



# Provider update on Care Home Brokerage 3 month review

11<sup>th</sup> March 2026

# Introduction

- The review covered the period 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026 (13 weeks)
- It provides a brief overview of the service, performance and make recommendations for any changes to the service at this point.
- It is important to recognise that this is a completely new provision in Bradford and three months is a relatively short period.
- Further reviews are planned at six months and a year which will provide more detail.
- Key themes identified in this review are:
  - Communication
  - Understanding of the process

# The process

Some changes have been made to processes over this initial delivery period:

- DTA: Initially a change was made to send referrals to all care homes with a vacancy to try to speed up the process, however the level of contact was not manageable. The CHB Team are now sending referrals based on constituency the person identifies they want to be placed in via the Social Worker.
- Timescales were temporarily shortened for responding to DTA referrals during winter pressure / Doctor's strikes
- Emergency same day placements: It was agreed IAH would process any emergency same day placements.

# CHB Team

- The CHB Team is made up of one Support Options Team Leader and four CHB Officers
- We have had once vacancy in the team since December.
- The number of referrals received by the team is higher than originally modelled for (modelling: 16 referrals pw, actuals: 24 referrals pw).
- As the team has been carrying a vacancy it is difficult to say whether four officers is sufficient or whether additional staffing is needed. This will be looked at in the six month review.

# Usage

- A total of 312 referrals have been received by CHB team in the 13 week period covered by this report.
- That is an average of 24 referrals a week.
- Of these referrals:
  - 167 have been closed (care home move agreed) during the 13 week period
  - 44 were withdrawn
- The number of service lines the teams are placing where a move to a care home has already agreed (being called 'retrospective' referrals) is significant. 39% of referrals come with a home identified and in some cases the person already moved into the home.
- We feel it would be useful to explore this further.

# Care Homes

Moves have been agreed to 56 care homes within the District out of a possible 71 signed up to CHB service and able to take placements. This means 78% of care homes have had a move agreed through brokerage.

Of the 56 homes where a moves has been agreed:

- The highest number of moves agreed to one home is 12.
- 24 homes had one move agreed.
- The average is three moves agreed per home.

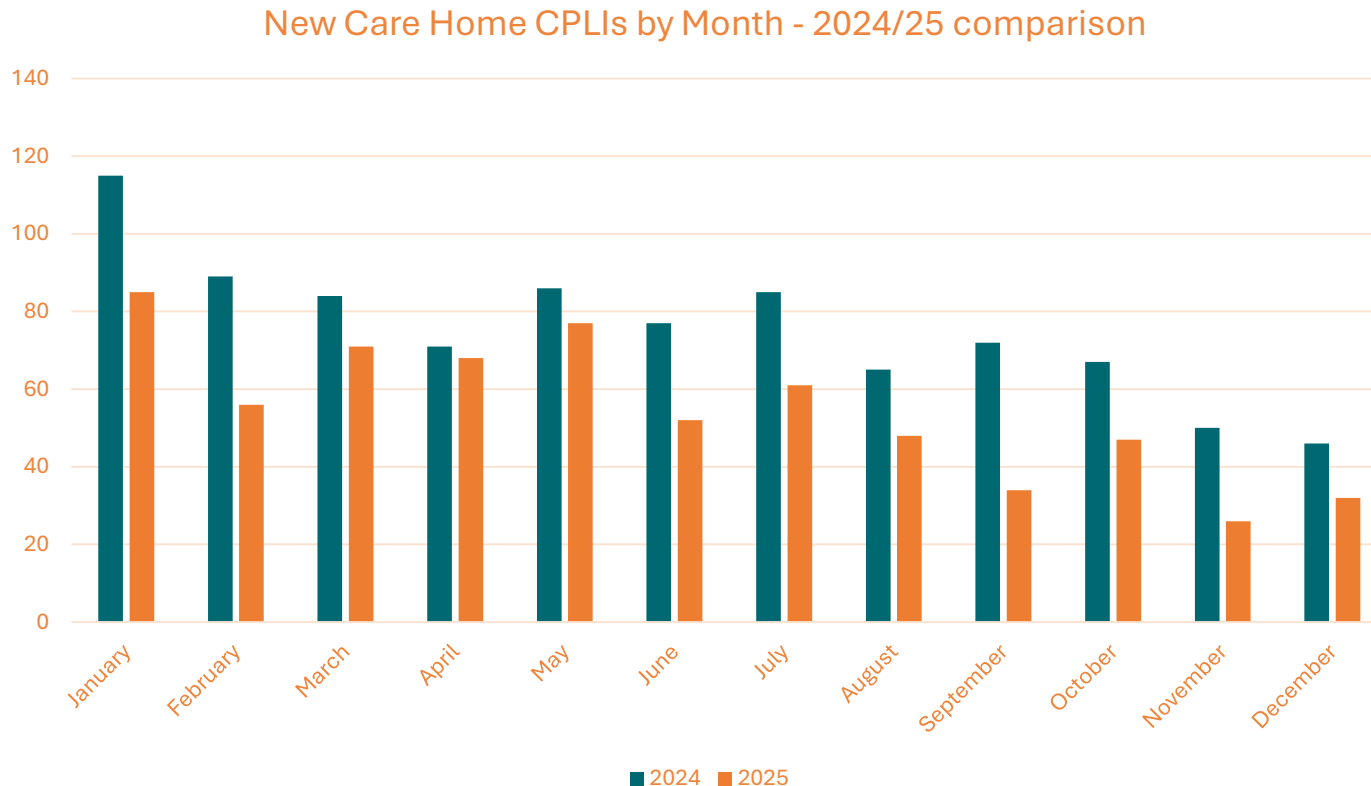
# Timescales

- Average between referral sent to CHB Team to date allocated in CHB Team = 0.88 days
- Average between date referral added on Connect to Support (CtS) to Care Homes Responding and SU decision = 4.60 days.
- Average between date referral added on CtS and date awarded on CtS = 7.74 days

These figures are affected by the number of retrospective referrals which are de-prioritised when adding referrals to Connect to Support.

# Market Impact

- Number of moves into services in the 13 week period reflects existing trend in care home moved:



# Feedback from people and families

- An online survey has been shared with families involved with choosing care homes. Only eight responses were received the period. We also looked at other sources of feedback.
- 4 families rated their experience of the team as good or very good, two said their experience was 'fair' and two felt their experience was poor or very poor.
- 6 felt their Brokerage Officer was helpful and supportive
- The main area of concern flagged was around communication, including how clear the communication was and how relevant the information is in different cases.

# Feedback from current providers (1)

- 35 responses were received to the care home feedback survey (47% response rate)
- Care Homes said the following things worked well:
  - Transparency over the packages available and clear view of referrals
  - There is a single system for referrals which is easier to manage than phone calls
  - Being able to see assessments sooner in the process
- 16 respondents said nothing worked well. Of these, 14 had had moves into their homes and two had not.
- Several care homes said they thought beds offered at base rate were being favoured.
- Two care homes reported social workers making negative comments to their staff about the brokerage team

# Feedback from current providers (2)

Areas for improvements were identified as:

- Better communication needed on progress of referrals
- Ensuring all assessment documents are correct and up to date
- Declined / closed referrals being removed / hidden on the system more quickly
- Improved targeting of referrals
- Clearer guidance on when assessments can / should take place
- More time and information is given to families to support decision-making
- Further training and guidance is given on processes and using the system

# Feedback from CHB Team

- There are elements of Connect to Support that don't work well.
- Some care homes are contacting people outside of the process, which can lead to confusion
- Often only a few care homes respond within the set timescales, which can limit choice
- Responsible People acting on behalf of the person moving to the home are often not returning signed documents, causing delays.
- Communication with social workers does not always work well.
- Lots of referrals are coming in late in the day – making timescales more challenging.

# Social Worker feedback

- Communication needs to improve on all sides
- Out of Area placements, and DTA placements for younger people, remain the responsibility of social workers. They would like these to move to the CHB team.
- Some of the Council's internal systems haven't been fully amended to reflect the work of the brokerage team.
- Additional training / guidance is needed for social workers to ensure they get the best out of the team.
- Care Homes are contacting them to complain about the CHB Team rather than going to the team directly.

# Feedback from other teams

- DTA timescales of the hospital are very ambitious and faster than families wish to work to. CHB are caught in the middle of this.
- The CHB Team is generally having a positive effect on Financial Support Service's workload. The team recognise that CHB are facing the same issues previously dealt with in FSS about people not returning signed documents.

# Recommendations (1)

6.1	Monthly updates will be shared in the Provider Bulletin on CHB performance.
6.2	A sample of retrospective referrals are reviewed to understand why referrals were sent after a care home move had been agreed.
6.3	Continue with plan to review emergency / unplanned closure process
6.4	Review, and potentially shorten, checklist for retrospective referrals to ensure families have still had the required information on contributions and top-ups but without irrelevant information.
6.5	Further training and support is provided to the team on communication with families.
6.6	A fact sheet / handbook is developed which can be sent to families explaining the process, why it is taking place and things to consider when looking at care homes.



# Recommendations (2)

6.7	A process is established for giving people / families more upfront information about care homes when options are shared, for example where relevant highlighting information relevant to need (e.g. dementia specialist) or where a home matches preferences.
6.8	Further training and support is provided to the team on communication with providers.
6.9	A list of improvements to CtS (e.g. automatic replies, messaging, archiving cases and filtering of providers) is put together and a quote requested from PPL. Funding for investment into CtS is requested from DMT.
6.10	The Brokerage Dashboard is reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of Brokerage Officers and enables them to accurately target referrals and pull from the system information on care homes for people / their families (see 5.4)
6.11	Further information sessions are set up for providers, topic to include assessments and use of the CtS system.

# Recommendations (3)

6.12	Analysis is carried on the number of homes chosen at a base rate vs. with a top-up.
6.13	All stakeholders involved in the process are reminded of the need to be respectful and professional when speaking about colleagues and partners.
6.14	Contact details and current location of the person are removed from assessment documents before being sent with a referral. Contact details are only shared with the home moving to the assessment step.
6.15	The process for signing of documents reviewed.
6.16	Consideration is given to what automation could be introduced to both making signing easier and reminders being sent.
6.17	Managers in social work teams remind all staff about the requirement to issue the 'Paying for Care' booklet at an early stage in conversation.

# Recommendations (4)

6.18	<p>Managers in social work teams remind staff making referrals to the Care Home Brokerage team to tell the person / their families this is taking place and explain that they will be contacted to discuss choosing their care home.</p> <p>A short information leaflet is produced to support social workers with this.</p>
6.19	<p>Further work is needed to ensure the CHB Team and Social Work teams understand each other's roles and are able to work together in a collaborative and supportive. It is recommended a plan is put in place to build links between the teams.</p>
6.20	<p>Placement Group processes are reviewed to ensure they fully reflect the introduction of the Care Home Brokerage Team.</p>
6.21	<p>Consideration is given to out of area placement being picked up by the CHB Team. Staff capacity would need to be considered.</p>
6.22	<p>Information and maps produced for social workers on the brokerage process are reviewed to ensure they reflect current practice and are saved in an accessible location.</p>

# Recommendations (5)

6.23	Addition training / drop-in sessions are planned for social work staff who are unsure of the process or need further guidance on working with the CHB team.
6.24	Further guidance is provided for teams for when someone lacks capacity and doesn't have a representative
6.25	Further guidance is provided to Social Workers / Trusted Assessors on how they can flag specific needs / requirements within referrals to CHB Officers so these are considered when collecting care home options

# Next steps

- We will be implementing the recommendations
- Please email the CHB Team directly if you need support with the brokerage process

# Question and Answers from the session on 11/03/2027

Question	Answer
When you say DTA referrals are sent to the constituency the person identifies they want to be placed in – what do you mean by “constituency”?	The constituencies are based on the boundaries in Bradford i.e. Bradford East, Bradford South etc. When the referral is made the Assessor must identify from their discussions with the person/family which constituency(s) the person is interested in moving to. The CHB team will then begin the process to identify a suitable home via our Placement Finder database.
Will removing signatures from checklists mean there are no delays for DTA payments for the DTA 4 week period?	We expect the change will speed up the payment process. A significant number of service lines have been processed in the last 2 weeks since the change in process. Hopefully homes waiting for payments will be receiving those soon.
Can there be a drop in for Care homes to recap the process	Yes, we will arrange sessions to review the process, and go over things like assessments and CtS