teams meetings (0930-1200 hrs): 10th February 2027 12th May 2027 11th August 2027 10th Nov 2027 – County Hall face to face	