

Thurrock Council

Background

Thurrock Council (TC) is the local council for Thurrock in Essex and represents the borough's 157,000 residents.

Thurrock's population has grown by over 22% since 1990 and is expected to rise by a further 28% by 2030. A significant percentage of Thurrock's residents are aged 65 and over and are major users of health and social care services.

What they wanted to achieve

Through its Health and Social Care Transformation Board, the council had already established a programme to respond to the challenges raised by the Care Act. TC therefore wanted to use the workforce capacity planning model to evaluate its progress and identify gaps in planning.

What they did

TC's senior management team used the model to build a picture of where the workforce is now and to inform what direction it should be taken in to meet the requirements of the Care Act. During the process, they focussed on the teams that undertake assessments, noting that the term 'assessments' is used to describe various tasks undertaken by a range of different practitioners across adult social care in Thurrock.

For the first stage, they decided to focus specifically on the field-work teams responsible for conducting assessments. These teams comprise a number of roles including support planners, social workers, community solutions workers, deputy managers and team managers.

TC compiled a report based on the six key themes of the tool that will be used by the relevant work streams of the Health and Social Care Transformation Board. The report will help develop action plans for each work stream to address workforce capacity planning in response to the Care Act.

What was achieved?

Using the workforce capacity planning model has allowed TC to continue developing its plans for the Care Act and has helped to underpin the steps it has already taken in preparation for the introduction of the new Act.

TC now has a detailed and comprehensive report that can be used to support the health and social care transformation across different work streams. The information gathered can be fed into action plans and provides a model of working that has been endorsed by the senior management team.

What was learnt?

Using the workforce capacity planning model showed TC how it could support local processes that have already been put in place. It also found that it could use the knowledge and data gathered to communicate the findings back to the governance boards.

After using the tool, TC has seen how the approach taken supports wider work in relation to the Care Act and how this will be underpinned by other programmes and implementation plans. By taking a flexible approach to using the model, rather than trying to predict or guess the answers to the questions raised, TC found that it was able to use the tool to generate discussions and think about new ways of working.

To access the workforce capacity planning model visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/careact > capacity planning model.

Skills for Care has a range of other resources that can support the Care Act implementation. For more information and to access the resources visit

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/careact