

Alan Patchett  
Chair of Healthwatch Sunderland  
Room 608, Hope Street Exchange  
1-3 Hind Street  
Sunderland  
SR1 3QD

Date: 13 August 2018  
Our ref: PF/jd

Dear Alan

### **Community Equipment Services Report (June 2018)**

I am writing to you in response to Healthwatch Sunderland's Report on the Community Equipment Service.

First of all I would like to thank Healthwatch for undertaking this review of the service.

As I explained when I met with you and Anna to discuss the findings of the report, the provision of community equipment is a complex system involving the assessment and prescription of equipment, alongside the provision and delivery of the prescribed equipment. Whilst this report has focused on the Community Equipment Service provided by Sunderland Care and Support, many of the issues identified in the report are health and social care system issues rather than just specific issues in relation to the delivery and collection function provided by the Community Equipment Service itself. However, as the most visible element of the overall provision of community equipment, I understand why services users can feel that any problems are related to operational delivery and collection of equipment undertaken by the Community Equipment Service.

It was pleasing to note in the report that the overall rating by service users of the actual quality of the Community Equipment Service was extremely high, which reflects the feedback that the service receives.

I recognise that, whilst the provision of community equipment in Sunderland remains overall very good, as an example last year over 40,000 items of equipment were provided, 16,000 items of equipment were collected, 8,000 services users received equipment, and 96% of all stock equipment items were delivered within 7 days, there is always scope for improvement.

Sunderland Care and Support Ltd  
Leechmere Centre  
Carmere Road, Leechmere  
Sunderland SR2 9TQ  
T: +44(0)191 520 5000  
E: [info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](mailto:info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)  
[www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)

Company Number 08681649  
Registered in England and Wales  
Registered Address Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland SR2 7DN

In response to the recommendations made within the report, through the Community Equipment Service Reform Programme which has recently been established, the report recommendations will be addressed, along with a range of other measures to ensure the service continues to provide an excellent customer response and meet the increasing demands on the service.

This will include:

## **Recommendation 1**

- A range of promotional posters and leaflets will be developed and used to explain how people can access and use the service. This will include better information and links on and to appropriate local websites – ie SCAS website;
- Improved systems to enable Prescribers, in line with their current responsibility, to inform service users of delivery times and dates.

This work will be completed by 31st of October 2018.

## **Recommendation 2**

- The Community Equipment Service will continue to inform and attend service user groups to provide regular updates on the service;
- The Community Equipment Service will continue to work with Prescriber representatives through the Prescriber Operational Group to improve the service and associated systems.

## **Recommendation 3**

- The Community Equipment Service will continue to work with Prescriber representatives through the current Prescriber Operational Group to enable all partners to use the current IT system better and in line with agreed protocols;
- The Community Equipment Service will continue to work with Prescriber representatives through the current Prescriber Operational Group to enable prescribers to understand better the existing information on stock levels and equipment to enable Prescriber's to order equipment correctly and appropriately.

This work will be completed by 31st of October 2018.

Again I would like to thank Healthwatch for undertaking this review of the Community Equipment Service.

Sunderland Care and Support Ltd  
Leechmere Centre  
Carrmere Road, Leechmere  
Sunderland SR2 9TQ  
T: +44(0)191 520 5000  
E: [info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](mailto:info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)  
[www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)

Company Number 08681649  
Registered in England and Wales  
Registered Address Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland SR2 7DN

SCAS remains committed to work with Healthwatch and health and social care partners to ensure the continued provision of a high quality Community Equipment Service to the people of Sunderland.

Yours sincerely



Philip Foster  
Chief Operating Officer  
Direct line 0191 561 8950  
Email [philip.foster@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](mailto:philip.foster@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)

Sunderland Care and Support Ltd  
Leechmere Centre  
Carrmere Road, Leechmere  
Sunderland SR2 9TQ  
T: +44(0)191 520 5000  
E: [info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](mailto:info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)  
[www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)

Company Number 08681649  
Registered in England and Wales  
Registered Address Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland SR2 7DN