

# Brief overview of the Health and Social Services Directorate



## Introduction

The Health and Social Service department aims to provide good quality, accessible care to our population, working within the limitations of our resources, our remote geographic location and our financial restraints. Within these limitations the Health and Social Services department strives to provide the highest standard of service to all our service users, no matter where they live within our Islands. Catering to the Islands resident population of approximately 3,400 people, we pride ourselves in delivering quality care that puts the service users needs at the heart of what we do.

## Facts & Figures

### Health of the Nation

The general standard of health in the Islands is good, with a pattern of disease similar to that of most developed countries. There are slightly lower rates of cancer generally, but higher rates of lung disease. There are however significant levels of mild to moderate mental health problems and alcohol abuse. To date, problems of drug misuse are virtually unknown, as is HIV/AIDS. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the elderly population (approximately 87% in 10 years), coupled with an increasing birth rate, which has created an inevitable increase in demand on health and social services.

### History of the Department

Before 1982, the Islands had a small, basic hospital service on the site of the current hospital. After the conflict in 1982 the hospital was run as a joint service with the military. In April 1984 the hospital was burnt down with the loss of 8 lives. It was rebuilt, and re-opened in 1987.

The hospital remained a joint civilian-military staffed service gradually moving to being completely civilian run in 2000 although the MOD continues to contribute a significant proportion of the costs of running the service.

The Social Services department was a much more recent development. Originally, there was a 'welfare' service provided by a team of unqualified staff. The first qualified Social Worker arrived in around 1999 and we now have a complement of;

- Head of Social Services
- Team Manager (Social Services)
- 2 X Children and Families Social Worker
- 1 X Adult Social Worker
- 1 X Social Work Assistants
- 1 X Early Help Coordinator
- 1 x MASH Police Officer
- Welfare Assistance Advisor
- Young Peoples Unit Team Leader
- 8 X Residential Support Workers

Initially based in the hospital, the team moved off site to a new base at the east end of Stanley in 2002 and still is based there.

It should also be noted that the Health and Social Services department has a Health Visitor and School Nurse employed purely for children and young people. They work closely with the families' schools and other agencies to provide a universal service to children and young people with an increased service to those with an identified need.

There is also a 'Community' team who provide care to those with an assessed need in their own homes.

Mental health services are provided by the Community Psychiatric Nurses and a Clinical Psychologist, who meet the needs of the community. They provide support for people with severe and enduring mental illness, as well as those with mild to moderate illness, and with problems of alcohol misuse. They also provide advice to the in-patient nursing team.

We have one Occupational Therapist who provides a service aimed at meeting the needs of the older and vulnerable population although may give advice for children if required.

Currently there is one qualified Speech and Language Therapist who is aided by an assistant. The team work closely with the schools. All age groups are catered for: infants and toddlers, pre-school children, school children (a service is provided to the schools), adults and the elderly. The service also includes provision of hearing aids.

### **Elderly Care**

For those that live independently in the community the recently established community care team provides care where assessed as necessary. The team consists of the community services lead with Social Work assistants and Staff Nurses as well as community carers. In the future there will be a residential facility which will support those who cannot live at home.

The Social Services department also provides some support and assistance to older people and can provide financial assistance in the form of an 'Attendance Allowance'.

Those elderly people who need 24 hour nursing care which cannot be provided at home are looked after in the 7-bedded elderly care unit at KEMH. These people will move to the new facility which is still in the planning phase.

There is a 'Day Centre' in the hospital from which activities are offered on two days a week vulnerable people and a dining room which provides meals daily. We also provide 'Meals on Wheels' in the community and meals for prisoners.

### **Paediatrics**

There is no dedicated paediatric service. Our Health Visitor provides a universal health visiting service, primarily to under school age, and a School Nurse provides a universal service to those children and young people of school age. The Speech and Language Therapist also works predominantly with children. Children needing inpatient care will be nursed with their parents or carers being asked to stay with them at all times.

## **More about Social Services team itself**

As noted above the Social Services team was set up in May 1999 when the first qualified Social Worker was recruited to the islands. Its mission statement is as follows:

- Service-users and their carers should be fully involved in decisions about their lives.
- To treat you with courtesy, honesty and respect. In return we will value these qualities from yourself.
- Support you to achieve and sustain the maximum possible independence in your life.
- To inform you in decisions and give you sufficient information to make informed choices.
- To treat everyone equally with due regard to age, gender, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

The aim of the team is to safeguard children, adults and all vulnerable members of the community. The team provides generic support services to children and their families, and promotes the wellbeing of all members of the Falkland Islands Community. We use clear assessments of needs to decide whether we can offer help and agree what that help should be. We will treat personal information as confidential and not share it with anyone else without written agreement (unless exceptional circumstances apply).

## **Premises**

The Social Services team office is located East end of Stanley, the building has wheelchair access. The offices also have a video interview suite for Achieving Best Evidence interviews. The Social Services Team office hours are from 8am-12 and 1-4.30pm.

We also offer a 24 hour emergency on call service through an on call rota which is accessed through the Royal Falkland Islands Police.

## **Children Services**

Our aim is to support families and help them care for their children. If a family is experiencing difficulties it is much better for the children if we can work together to improve things.

We may work directly with the family and other agencies to improve the situation and make sure that the child is safe or we may put the family in touch with other services that can be of assistance to them.

The main legislation that informs our work is The Children's Ordinance 2014. This legislation is based upon the Children Act 1989 in England and Wales. We have also developed our Safeguarding Procedures and Threshold Document which has been ratified by the Falkland Islands Child Safeguarding Board.

## **Residential and Foster Care**

We have a small number of foster carers on East and West Falkland Islands and we are currently recruiting more carers. It is hoped that we will be able to establish a pool of carers in the community to provide emergency, short term and long-term placements for children and young people.

We also have a residential unit known as Jersey House and this provides care to those young people who can no longer remain at home.

## **Adult Services**

We provide support to vulnerable adults in the community, people with mental health issues and those with complex needs. Our Adult Social Worker is able to complete Capacity Assessments and is a Best Interests Assessor.

The Community Support Team also offer a range of services from assessing individual needs at home and access to community support - these are completed alongside the Community Psychiatric Nurses (CPN).

## **Sheltered Housing**

There are 27 Sheltered Accommodation units over three sites in Stanley, two within close proximity to the hospital (Thatcher Drive and St Marys Walk) and the other in the town centre (Yates Place). The Community Support Team visit the residents and deal with day to day tasks including out of hours cover for emergencies.

## **Acorns**

The team is also responsible for an adult community group called Acorns; this is a registered charity which meets two mornings a week at the hospital. An additional session takes place under the co-ordination of the CPN on a Thursday evening. Working alongside service-users, core volunteers and other health staff the group includes young adults with additional needs, adults with mental health needs and older people from the community and residents from sheltered housing.

## **Probation**

The Probation Officer is responsible for managing Community Rehabilitation and Service cases, as well as providing Pre-Sentence Reports for the Court. The Probation Officer will also assess risk, and deliver appropriate offence-focused and criminogenic-related programmes for individuals in the community or at HMP Stanley, such as anger management and alcohol awareness.

## **Welfare**

Social Services assess and assist with applications for Welfare Assistance and Attendance Allowance (a non means tested allowance for children and adults with additional needs to buy in services).

All assessments are reviewed regularly and work alongside the Employment and Enablement Programme. This programme provides placements and support for young people and adults who have been unemployed for 6 weeks or more and / or have additional needs.

## **Quality & Standards**

The department are proud of the quality of service that is provided and endeavours to maintain standards in a variety of ways, as set out below.

### **Professional Registration**

It is a requirement of working in the Falkland Islands that all qualified staff are registered with the appropriate UK registering body or be eligible to register with a UK-recognised international equivalent. These might include Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, other Commonwealth and EC countries and the USA, depending on the profession.

As far as possible, we seek to employ staff who are familiar with the professional culture and approaches of similar organisations in UK so that they can be assimilated easily into our service which operates along UK lines.

It is an employment condition for all potential staff to undergo an enhanced police check prior to joining the staff complement.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

We have a local programme of training and CPD which includes mandatory training such as fire and manual handling etc. A number of our health care and social work assistants have achieved NVQs at Levels 2, 3 and 4. There is a comprehensive program of online training and the Falkland Islands College also offers a range of course and accredited CPD courses.