

Position statement

Recommendations for commissioners

contract specification.

Why short episodes are a problem

The scale of the problem

Despite their significance in social
limited and is often confined to services

The impact of commissioning practice

official guidance.

Activities during a care episode

Implications for service users

Careworkers' activities

including greeting and verification of

Implications for careworkers

Workers report feeling rushed, unsatisfied

Who Cares Now? An Updated Profile of the Independent Sector Home Care Workforce in England

Community Care Statistics 2005: Home Care Services for Adults in England

Time to Care? An overview of home care services for older people in England, 2006.

The impact of unpaid travel time

Implications for providers

It can be difficult for prospective 'block'

Recommendations for commissioners

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The Homecare Sector in Facts and Figures

The following snapshot of the homecare sector¹ uses the most recently published figures available at the time of writing. More detailed information can be found at www.ukhca.co.uk/pdfs/homecare_stats.pdf.

Number of users: Around 367,700 people in around 354,500 households received state-funded homecare in 2005.

Statutory provision: An estimated 3.6 million hours of care a week were commissioned by the statutory sector in 2005, with households receiving on average just over 10 hours of care a week.

Private purchase: Little is known about privately purchased homecare, but one estimate puts it at 854,000 hours a week in 2004 with a value of £417 million a year.

Expenditure: Gross spend on all personal social services, including homecare, in 2002-3 was £15.2 billion. In total, local authorities recoup around 11% of their expenditure on homecare through charges to service users.

Supply: 73% of publicly-funded homecare was provided by the independent sector in 2005, compared to just 5% in 1993.

Contracting: 60% of independent providers are thought to rely on local authority purchase for more than three quarters of their business. Almost 15% of providers depended on local authorities as their only customer.

Average price: Charges are variable and depend largely on local labour-markets and historical statutory spend. There is no average price of an hour of care, but a figure of £11.40 per hour was proposed for 2004.

Provider numbers: There were 4,622 homecare agencies registered with the Commission for Social Care Inspection in March 2006. 80% of them were based in the independent sector.

Homecare workforce: In 2004 there were an estimated 163,000 homecare workers and service managers in England. 65% of them worked in the independent sector. The 'average' careworker undertakes between 26 and 30 hours per week.

Contract specifications should move

contract specifications and

when writing contract specifications.

Colin Angel

About UKHCA

UKHCA is the representative association for organisations that provide domiciliary care, home nursing and allied services.

The Association's primary aims are to promote the highest standards of care through training, information sharing and membership services.

Professional Representation

UKHCA represents the views of homecare providers with national policy makers and the media.

Advice and support

UKHCA is the first point of contact for professional advice about the sector, with a telephone helpline service for legal, employment and practice-based enquiries.

Conferences and Events

A programme of conferences, workshops and events runs in the four nations of the UK. Member organisations receive preferential rates on all events.

Training and learning

UKHCA helps organisations access available training funds and runs a Training and Assessment Centre for vocational qualifications and qualified assessors.

Updates and publications

Regular e-mail alerts, mailings and a member-only website complement our bimonthly magazine,

