



Impact Data: service example

Name of service and location (please include country).

Access Independent Ltd, working on behalf of Suffolk County Council in the UK, undertaking occupational therapy assessments of service users in the community.

Description of the service: eg. profile of users, setting, integrated/multidisciplinary, 7 day, etc.

In February 2018, Suffolk County Council (SCC) engaged Access Independent to undertake a backlog of approximately 250 occupational therapy assessments which Orbit East HIA had previously been contracted to undertake on behalf of SCC.

SCC had overall responsibility to ensure that the assessments are undertaken in a way that discharges its legal duties and contracted with Orbit East HIA to fulfil this responsibility. Following this agreement, Access Independent were approached to undertake the clinical aspects of these assessments.

The assessments covered the following geographical areas: East Suffolk (Waveney & Suffolk Coastal councils), Ipswich Borough Council, West Suffolk (Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury councils) and Babergh Mid Suffolk (Babergh & Mid Suffolk councils).

The general principle was for assessments to be carried out in date order, ie. oldest first, although some priority assessments were identified. The assessments were coordinated in an order that distributed them geographically across the county in such a way that the district councils maintained the capacity to undertake the volume of referrals arising.

The challenge: What need was the service set up to meet? What challenge does your service address?

The delivery of occupational therapy assessments to 250 residents identified as requiring major adaptations to their homes had not been completed over a 6-month period, leading to strains on other occupational therapy services in the county due to the assessment backlog, and potentially leaving service users at risk, and with a reduced standard of independence and wellbeing.

Actions taken: eg. aims of service, delivery, assessments and measures used.

Access Independent were required to mobilise a team of qualified occupational therapists to complete 250 cases over four months from February to May 2018.

The requirement was for all therapists to have training and experience in housing assessments and preparation of major adaptation recommendations to be funded under the Disabled Facilities Grant scheme.

Access Independent were required to coordinate the assessments, recommendations and grants applications between SCC, Orbit HIA and the District and Borough councils.

Impact: eg. difference to service users, carers, systems delivery, other services and delivery partners.

Access Independent's intervention facilitated the provision of major adaptations, which service users had been identified as requiring prior to the project starting. It enabled the redeployment of further occupational therapy resources in the county and enabled other stakeholders to divert resources to other much-needed areas of community development.

Measure of success: Improvements to service users – occupational outcomes, health and wellbeing outcomes – mental and physical health benefits, social engagement, ability to self-manage. Value to the carer(s) and improvements to service delivery (quality of care outcomes). Costs savings/return on investment.

Access Independent were able to deliver timely occupational therapy interventions resulting in the appropriate adaptations and equipment being provided to service users. As part of the service delivery, service user satisfaction and improvements to their independence, health and wellbeing were measured. 84% of service users reported that their situation had improved as a result of Access Independent's work, and 94% of service users were satisfied or very satisfied with the experience.

In addition, we supported Suffolk County Council and Orbit Home Improvement Agency to clear the backlog of OT assessments within four months, achieving 93% of our service-delivery KPIs. Feedback from the Project Managers at Suffolk was overwhelmingly positive:

"I'd just like to formally thank all of you for your input and support in getting this resolved. I know at times it has been challenging but a combination of all of your efforts has meant that those poor folk who had been so let down have at least now had their needs properly assessed and appropriate action taken or recommendations made to address these – so, many thanks!

"I'd like to especially thank you for your co-ordinating, advisory activities, and also to those OTs who have gone out to carry out the assessments, often in their own time."

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Please confirm that you have gained permission from your employer to share this information: Yes.