

Quality Account

Annual report 2020- 2021



Introduction

The year covered by this, Voyage Care's fourth annual Quality Account, was overshadowed by the global COVID-19 pandemic which affected so many aspects of the care and support we provide, and the lives of all the Voyage Care family. There were a great many positives and achievements this year, despite the challenges, as well as learnings we will take forward as we emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever.

For us, publication of an annual Quality Account is vital for accountability and transparency. In recognition of the extraordinary times we are living in, this year we are publishing a condensed Quality Account, sharing key metrics and trends only, enabling our teams to remain wholly focused on essential support for frontline colleagues.

Everything we do as individuals, no matter our role in the organisation, is in service of our purpose; the delivery of great care and support. Through the worsening crisis during early 2020, our purpose remained steadfast and the organisation came together to mount a superb response. By the time the first UK lockdown was announced in March 2020 we had already established robust protocols to keep people safe and well supported. Our crisis team determined a series of aims, including effective communication, strong leadership, and a focus on employee wellbeing, to maintain our sector-leading specialist care and support.

Throughout the pandemic our teams have balanced the demands posed by COVID-19 and the ever-changing guidance, with the realities of day to day care and support delivery; ensuring people were kept active, happy and, most crucially, safe. The skill of our teams and the robust governance frameworks that support our specialist care offering helped to minimise the impact the changes in routine and isolation from loved ones had on people's wellbeing.

Our 2020 Quality Questionnaire, a truly innovative measure of the meaningful impact our support is having on people's lives, has given us insight into their wellbeing through this difficult year. Whilst this year, as expected, some promising trends tracked over recent years have slowed, there are still key areas in which our quality performance has further improved, which is extremely encouraging; and our sustained performance across many of the measures is a real positive given the challenges of the pandemic. Our focus is on outcomes, reducing health inequalities and helping people reach their individual goals and aspirations – pleasingly this is reflected in this year's results, with 84% of respondents having reviewed their smart goals in the last year.

Innovation has been a watchword for us throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as we responded to the new demands on our teams. We recognised early on that we needed real-time oversight of the impact of the pandemic to determine the prevalence of infection and

ensure our teams were effectively supported. The rapid development of our Daily Service Report app has enabled us to capture infections, testing and, latterly, vaccinations. We have delivered award-winning communications to our employees, the people we support and their families throughout the pandemic, launching new communications tools and pushing the boundaries of those already in place to keep people engaged and informed. The COVID-19 hub on our intranet has attracted over 500,000 visits so far.

Over this year there has been more well-deserved public recognition of the importance of the care sector. 'Clap for carers' shone a light on social care, raising morale at a crucial time - but there remains some way to go before the sector has parity with our NHS counterparts. Throughout the pandemic we have played a significant role in advocating and lobbying for greater support and guidance for the specialist care sector. Working alongside Care England, other social care leaders and Government, our efforts have ensured the voice of the people we support and the needs of the learning disability sector have been considered in the developing national COVID-19 response.

Like many organisations in our sector, despite the hard work and extensive measures taken by our teams, many colleagues and people we support were directly affected by COVID-19. Sadly, a small number lost their lives to the virus this year; deaths of anyone in the Voyage Care family weigh heavily on us at any time, but the losses borne during the pandemic, when normal rituals of grieving have been so interrupted will not be forgotten. We have plans underway for permanent memorials both locally and at our head office (Group Support) to provide places for reflection as we all come to terms with the long-term impact of the pandemic.

The unfailing dedication of our teams and the resilience of the people we support are always admirable, but during the recent challenges it has been awe-inspiring; from the countless stories of people moving into services to ensure consistency of care and minimise the risk of infection for the vulnerable people in our care, to a sterling performance in containing outbreaks and minimising the impact on our services. We are exceptionally proud and grateful to our incredible teams. Seeing our ETHOS values in action as everyone pulled together to keep people well, active and safe has been nothing short of extraordinary: thank you.

The Quality Safety and Risk Committee (QSR)



Alan Rosenbach
Chair of the Quality
Safety and Risk
Committee



Amanda Griffiths
Director of Quality



Andrew Cannon
Chief Executive
Officer



Jayne Davey
Chief Operating
Officer



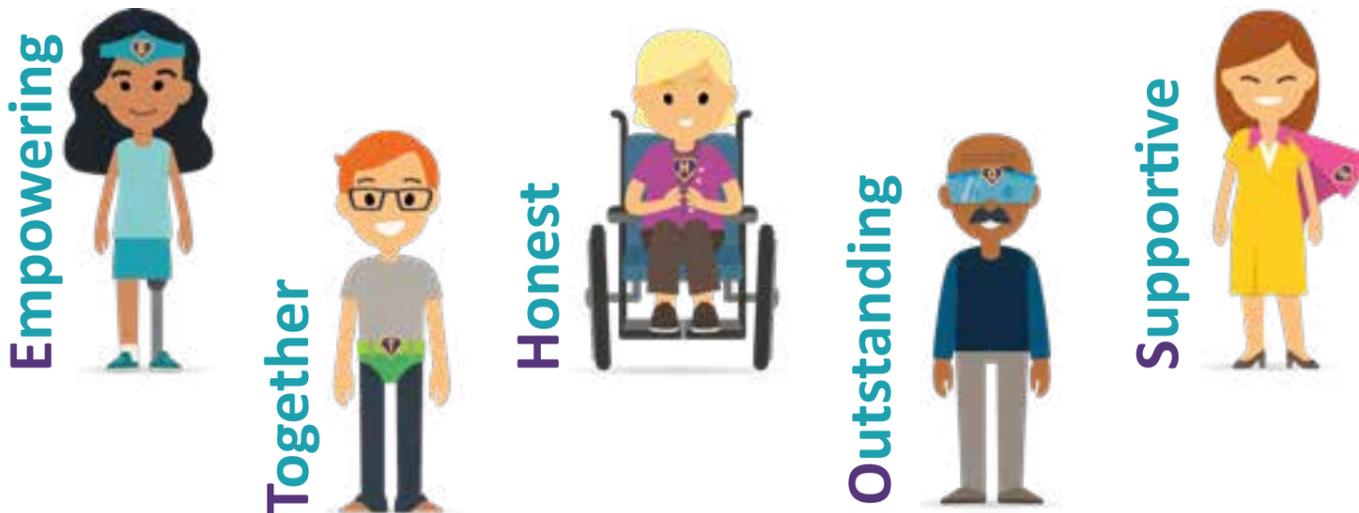
About us

Voyage Care is a sector leading provider of specialist care and support, with over 30 years' experience. We support adults and children with learning disabilities, autism, brain injuries and complex needs. Seven Managing Directors, under the leadership of our Chief Operating Officer, lead dedicated regional teams who provide consistent, high-quality care and support to approximately 3,500 people across the UK. Our 11,000+ employees live our values every day, enabling the people we support to lead more independent and fulfilled lives. Whether it's supporting someone in their own home, to access the community or in a registered care home, we provide exceptional person-centred care and support. Our ETHOS values guide how we engage with stakeholders, and the behaviours we expect to see in each other as we work towards our core purpose of delivering great quality care and support.



Our values are embedded throughout the organisation and have a role to play in support planning and review, recruitment, internal quality audits, learning and development, appraisals and reward and recognition.

Our ETHOS values were co-created by our colleagues and the people we support based on their priorities and the attributes they want to see in each other.



Our Quality Account

What is a Quality Account?

NHS healthcare providers are required to produce an annual Quality Account. This is a report about the quality of services offered by them and improvements in the services delivered to individuals and other stakeholders. Quality is measured by looking at safety, effectiveness and feedback received. Given our commitment to openness and transparency, we are mirroring the requirements on NHS providers by voluntarily producing annual Quality Accounts.

What is included in this Quality Account?

This, our fourth annual report to the public and other stakeholders, reviews the quality of the services we provide and covers the period from 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021. It presents an assessment of our achievements in terms of excellence, effectiveness, safety and people's experiences, demonstrating our commitment to supporting people to achieve their goals and live the lives they want.

- ✓ **Operational and Quality Achievements**
An overview of our achievements in 2020-21
- ✓ **Review of quality**
Measures our progress against each of the five goals of our quality framework and sets priorities for operational and quality developments against each of them.

Governance process

This Quality Account demonstrates that we regularly audit every service we provide with a view to continually improving and ensuring the care and life outcomes for the people we support are the best they can be. It provides a balanced, honest and authentic view of what we do well and areas where we could further improve. This report consolidates routine reporting metrics used by our operational and quality teams to track and review performance. This data is regularly reviewed by our Quality, Safety and Risk Committee, who have accountability to the board for ensuring identified actions are disseminated and acted upon at all levels of the organisation.

Our well-established governance processes were supplemented with a dedicated crisis committee, led by our Chief Operating Officer and Quality Director, to oversee all aspects of our organisation-wide pandemic response. This response included making round the clock expert support available to our frontline teams, swift dissemination of tailored guidance through our award-winning communications channels, and rapid implementation of new bespoke systems and processes. All of which gave clear organisational oversight of the impact of COVID-19 and enabled lessons learnt to be effectively disseminated.

An easy read version of this Quality Account is available.



Operational and quality achievements

We remain the sector leader for regulatory compliance with more 'Outstanding' and 'Good' services in England than any other adult social care provider. Our registered services in Scotland and Wales continue to be 100% compliant overall.

Responding to the pandemic has taken considerable resource and expertise to keep colleagues and the people we support safe and up to 31 March 2021 this included:

300,000

COVID-19 tests undertaken

7,500

colleagues vaccinated

2,700

People we support vaccinated

2,600

positive cases of COVID-19

500,000

views of over 475 documents on our COVID-19 hub

We continued to grow and develop as an organisation despite the challenges of managing the pandemic. The key achievements in this period include:

- Further 10% growth in supported living capacity, increasing to 1,273 places, as a result of our innovative partnerships with housing providers and developers.
- Mobilisation commenced for 27 new services, with capacity to support over 225 people. 13 of these locations are now up and running, already delivering 4,500 hours of support.
- Acquisition of Day Opportunities Limited, a group of locations in Calderdale providing both residential and community support, with capacity for 26 people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs.
- 10 community services with capacity to support 99 people delivering 8,500 hours per week won through competitive tender including specialist supported living for people with mental health, complex autism and learning disabilities.
- Five new developments opened:
 - 1,700 hours of support per week to 32 people in four community settings in Nottingham, Blackpool, Falkirk and Chesterfield
 - Devonshire House, a specialist Brain Injury Rehabilitation registered care home for 24 people.
- + 350 average number of new referrals per month

95%

of our services have a Good or Outstanding rating from CQC in England. 100% of our registered services are rated overall compliant in Scotland and Wales. We have 16 Outstanding services or equivalent, with a further 13 having Outstanding elements.



We cannot praise the staff highly enough for the care and support they have given our daughter. Staff truly care for her both physically and emotionally and our family owes them a huge debt of gratitude."

Elizabeth

Mother of a person we support



3% nurse-led care

55% residential

42% community

Review of quality

We have a robust quality framework which provides vision and direction for all organisational processes associated with the quality of care and support.

Our quality framework identifies five overarching goals for achievement and measurement of the quality of services we provide. Within this framework, proactive support is provided as required, responding to any identified operational need. This included rapidly tailoring our policy, procedures and processes to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The remainder of this Quality Account addresses each goal in turn and evidences our progress and sets out our key priorities for operational and quality developments against each.

1

Competent, caring staff

2

Involvement of people we support

3

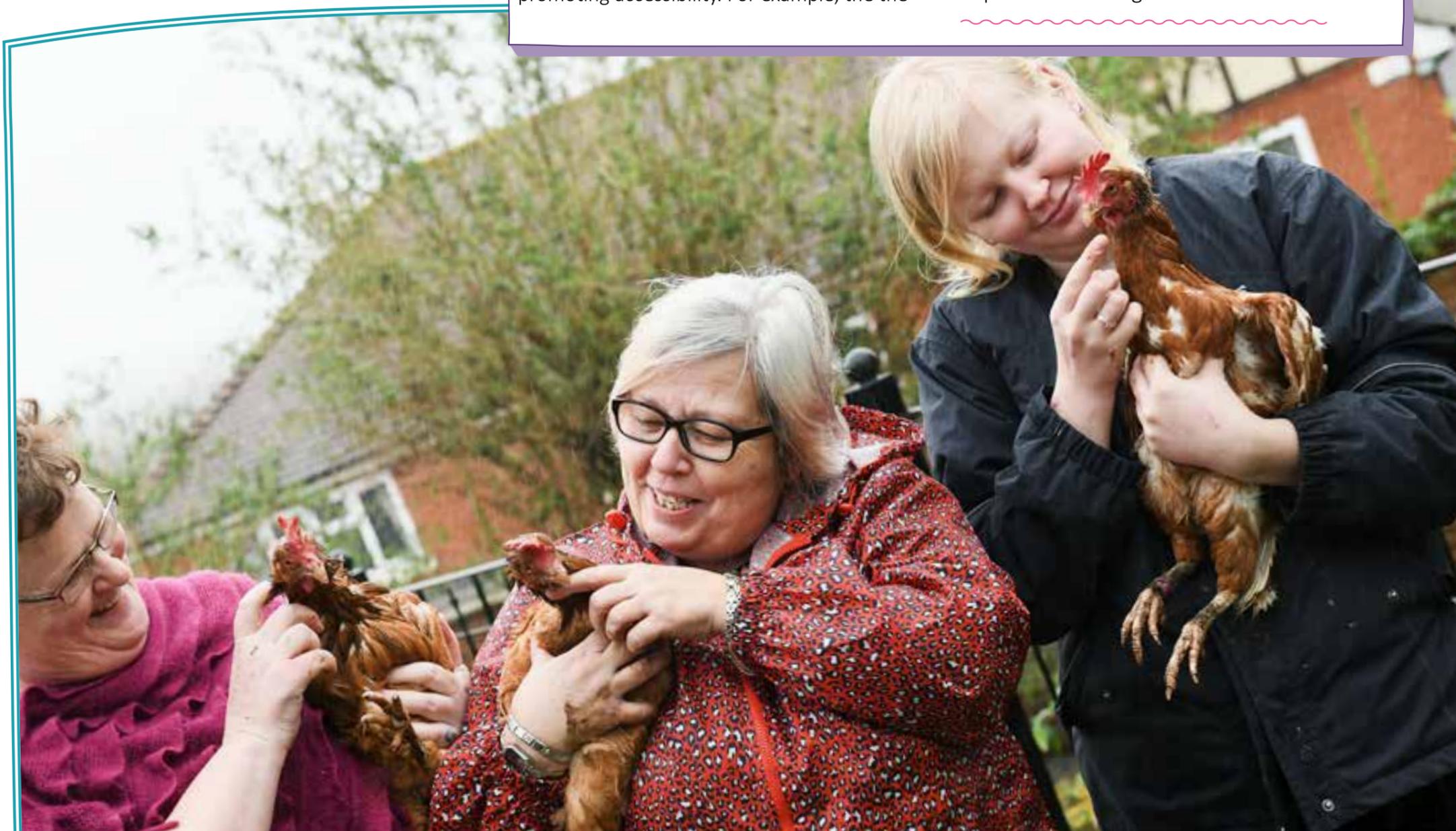
Positive outcomes

4

Positive assurance

5

Consistent delivery of care



Case study

This year we opened The Library House, our new supported living service in Bestwood, Nottingham. This purpose-built accommodation has eight self-contained flats over two floors with assisted technology.

It's called 'The Library House', as previously the property was a community library. The central location will help to ensure the people we support are at the heart of the community. It took nearly three years to complete and the design focuses on using assistive technology and promoting accessibility. For example, the the

slightly lower windows that give the perfect view for people who use a wheelchair. In one of the eight flats, there are adjustable kitchen worktops to suit the height of the user.



We took our time with this build to make it just right. The flats are bright and airy; there is a lift between flats, on-site parking, front-door buzzer system and 24/7 support available. This means the tenants can achieve the right level of independence for them."

Steph Allen
Operations Manager

1 Competent, caring staff

Our colleagues are our greatest asset. Their safety and health have been key priorities for the organisation, as our frontline teams faced what for many has been the hardest period of their professional lives.

Social care has been acknowledged as one of the hardest fought frontlines and the resilience and creativity of our teams through this time has been truly awe-inspiring. Not only have our highly skilled colleagues done all they could to nurture and engage the people we support, they have shown amazing camaraderie and support to each other.

Responding to rapidly evolving understanding about the effects of COVID-19 demanded agile strategies for managing both the risk to our extraordinary colleagues and, equally crucially, their wellbeing. Our central support teams were responsive to emerging guidance, developing policies and procedures as well as personal risk assessments so our teams could be confident in the new working practices implemented.

We have made positive strides in developing our People Strategy with progress being made on initiatives under each of the three pillars:

43%

March 20

34%

March 21

21%

improvement



Recruit

Recruiting people who share our ETHOS values and a passion for providing great quality care and support remained essential this year, and we successfully recruited over 4,400+ candidates. Our innovative campaigns, targeting people who may not have considered a career in care previously, and a new recruitment website contributed to this success. We launched a specific values-based recruitment programme for our Specialist Behavioural Support Services; the early results are positive and it has enabled selection of team members with not just the right skills, but the empathy, resilience and compassion required to support people with enhanced needs.



Support workers understood people's diverse needs and interests and encouraged them to maintain their independence according to their wishes and abilities."

CQC inspection report

Voyage Care, Supported Living

Continued investment in developing our people as well as holistic support for their health and wellbeing, and recognition of their achievements, led to a 21% improvement in our retention rate compared to the previous year and a significant reduction in the usage of agency staff.

Engage

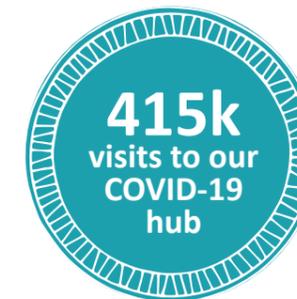
Our open and responsive approach to communications has never been more vital and we adapted our regular communication channels to respond to the emerging needs.

Our holistic approach to engagement considered not only the functional communication needs of our teams, empowering them to keep people safe – evidenced by the low mortality rates sustained throughout the pandemic – but the wider social and emotional impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of our colleagues and the people we support. Our intranet, Hive, has been an invaluable tool in our response to the pandemic equipping teams with the latest Government guidance, distilling it into accessible and easy to digest formats in our COVID-19 hub, but also engaging staff and people supported, bolstering resilience and morale and keeping them connected despite the challenges.

We used our regular crisis team meetings to respond effectively to emerging needs, including most recently a campaign to counter vaccine misinformation and share positive stories from staff and people we support who have received their job resulting in the number of people declining the job reducing by 13%.

The focus on staff wellbeing included deploying a range of tools including loss and bereavement toolkits, a Hive wellbeing hub with useful links and signposting to our Employee Assistance Programme and other sources of support, such as our mental health champions.

It remained vitally important to recognise everyone's efforts, so the Voyage Excellence Awards went ahead, albeit virtually, celebrating the extraordinary efforts of our winners, selected from over 1,000 completed nominations: the most ever received!



Maximise

Access to training has been critical in managing our COVID-19 response and keeping people safe and well. We were delighted to retain our Good OfSTED rating following re-assessment. The 36,000+ participants on training courses continued to achieve excellent outcomes despite the rapid pivot away from face to face training during the initial lockdown. Our Learning and Development team quickly mobilised a re-imagined training offering where face to face was no longer possible; Online webinars allowed real-time interactions between participants and trainers contributing to positive feedback from learners.



Priorities for the coming year:

In the coming year, as part of the execution of our People Strategy, we will:

- ✓ Adopt a blended model of training: maintaining in-person training where necessary but incorporates face to face training via Teams as well as e-learning. This will save time, travel and resources whilst not diminishing the access to high quality training for all colleagues.
- ✓ Launch an updated benefits platform, building on the success of the wellbeing hub on Hive.
- ✓ Invest in further enhancements to streamlining the employee journey including:
 - Updates to our Applicant Tracking System, which will deliver an enhanced on-boarding experience
 - Deployment of a new Learning Management System, enabling seamless delivery of a new mixed training model, an enhanced user-experience and improved reporting.

Involvement of people we support

The people we support, many of whom are classified as clinically extremely vulnerable, have been enabled to stay connected with their loved ones and each other. We've seen phenomenal engagement from people sharing their stories, experiences and the fun they've had over the year, despite the challenges.

Whilst many formal engagement and participation activities, such as our Growing Together events, were necessarily suspended due to the pandemic, the strong relationships built up in previous years enabled people to remain active and connected albeit it virtually in most cases. We have seen an increase in the use of technology to stay connected with friends and family, and in responding to our Quality Questionnaire the people we support reported similar overall levels of social contact with family to prior years.

Our Quality Checker team, whilst unable to be out in services undertaking their usual audits, remained a powerful voice across the organisation, ensuring their views and those of others we support remained central. They made vital contributions to other initiatives, including contributing to Zest, our internal magazine, and an explanatory video about the Quality Questionnaire.

Engagement campaigns ran throughout the year, focused on staying safe, active and healthy. Our weekly clap for carers videos early in the pandemic provided a much-needed boost to everyone and enabled people we support to engage with peers as well as receiving extremely positive family feedback. We encouraged regular communication with families by providing informative template letters and emails for teams to deliver personalised updates to loved ones. We also provided a range of materials for services to display to smooth visiting times and provide reassurance to families.



200,000
Facebook Likes
for our 'Clap
for Carers'
videos



Examples

Engagement from our teams is at an all-time high!

Zest, our magazine for colleagues and people we support won a prestigious National award this year, among a clutch of 3 awards in total!



Priorities for the coming year

- ✓ New tools are being developed, as well as refinements to the Quality Questionnaire, to facilitate more holistic and timely sharing of feedback by the people we support and their families about their experiences. Their insights will contribute directly to the actions we take to further improve the care and support provided to individuals as well as further improving standards across Voyage Care.
- ✓ Plans will be implemented to recruit more Quality Checkers and investments are being made in digital tools to enable them to undertake their audits effectively. A conference later in the year is planned to support with the reinvigoration of the Quality Checker programme, which remains vital to achieving our goals.
- ✓ In addition to continuing with our broader engagement campaigns, projects to promote employment and education opportunities will be accelerated as people look to capitalise on opportunities which will open up as restrictions ease.

364
activities
completed



Our Activ8 challenge was completed by 100 services!

3 Positive outcomes

The true quality of care and support we provide at Voyage Care can only be meaningfully measured through the experiences of each person we support; in Summer 2020 over 2,540 people completed our third Quality Questionnaire. What is clear from the findings is that COVID-19 didn't detract from our focus on outcomes and ensuring the people we support continued to strive to meet their personal goals.

Recognising conventional quality metrics in the sector often fall short of measuring outcomes that really matter to individuals – their quality of life and wellbeing – our innovative digital questionnaire measures quality of experience over time, focusing on issues such as health, participation in daily life and choice making. Its engaging easy read format facilitates wide participation from the people we support. The value to them is enormous as people can easily see their personal progress over time and how their support is enabling them to achieve their goals. Positive trends were noted in 28 of the 38 quality of life measures which, considering the impact of restrictions on so many aspects of life, is encouraging. Overall independence increased as did satisfaction and trust.

We saw notable increases in positive activity outcomes, with many enjoying gardening, choosing to spend time alone and making their own independent clothing choices. Given the impact COVID-19 has had on the healthcare system we're particularly happy to see that 84% of respondents had a health check in the past year, well above the national average of 55% of adults with a learning disability [NHS Digital 2019].

85%

of respondents had their goals reviewed in the last year

84%

Had an annual health check

93%

of respondents feel safe

Priorities for the coming year:

- ✓ The Quality Questionnaire findings enable the organisation to identify opportunities for further improvements and positive trends. We will continue to iterate and evolve the questionnaire, implementing identified actions, including further benchmarking against sector data, e.g. LeDeR and NHS Digital, and aligning the questions to our developing Mental Health specialism. Plans for the coming year will focus on improving education and employment opportunities as figures here remain stubbornly low.
- ✓ Further digitisation will include auto-population of some fields to streamline the process and the roll-out of a reporting tool to allow analysis of





4 Positive assurance

Voyage Care has an unwavering focus on quality – we operate a robust suite of internal audit tools to ensure the quality of care and support is of a high standard and meets the requirements of our regulators and commissioners. All data and trends are reviewed regularly by our Quality, Safety and Risk Committee which reports independently to the Board. This robust governance framework underpinned our response to COVID-19 and undoubtedly contributed to our success in managing the pandemic whilst also maintaining our sector leading quality outcomes.

By the time the first unprecedented national lockdown was announced in March 2020, Voyage Care had established a crisis team who, working collaboratively with operational colleagues, had set clear objectives for our organisational response. The dedicated team reacted decisively and effectively to the evolving guidance/ regulatory position issuing guidance to colleagues enabling them to focus on the fundamentals of managing the impacts of the pandemic on the people we support and our colleagues.



Existing internal governance processes were strengthened and adapted including:

- ✓ Regular crisis team meetings for effective, auditable decision-making initially took place daily; reducing to weekly as the crisis stabilised.
- ✓ COVID-19 specific policy, protocols and resources, based around our extensive case management procedure, have been introduced, as required to respond to rapidly changing guidance, to give our teams the information they need as effectively as possible. Resources used include posters, videos and blogs to supplement more formal communications. Regular planned and reactive communications have been shared on our COVID-19 intranet hub.
- ✓ A specific COVID-19 audit was introduced in quarter two: 90% of our registered locations completed it in that quarter and 100% completed it in the second half of the year, with an average score of 93% demonstrating the depth of understanding of the requirements and close adherence to the guidance. These requirements have now been incorporated into routine audits for managers, Operations Managers, and the internal quality audit.

- ✓ Systems development enabled real-time oversight and reporting capabilities. Key internal systems were rapidly developed including a Daily Service Review app and a PPE portal enabling support to be deployed where it was most needed.

- ✓ Dedicated support to each of our operational regions was established to provide round the clock guidance and reassurance. It also enabled us to rapidly share learnings and monitor local and national trends. Daily support calls were provided to locations with COVID-19 cases to ensure teams had the practical and emotional support required.

Whilst in some cases COVID-19 procedures have supplanted pre-pandemic processes, many areas of our routine assurance framework continued alongside our COVID-19 response. Some key trends from these audits include:

Incidents and accidents

Our bespoke Case Management System (CMS) is used for all accident and incident reporting. It automatically alerts operational and senior management about incidents that are graded high or very high to ensure they are managed effectively. Managers are accountable for monitoring local incidents and implementing action plans.

Year	Accidents	Incidents
2020-21	3,784	19,820
2019-20	3,428	16,934

Incidents increased 17% year on year, a trend which reflects the restrictions and disruption to normal routines, as well as that we are now supporting more people with complex needs. In this latest year 63% were challenging behaviour incidents, which in percentage terms is directly comparable to the previous year. As we entered lockdown, the use of both restraint and PRN medication initially declined, but this trend reversed over the period of prolonged restrictions. Our Behavioural Support team moved swiftly to adapt their support to the

restrictions imposed on travel and access to care settings. Initially daily regional calls to homes which had known high indicators of challenge were later reduced to weekly and then monthly calls. The team also respond immediately to any high entries on the CMS offering support and guidance in the moment. Overall feedback has been positive, with frontline operational teams welcoming proactive support around these key areas:

- How to desensitise people we support to staff wearing PPE, in particular masks - undertaken by our in-house autism lead.
- Meaningfully engaging people utilising active support.
- Supporting and desensitising people in relation to vaccination

At the very start of lockdown, face to face delivery of MAPA training had to stop. We rapidly developed remote delivery of the units without the need to touch, followed by remote coaching, then to the actual delivery, adhering to all our insurance requirements and Government guidance. This innovative approach has since been adopted more widely by our MAPA partner.

8% of incidents reported were medication errors. When a developing trend was identified the Quality Development Team analysed all errors in the first 8 weeks of the COVID 19 lockdown and followed up with a supportive call where more than one error had occurred. This targeted support, including a learning review, resulted in only 10% of these 20 locations making further errors when reviewed across the 12 month period. The findings from the support calls and feedback from colleagues, including identification of practical strategies to eliminate the risk of future medication errors, were shared with our services. Managers were asked to consider additional strategies they could use and ensure they were written into their local medication procedure. This open and proactive approach, and simplification of our medication policy and procedure has improved understanding across all frontline teams and reduced errors.

Complaints and Compliments

Positive trends were seen in relation to both complaints, which decreased by 15% year on year to 429 cases, and compliments, which increased to 740 - a rise of 31% year on year. Whilst the year has been hard on everyone, particularly those in care homes who have been separated from friends and family for prolonged periods, it was particularly pleasing to receive such improved levels of compliments; much deserved recognition for the efforts of our frontline teams to keep people well, active and safe in tough circumstances.

Whistleblowing

91 incidents of whistleblowing were received from a variety of sources including professionals, family members, staff and neighbours. This is a rise of 46% year on year, a negative trend seen more broadly across the care sector. Briefings were shared with managers encouraging them to invest time in investigating all concerns openly and identify key learnings. We recognise sharing outcomes and the actions taken with all key stakeholders is essential to foster an open, learning culture.



Priorities for the coming year

-  In the coming year we will continue to focus on implementing further COVID-19 measures where necessary whilst also embedding the 'new normal' which will allow us to emerge stronger from the pandemic. This will include adapting our audit and quality assurance process to incorporate CQC's new regulatory approach, implementation of the Liberty Protection Standards and changes to safeguarding. We will also implement our new Mental Health specialism and further establish a formal process for clinical oversight. The Operations Manager audit will also be developed into a more assurance-based process.
-  As we move forward key systems, including CMS and the Quality Questionnaire Reporting tool, will continue to be refined and other tools developed to maintain this responsive and agile approach to continuous improvement.

Case study

Lorraine is a person we support at Heather House, one of our residential care homes in Tyne & Wear. Since the start of the pandemic, Lorraine has been curious about COVID-19 and has stayed up to date with the government announcements.

When one of the people we support asked a member of staff why they have to wear a mask and why they are always wiping down door handles, Lorraine was eager to answer. Before the staff member could respond, she explained that this was to reduce the spread of the COVID-19.

With the assistance of staff, Lorraine carries out regular checks most days. This includes monitoring the cleaning schedule, carrying out

personal protection equipment (PPE) checks and asking for staff members' temperatures when they arrive at the service.

In a relaxed way, Lorraine has helped the other residents to understand why our teams are carrying out additional cleaning and wearing PPE. She has even encouraged others to get more involved too!



It's nice to be able to help... I want to keep everyone safe so they can see their families."

Lorraine
A person we support



Consistent delivery of care

Voyage Care is a curious and driven organisation, focused on identifying any opportunities for improvement in how we meet the needs of those we support. Proactive work on understanding the impact of COVID-19 on the people we support, using data from our Daily Service Review app and insights from our managers, enabled us to be ahead of the curve in sharing resources and communication tools for staying healthy.

As well as creating new COVID-19 guidance, anchored around our case management procedure, existing guidance continued to be updated to reflect best practice linked to the assessed needs of some people we support, such as deploying the DeChoker to support improved management of choking incidents.

Throughout the pandemic we have taken opportunities to deepen existing partnerships and foster greater engagement with other organisations to improve accreditation rates and embed continuous learning. We have strengthened our involvement with Care England and contributed to development of guidance to ensure needs of our colleagues and those we support are reflected. We have been active participants in the Government's National Testing Groups and in the delivery of webinars for the wider social care sector.

89%

had required medication reviews

77

death reviews

Other key areas of development include:

Review of deaths

70 internal death reviews were completed by members of our Quality Development team who are Learning Disability Mortality Review Programme (LeDeR) assessors. The internal critical review mirrors, and is additional to, the LeDeR process. The reviews highlighted many areas where great care and compassion from our teams, advocating for individuals and enabling them to maintain contact with family, had ensured they were well supported at the end of their life. However, there were also organisation-wide and local improvement plans developed and learnings were shared. These included keeping comprehensive records, facilitating health screenings and identifying ways to help hospital staff better support people with learning disabilities. Learning reviews are undertaken to ensure these recommendations are taken forward into practice locally when supporting someone at the end of their life.

Stopping the over medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both (STOMP)

As signatories to the STOMP pledge we have continued to share good practice, resources, information and learning through our STOMP champions. However, we have seen a slight increase in the rate of usage of psychotropic medication this year, likely as a consequence of the impact of lockdown restrictions. We are pleased to have seen an increase in required medication reviews, which were carried out for 89% of those taking medication. These reviews also led to a reduction in medication for an increased number of people.



Restraint Reduction Network

We remain committed to reducing restraint incidents and our action plan includes developing regionalised reporting which will allow support from our Behavioural Support team, such as the promotion of Active Support and Positive Behavioural Support, to be tailored to local needs.

Priorities for the coming year:

- ✓ Pilot eCare, which will digitise the recording of the needs of the people we support and support the completion of comprehensive care needs assessments, specialism-specific documentation and essential 'must do' support guidelines. The objectives of eCare are to simplify processes, improve reliability and reporting, and reduce paper wastage.
- ✓ Support four locations currently aspiring to National Autistic Society (NAS) accreditation to achieve full accreditation.
- ✓ Have a positive behavioural support plan in place for the 5% of those we support with recorded 'high' behavioural incidents.

Accreditations

All brain injury rehabilitation specific services are accredited through Headway's provider standards.



"We work with the residents rather than for the residents and that's another big part about them being involved in the accreditation."

Sarajane Willis

Service Manager of Northfield House (NAS accredited)



We continue to progress our National Autistic Society accreditation programme; 25 services are fully accredited, including two who achieved this in the past year.

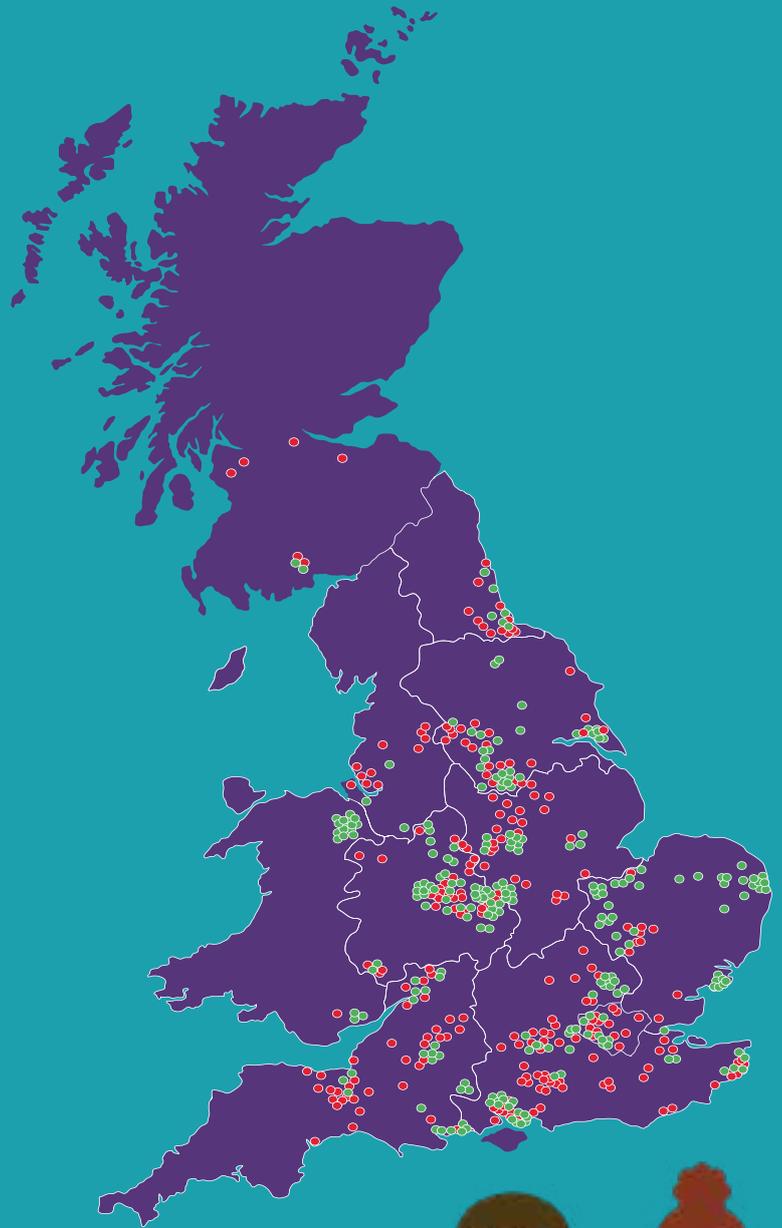


Voyage Care are the sector leading provider, with over 30 years' experience of specialist care and support. We support about 3,400 people with learning disabilities, autism, brain injuries and complex needs across the UK.

Whether it's supporting someone in their own home, to access the community or in a registered care home, we provide exceptional person-centred care and support. We enable people to live as independently as possible — where, how and with whom they choose.

Our highly trained, specialist teams use an individualised approach to support.

We're committed to supporting people in a way that works for them - with reliability and consistency. The people we support and their loved ones can be assured that their needs are at the centre of all we do.



Get in touch

Interested in care and support for a client, yourself or a loved one? Get in touch with our friendly enquiry team today!

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-  referrals@voyagecare.com
-  www.voyagecare.com