
nimrod house



Offering an innovative solution to the challenges posed by Transforming Care



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nimrod house

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forewords



I AM pleased to introduce this short independent report of Nimrod House, a Look Ahead Transforming Care service in Newham, produced by HACT over the last year.

Visiting this and our other Transforming Care services makes me immensely proud. Through these services, we've been able to demonstrate that it is possible to enable individuals with learning disabilities, autism and behaviour that challenges to have the freedom to live not only 'normal', but also enriched lives, often nearer to their families. This is why we work in this area.

The more people we can help in this way, the better – and this report outlines how it can be done. We urge others to learn from Look Ahead's experiences and push forward with developing solutions that enable individuals to move on from in-patient settings.

I hope the following pages make it clear that Look Ahead has not developed the Nimrod House model in isolation; a co-produced approach has been key to the service's success. Joint working between health, social care and housing, in addition to the valuable input of individuals and their families, has been absolutely integral to this model, whilst collaboration with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has allowed us to test a unique form of dual registration for this service.

I would like to thank HACT for its work on this report. We hope it serves to tell our story, and share our learning with our wider sector at what can only be seen as a critical juncture in the Transforming Care journey.

In addition, I would like to pay credit to our staff team at Nimrod House for their invaluable contribution to this report. They are truly passionate about what they do, and the level of commitment they show to our customers every day is exemplary.

Chris Hampson

Chief Executive
Look Ahead

In 2012, in response to the Winterbourne View scandal, the government and NHS England launched its Transforming Care programme to improve the care of people with learning disabilities and autism. It wanted to see a move away from institutional care to community-based settings - settings like Look Ahead's Nimrod House.

By March 2019, the government and NHS England aimed to close between 35% and 50% of in-patient beds, and build enhanced community services to prevent the next generation of people going into hospital. Sadly, most areas have failed to achieve this, with only approximately 20% of beds having been closed across England. The result is that far too many people still remain, often unnecessarily, in institutional care.

In January 2019 – two months ahead of Transforming Care's deadline – the NHS published its Long Term Plan, which postponed the ambition to halve the number of people in institutions. It stated that by March 2023/24, in-patient provision will have reduced to less than half of the 2015 levels, on a like for like basis and taking into account population growth. Nimrod House demonstrates that, with the right collaboration, resources and vision, it is possible for individuals to successfully move on from secure settings. New co-produced solutions that place the individual at the centre of their care can be achieved. By working alongside specialist housing associations to develop the right accommodation with care and support, lives can be transformed.

For too long society has failed this group of people, locking them away 'out of sight and out of mind'. But with organisations like Look Ahead, always hungry to find the solutions for the toughest of challenges, their future is living beside us, in our communities and as our neighbours.

Andrew van Doorn

Chief Executive
HACT



executive summary

HACT was commissioned by Look Ahead to bring together the key learning outcomes from the development of Nimrod House, their award-winning Transforming Care service in Newham, from design to operation.

This report aims to clarify the 'art of the possible' and provide practical guidance in a market where we know many local commissioners are struggling to secure appropriate community placements for people with high needs.

By drawing on learning from its staff members and stakeholders, who have played a key role in setting-up and delivering the service over the last three years, Look Ahead hopes its experiences will help others to push ahead with the development of settings that can provide successful move-on options or even alternatives to in-patient hospital settings.

HACT's review found the following key conclusions and learning points:

- **Look Ahead's work at Nimrod House highlights how Transforming Care can truly transform individuals' lives.** Before moving to Nimrod House, many of its customers had resided in hospital for several years, often far away from friends and family. Now, they are thriving within community settings, developing stronger relationships, building on their skills and interests, and gaining greater independence.
- **Nimrod House demonstrates that Transforming Care services offer a cost-effective alternative to in-patient settings for some individuals.** Placements in in-patient settings can cost up to £500,000 per annum per person. The cost of community based placements can be significantly lower, depending on the level of staffing required. For example, the cost of one customer's placement at Nimrod House is 24% lower than a typical in-patient placement for this cohort, representing a potential annual saving of more than £70,000 to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).
- **Investment in the physical environment is a key component for success.** Significant investment is required to provide the buildings needed in order to move individuals out of in-patient settings to community-based services. Nimrod House has only been successful because Look Ahead had both the resources and the will required to make the model and building fit for purpose.

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- **The length of time from referral to placement is often too long.**
At times, this has been due to clinicians' reluctance to take positive risks, and to trust community providers. There needs to be a greater focus on this transition process; in particular, the point at which responsibility has to be handed over to social care professionals, supported by community-based clinicians.
 - **Providers must invest in the right skills and training for staff.**
Delivering Transforming Care services, by their very nature, involves working with individuals with high and at times extremely challenging support needs. Providers must be prepared to invest in the right specialist training, expertise and input for staff working in this area. In addition, a shared approach to risk-taking must be integral to this, with clinicians and families trusting supported housing providers to deliver on what they're good at.
 - **Providers in this space must be able to positively engage and negotiate with a wide range of stakeholders, including clinicians.**
Look Ahead's success with Transforming Care is partially a result of its care and support expertise, gained through its previous and continuing work with the NHS, trusts, CCGs and clinicians. One of the most important cultural changes that needs to take place across the country is the education of hospital teams. Clinicians must see environments like the one at Nimrod House with their own eyes, and understand how they can often lead to a better quality of life for their patients.
 - **Regulatory innovation and partnership is key.** Look Ahead has a strong and established relationship with the CQC and, as a result of this, has developed a unique and flexible approach to dual registration meaning that a placement at Nimrod House can have a residential or supported living registration, or, indeed, no registration at all. Nimrod House has a 'good' CQC rating.*

*As of February 2019.

setting the scene

An overview of the Transforming Care programme

In October 2015, NHS England, with its partners in local government, set out a national plan to develop community services to allow closure of in-patient facilities for people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviours that challenge, including those with a mental health condition.

Known as the Transforming Care programme, its drive is to ensure that the right care is being delivered in the right place in the least restrictive way and environment possible. As outlined in guidance for commissioners entitled, 'Building the right home', the Transforming Care Partnerships (TCPs) – made up of CCGs (NHS England's specialised commissioners) and local authorities – are critically tasked with increasing the supply of housing. This is to ensure people with learning disabilities are able to exercise more choice about where and how they live.

Under Transforming Care, individuals should be offered their own tenancy in settled accommodation or their own home – this might include small-scale supported housing schemes or other bespoke housing options. To support delivery, NHS England made £100m of capital available between 2016 and 2021 and helped to broker access to other investment streams.

A considerable amount of work has been done to reduce the perceived over-reliance on in-patient care facilities, however there is still much work to do, with an estimated 2,400 people requiring new support and living arrangements by the Transforming Care programme deadline of March 2019.

The NHS Long Term Plan, published in January 2019, effectively extended this deadline by up to five years, with the aim now being to reduce in-patient provision to less than half of the 2015 levels by 2023/24.

About Look Ahead

Look Ahead is a specialist housing association and provider of tailor-made care, support and accommodation services. Every year in 30 local authorities across London and the South East it supports more than 7,000 people with a wide range of needs, including mental health, homelessness and complex needs, care leavers and young people.

Within its learning disabilities and autism division, Look Ahead provides 21 specialist services for adults with a broad range of learning disabilities and/or autism, including those with complex needs, to nine local authorities and CCGs. Supporting over 350 customers, it specialises in providing a safe and supported home for those with complex and profound disabilities.

With over 110 services and nearly 1,000 staff, Look Ahead has extensive experience in developing partnerships with commissioners, both in health and local authorities. As a housing provider, it is also an expert in developing bespoke homes, which meet individuals' needs within safe, supportive environments.

Services are as individualised and bespoke as possible, with Look Ahead implementing a co-produced and person-centred approach to care, which involves customers and their families having significant input into the care they receive and how it is delivered. This process helps facilitate the transition towards more independent living.

Look Ahead's strategy is to develop its services and organisational capability to respond to the increasing demand for high-acuity services for individuals with learning disabilities, mental health needs and behaviours that challenge.

A number of Look Ahead's current services are registered with the CQC, and this is an area of growth for the organisation. This, together with its approach to making capital investments in order to deliver supported housing solutions on behalf of commissioners, is closely aligned with the Transforming Care programme and NHS England's Five Year Forward View.

setting the scene

About Nimrod House

The service was conceived in 2015 and developed throughout 2016. It features five self-contained flats, each tailored to customer needs, with bespoke features and assistive technology.

The Nimrod House building, previously part of Look Ahead's general housing portfolio, was significantly redeveloped to be able to offer a combination of residential care and supported living services under one roof. This work was part of Look Ahead's strategy to align its housing and properties to the changing needs of the sector and its local communities.

Support is provided 24 hours a day at Nimrod House, with a highly trained staff team providing a combination of flexible 1:1 or 2:1 support during waking hours. The service provides a core support model, which includes shared waking night and management cover. In addition, personalised 1:1 packages meet each individual's needs, and can be adapted as those needs change and develop over time.

Referrals to Nimrod House are sourced from local authorities and CCGs, and bespoke support packages are proposed for individuals following detailed and thorough care needs assessments. All support is delivered in close partnership with clinicians, social workers, commissioners, carers and families. The ultimate goal is to provide support to help individuals move towards living more independently in their communities.

The following narrative describes the development of Nimrod House in distinct phases, including development of Look Ahead's expertise, development of the service model, and delivery.



phase one:

development of complex care expertise

Initial steps

Over the last six years, Look Ahead has developed the core organisational skills and expertise needed to work with the group of people identified under the Transforming Care programme. This began in 2013, when Look Ahead was approached by a family in Hertfordshire whose son had lived in a private hospital for sixteen years. Look Ahead had been recommended to the family by local commissioners, who suggested the organisation might be able to find somewhere more appropriate for their son to live, ideally in his own accommodation within the local community.

Look Ahead agreed to help, and worked with Aragon Housing Association (now Grand Union Housing Group) who purchased and refurbished two bungalows. Look Ahead used the second bungalow on the plot to support another individual to move to a community-based setting, and to create the economies of scale needed to make the overall scheme more financially viable.

The development of the support model and the accommodation was complex and challenging, but the scheme was highly successful and led to two individuals, who had previously lived in a secure setting for many years, being supported effectively in their community.



Building reputation

Due to the success of the scheme, Hertfordshire County Council promoted Look Ahead's services to other local authorities, including Newham Council, who were also keen to develop local services that would meet the needs of people with complex conditions in more independent settings nearer home. The local authority identified Look Ahead as a partner that could help it achieve its strategic aims.

Newham CCG initially identified one individual it wanted to help move from a secure hospital. Look Ahead was presented with an opportunity to assess the individual and propose a support model that would provide them with their own accommodation, and a support package that would deliver personalised outcomes.

Developing and delivering the right model that appropriately managed risk, particularly through the transition period to delivering the service, was lengthy and complex, taking over twelve months in total.

Slough was identified as a suitable location for the service, as the individual's family lived along the M4 corridor, and their support and input into the service model was identified as a critical aspect of success. Look Ahead completed detailed work and planning in relation to managing risk and contingency, in order to address the concerns of stakeholders, particularly clinicians.

Overcoming barriers and challenges

One significant factor that helped propel collaborative support for the service was Newham being asked by NHS England to move this particular individual out of hospital. This pressure created some impetus, and led to risk-sharing protocols being developed, which responded fully to stakeholder concerns.

One further obstacle – one that can often derail potential service developments for individuals identified under the Transforming Care programme – was gaining the support of the privately run hospital where the individual lived, which was perceived to have some reservations about losing the patient and the associated revenue stream.

phase one:

development of complex care expertise

Initially, a twelve-week pilot transition was agreed in order to trial the support package and model. This was done on the basis that it could be suspended if the individual became anxious about moving.

Anxiety about moving is somewhat inevitable, particularly for individuals with complex behavioural needs relating to learning disabilities, autism and Asperger's Syndrome. Individuals may not fully understand they're moving, and this, along with the changes going on around them and working with new people, will likely cause increased behaviours that challenge. Having the ability to manage this is key.

A planned and carefully considered transition period is a key factor in successfully supporting complex individuals to leave secure settings and live more independently. Induction needs to be approached strategically, and change must be managed on a gradual basis, allowing staff to build knowledge about the person safely, whilst effectively managing the risks.

Inspiring confidence and managing change

Look Ahead was able to provide assurance due to its organisational expertise, particularly around risk management, and this led to the individual moving to his new property in Slough in 2015.

Whilst the whole process was not straightforward, and required great flexibility and agility, it served to demonstrate to Newham that Look Ahead could make complex models of care work. It also showed that the organisation had developed a robust skillset to help people transition from secure settings to independent living.

Following the success of this project, Look Ahead, working alongside Newham, completed a strategy to support similar individuals out of hospital, commissioned by the local authority.

Its primary focus was to define how risk was to be assessed and managed; what specialist staff training would be needed to support people with more complex needs and behaviours that challenge; and, finally, the specific model of support and care that would be co-designed with each individual.

A significant element of the work involved implementing a process of change management for the commissioning authority, which outlined what a personalised housing-based service could look like.

phase two:

developing the Nimrod House model

The work undertaken in phase one, between 2013 and 2016, provided Look Ahead with significant skills and experience of working with individuals with complex learning disabilities and high support needs that they could then evidence.

The team already had a core skillset and established models for working with people experiencing mental health needs, and found that there was a significant amount of mental health support required with the Transforming Care cohort.

However, there was also a level of risk for the organisation in expanding into this complex and high risk area of work. To mitigate risk, Look Ahead decided to begin work gradually, only supporting a small number of individuals into new services at the same time.

The accommodation

Nimrod House, already part of Look Ahead's housing stock, was identified as a suitable location for a small scheme. It had several features that made it suitable to support a group of people with complex needs under the Transforming Care programme.

At that time, the property contained six one-bedroomed self-contained flats, meaning it provided an opportunity to support five individuals, whilst redeveloping one flat into a shared communal space for customers and staff.

The property was detached with a large garden, and located in the heart of the community but within a quiet cul-de-sac. This meant that a level of privacy and dignity could be afforded to the individuals living at the service, without being too removed from opportunities to integrate within their community.

phase two:

developing the Nimrod House model

To develop the property into a residential care service required a change to planning regulations. Look Ahead is a Registered Social Landlord and has expertise in delivering housing developments, alongside innovative care and support models.

Close working with the planning office allayed any concerns about changing the property from six to five residential units. Look Ahead wrote a planning report and attended a planning meeting to answer questions and address concerns. Additionally, the Director of Strategic Commissioning for Newham wrote to the planning office to underline the need for the service.

Upon receiving planning permission, Look Ahead moved the current residents to local alternative accommodation, and undertook a refurbishment project, investing £440,000 to deliver high specification accommodation, including external landscaping, new office and communal spaces, and communal gardens with features to encourage exercise and activity. The individual flats were installed with appropriate assistive technology in partnership with Alcove, a leading provider of digital care technology solutions.

Registration

Once the design and specification for the size and shape of the scheme were confirmed, Look Ahead needed to decide the most appropriate model of registration with the CQC. It liaised closely with a range of stakeholders in order to establish how to do this most effectively. In close consultation with the CQC, Look Ahead proposed separate registrations for both residential care and supported living, with a unique flexibility to adjust the number of flats registered as residential or supported living, depending on the specific needs of each individual residing at the service. All of the flats are CQC registered; three placements are residential care and two are supported living; however this can be adapted at any time following notification to the CQC.

phase three:

delivery of the service model

An integral part of Look Ahead's forward strategy is to offer housing solutions aligned to complex care spot contracts. Not only does this operating model deliver sustainable revenue streams that support high levels of capital investment, it crucially provides security of tenure and safety for customers.

Nimrod House is an example of this strategy. It is a model solution for unlocking housing and support options for individuals who may present risk, and have resided in inappropriate secure settings for too long due to a lack of viable and safe move-on options.

The following section describes the offer at Nimrod House, and how it was developed through the initial delivery phase, including the process of implementing a service for a typical customer.

Stage 1: Referral

A referral to Nimrod House typically comes through local authorities or CCGs. Look Ahead then conducts a thorough and detailed support and risk assessment of each customer in the setting that they currently reside in.

A second assessment is done shortly afterwards by a different member of staff to gain a broader perspective of the individual. Look Ahead engages closely with the individual's family members and support network, as their involvement is critical, both as advocates and in terms of designing the most appropriate and holistic support package.

Look Ahead uses their in-depth assessment process to construct a bespoke support package model, including detailed costs, with a transition plan for the individual to move to Nimrod House. This is then presented to the funding authority.

As well as developing a close working partnership with Newham CCG, Look Ahead works closely with professionals within the East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT), including Consultant Psychiatrists, Case Managers, Social Workers, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists.

Look Ahead involves clinicians in the assessment process to ensure the proposed package of support and living environment fully reflect the needs of each individual.

phase three:

delivery of the service model

Stage 2: Stakeholder and staff engagement

Subject to acceptance of the proposal by Newham CCG, Look Ahead immediately begins to set-up the individual's care and support package. This begins with the recruitment of staff. Families are heavily involved in the process of shortlisting potential staff, to help ensure that the right people are found. Family members will also be part of the interview panel if they wish. Generally, families tend to ask questions around empathy and diversity that are very important in terms of ensuring the staff team is able to build strong, trusting and positive relationships with residents.

Once staff are appointed, a specialist training package is designed for them. This is a bespoke package based on the needs of the prospective customer, again involving members of the family. All recruitment and training takes place before the individual moves into Nimrod House. Look Ahead also works with ELFT's Multi-Disciplinary Team on housing management issues, principally on adapting the flat appropriately.

Stage 3: Transition to the service

Transitioning to a new living and support environment can be a highly stressful experience, particularly for people with autism and associated behaviours that challenge. Look Ahead places significant emphasis on planning and delivering this aspect of the service within a risk management framework. The transition process starts gradually and at a pace that is determined through the detailed assessment phase.

The goal is to help each person understand and digest the change. Look Ahead introduces the new support team and management gradually – and, if appropriate, provides the new customer with pictures of the building and flat – to build some familiarity ahead of planned visits. Staff will also amend fixtures and fittings to support the personalisation of living space.

The team then develops a Positive Behaviour Support Plan, which is about maintaining what keeps individuals happy and calm, and knowing how to de-escalate any situations where the person does become distressed. The aim is to support customers to integrate into the community, and improve their personal life skills and competences.

A risk management plan is also drawn up. Meanwhile, environmental and individual risk assessments are undertaken to provide a comprehensive picture of what is needed to enable a safe transition and successful move-in experience for each individual.

Stage 4: Move-in

When it comes to move-in, both the individual and the staff team can experience anxieties. To help support a smooth transition, additional staff resources will be deployed during the move-in and immediate settling in period.

Supporting the customer's familiarity and adjustment to their new living environment and community is an immediate priority. Developing strong relationships with the family is key to making the move-in and subsequent long-term placement a success – at Nimrod House, a number of the customers moved back to their home borough from secure settings many miles away.

More family contact is a natural expectation, but this can sometimes heighten emotions, and make the transition more complex on occasions. The team will meet with family members prior to discharge in order to create a clear plan and structure for visiting, which helps transitions go smoothly. It enables all parties to understand how best they can support a successful transition to independent living.

Close engagement with clinicians occurs during the typical two-month move-in phase, when weekly multi-disciplinary meetings are held with Newham Council, the CCG and ELFT. Following this, a cycle of meetings is agreed at the right frequency for the individual customer. The initial meetings allow shared learning, drawing on the resources of key partners in the NHS and the local authority, and help to establish a culture of transparency and open dialogue.

Riz's story

Riz, 39, has lived at Nimrod House since March 2016. Before this, he had been living in a secure unit since he was 18 years old. This is the first time he has lived independently. He has his own one-bedroom flat, which he has been involved in furnishing and decorating. With the support of the Nimrod House team, in partnership with his family and Newham's multi-disciplinary team, Riz has made great progress. After three years in the service, Riz is now:

- **Able to use public transport to travel around London (supported by staff);**
- **Visiting his family unaccompanied twice a week. In 2017 he spent Christmas at home for the first time in eight years, and now visits home unaccompanied for all major festivals;**
- **Cleaning his flat independently, preparing his own breakfast and hot drinks independently, and doing his own washing. Previously all these things were done for him;**
- **More physically active, having joined the local gym and started swimming regularly, as well as riding his bike for the first time since childhood;**
- **Holding conversations, and taking more control of what he wants to do on a daily basis, including choosing to change his activity when he doesn't want to do the activity offered;**
- **Attending the local mosque every week; this involves a special arrangement with the imam who will pray with him immediately after service;**
- **Enjoying a higher quality of life, DJ-ing locally on a Friday night and doing a weekly shop with staff every Monday. He has completed a course teaching him the value of money and what he can get with each denomination, and will make payments for his own grocery shopping now;**
- **Able to request help when he feels agitated and knows what to request, for example medications or time-out. As part of a Positive Behavioural Support plan, this has reduced the need for incident-related 'when required' medication (also known as 'PRN') from 25 to around five times a month.**

“ He is back in the area where he grew up, going to the places he knows and remembers... Riz’s move here has changed all our lives for the better.”

His mother, Raheela, shares his story:

“Before coming to Nimrod House, Riz was in a secure hospital in Colchester. He had been there for almost five years. Living in a hospital is very different: he just had a room, and it was much more difficult for our family to see him. We might get to see him once a month. Now, we see him most days.

He is back in the area where he grew up, going to the places he knows and remembers. His grandparents live just five minutes away. He now goes with staff to the pool where he learnt to swim as a child. He is riding a bike again after many years. He is doing so much here; he is much more independent. We have all seen big improvements and he is a much happier person.

Riz is part of a big, very close family: he has six brothers and sisters, and eight nieces and nephews. On Sundays, he might come home for the day or we all come here and enjoy a meal together, in his home. Riz’s move here has changed all our lives for the better.”

Additional to the good outcomes Riz has achieved, his placement at Nimrod House is 24% cheaper than the cost of an alternative high-secure hospital placement (based on NHS National Schedule of Reference Costs, 2017-18).



phase four:

operating expertise: attaining success

Accommodation

Nimrod House is on the corner of a residential estate, set back from the road, with a big open space at the front and a secure back garden. There is also office space, staff sleeping space, and a communal lounge. This design allows the whole staff team to know who is in and out of the building at any time.

The five flats are all self-contained one-bedroom apartments. Each is equipped with assistive technology: door sensors, movement sensors, temperature sensors and medication cabinets. The technology is provided by Alcove, which provides data on a monthly basis, or more often if required. This data is used as part of the review process and feeds into the ongoing care and support for each customer. Each flat has an individual kitchen, bathroom and lounge. All windows are reinforced, and have magnetic curtains. Cookers are cold to the touch.

Partnerships

A well-trained team, with strong partnership working, is able to support and be an effective advocate for their customer. For example, when one customer was becoming distressed, a duty psychiatrist visited and wanted to recall the customer to hospital. The manager was able to appropriately challenge this assessment by demonstrating how he and the team could manage and support the customer without recall. This was accepted by the psychiatrist and a return to hospital was avoided.

The service also works with many local and community services to access relevant support for customers.

phase four:

operating expertise: attaining success

Risk management

During the referral process, within a multi-disciplinary forum, careful consideration of the needs of the individual and presenting risks is key. There is a real and continued focus on challenging the use of any restrictive practice that may be considered to be required, and strategies are agreed. Adherence to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards is fundamental to ensuring that the service allows the individual the least restrictive environment possible, whilst ensuring the appropriate safeguards are in place. Observation and discreet recording of moods allows staff to form early judgements on a person's wellbeing and temperament so early de-escalation strategies can be used. Through this, Look Ahead has seen significant reductions in the number of incidents, and the use and severity of restrictive practice.

Incidents, use of restrictive practice, safeguarding alerts and 'near misses' are reported through the organisation's governance structure, ensuring robust scrutiny and challenge is applied to all services.

Look Ahead also has a Quality Assurance framework that ensures it is consistently compliant with the Health and Social Care Act, in line with the CQC Fundamental Standards.

Staff expertise

Look Ahead has developed a range of expertise to work with customers at Nimrod House. At the heart of the operating model is Positive Behavioural Support (PBS). PBS is a person-centred approach to support people who display or are at risk of displaying behaviours that challenge. It is particularly used with people who have a learning disability and/or autism, and involves:

- **Understanding the reasons for behaviours which challenge;**
- **Assessing the broad social and physical context in which the behaviour occurs – including the person's life history, physical and mental health, and the impact of any traumatic life events;**
- **Planning and implementing ways of supporting the person, which enhance quality of life for both the person themselves and their carers;**

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- **Appropriate use of restrictive practice;**
 - **A culture of active support, where individuals are taught new skills to replace the behaviours that challenge;**
 - **Creating physical and social environments that are supportive and capable of meeting an individual's needs.**

The team at Nimrod House are trained in PBS and this is integral to their daily practice. The manager has a Level Five Qualification in Functional Assistance. The Team Leader is a PBS Coach and all members of the team are trained to Level Two PBS Practitioner standard. They continue to work within the Positive Behavioural Support Framework outlined by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD).

Financial efficiencies

This study has demonstrated that Transforming Care services can offer a cost-effective alternative to in-patient settings. Placements in in-patient settings can cost between up to £500,000 per annum per person, primarily depending on the level of staffing required. We know Transforming Care services such as Look Ahead's Nimrod House, have the potential to deliver significant financial efficiencies when compared to in-patient settings for some individuals.

It can take time to realise these savings as a high staff to customer ratio is often initially needed to help support transition and manage risk. However, we believe that in the long-term, the costs savings generated for the public purse can be great. The cost of community based placements can be significantly lower, depending on the level of staffing required. For example, the cost of one customer's placement at Nimrod House is 24% lower than a typical in-patient placement for this cohort, representing a potential annual saving of more than £70,000 to the CCG.

phase five:

lessons learnt for the next generation of Transforming Care services

Inevitably, the process of setting up and running Nimrod House has led to considerable learning about what has and has not worked. This has been incorporated into Look Ahead's service development work and continues to inform practice.

Relationships and risk

Developing strong relationships with commissioners and clinicians is a lengthy but crucial process. In the case of Nimrod House, Look Ahead has developed positive relationships with both the local authority and the CCG. Nonetheless, it took time for clinicians to understand and trust the professional expertise of Look Ahead and its staff, and to see what could be achieved in terms of improvements to quality of life.

Building these relationships has been vital, given the positive risk taking that Look Ahead adopts with customers at Nimrod House. Without these relationships, the local authority and the CQC might not have the confidence to provide Nimrod House with its bespoke and flexible registration model.

Nimrod House's CQC registration is unique, and has required engagement with the CQC based on creativity, dialogue, openness and challenge. Look Ahead was keen to make the model work and understood that a strong and productive relationship with its commissioners, clinicians and the CQC would be a key success measure.

There has also been a need from all those involved to have open conversations around risk in all areas and how this is managed.

In terms of the wider organisation, Look Ahead has also taken some financial risks in developing this area of work, and it has been important that a culture of taking and managing risks has evolved with all key partners.

Flexibility and creativity

Look Ahead recognised early on that a flexible and creative approach to residents' living environments was crucial.

Having assistive technology built into homes from the start was key. Look Ahead knew that passive technology had the potential to not only enhance the quality and experience of care, but also generate important information and data that could be used to personalise the care and support package further. Working with a leading technology provider such as Alcove was therefore critical.

Personalisation of living environments was also important, particularly to individuals and their families as they were given greater ownership over the look and feel of their new homes - many, for the first time.

Look Ahead learnt through the process that working to a general design specification, which could then be built on and personalised, worked well in terms of customer preferences and managing the overall development costs. It also offered more scope for creativity. For example, Look Ahead supports one individual who required additional safety measures in his home, such as padded walls, which was proving extremely costly using clinical sources. Instead a local craftsman was sourced, who was able to provide a safe, bespoke alternative at a lower cost.



phase five:

Lessons learnt for the next generation of Transforming Care services

Mental and physical health issues

Although the Transforming Care cohort has been mainly characterised as people living with a learning disability and/or autism, the experience of mental ill health is also a common feature. This was recognised early on by Look Ahead, which was able to draw on its expertise of working with people with complex mental health issues.

Physical health issues were widely under-reported when Look Ahead engaged with the hospital-based providers during the assessment and transition period. Look Ahead had to ensure that this became a key part of the assessment, and make sure that access to healthcare services were in place once the customer moved into their new home.

The right skills and timeframes

Recruiting and training staff with the right skills and expertise was critical and at times presented Look Ahead with its greatest challenges. It was essential that they developed the appropriate infrastructure to secure the right staff capabilities, ensure staff retention, and model the costings for this. This is likely to be a different staffing model to its wider workforce, with different expectations, support structures and costs required.

Finally, it is important to take the time to get it right. This applies to each and every aspect of the process. This is a challenging programme and a challenging cohort and therefore it is vital to make sure every decision is taken with collaboration, care and consideration, even if this means moving more slowly than ideally desirable.

concluding remarks

Through Nimrod House, Look Ahead and its partners have been able to demonstrate that with the right resources, collaboration and will, Transforming Care can and does work.

Look Ahead has shown that individuals can be supported to live more independent lives closer to their families and in their own local communities. However, despite this, far too many people still remain in secure or in-patient settings with little or no hope of move-on.

While Look Ahead is heartened by the NHS's commitment to reducing the health and care inequalities experienced by individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism, it is concerned about the fact that its Long Term Plan did not refer to the Transforming Care programme.

Look Ahead believes there needs to be a renewed focus on Transforming Care and a refreshed political drive is required to rebuild momentum, galvanise trusts and clinicians, and ensure that other housing and support providers have the opportunity to replicate Look Ahead's success in this area.

The NHS Long Term Plan gives policymakers, providers and clinicians more time to move individuals out of in-patient settings, but this must not be interpreted as an opportunity to stop pushing ahead with developing suitable community-based care, support and accommodation.

Look Ahead urges the government to provide more guidance for everybody who has been responsible for delivering Transforming Care. The NHS and support providers must be supported to work in genuine partnership if they are to help to improve the lives of many thousands of individuals and their families across the country.

about this report

Look Ahead commissioned HACT, the Housing Associations' Charitable Trust, to conduct an independent evaluation of Nimrod House. Published in February 2019, the evaluation used an in-depth interview methodology and covered:

- **Outcomes for individuals and commissioners**
- **The service's position in the care pathway and the internal pathway**
- **Stakeholder engagement and partnership working**

The report was written by:

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About HACT

HACT is an innovation agency that provides futures-oriented solutions, projects and products for UK housing. HACT delivers thought leadership and drives new ideas for business transformation through our platform of research, impact measurement and data analytics, as well as through our engagement with other sectors and our work on connected technologies. We work alongside housing providers to drive change within their own businesses. HACT helps housing providers maintain and refine resilient and successful businesses by generating actionable evidence to inform the development of new, smarter, and more efficient ways of working. HACT Health is a collaboration that forges links between providers of social housing and healthcare services. We help housing and health providers to:

- **Identify current and future opportunities in the healthcare market**
- **Develop business cases for transformation and NHS investment**
- **Reach the right people in the NHS and housing**
- **Create new partnerships between Housing Associations and NHS providers**
- **Improve evidence and demonstrate value**

www.hact.org.uk



In line with our core values – excellence, aspiration, partnership and trust – we align ourselves with other organisations that help us to achieve our vision.

accreditations



awards



memberships and associations



about look ahead

Look Ahead is a specialist housing association and provider of tailor-made care, support and accommodation services. We support thousands of people across London and the South East with a diverse range of needs, helping them to make individual choices, achieve goals and take control of their own lives.

With the right support, we know that our customers can realise their dreams and aspirations. Our customers are experts by experience - by encouraging individuals to identify and develop their own unique skills and abilities, we can support them to bring about positive change in both their lives and those of the people around them.

Who do we work with?

With over 40 years in social care under our belt, we are experts through both practice and understanding. Today, we are proud to be the trusted partner of over 30 local authorities and health trusts, providing specialist support and care services for over 7,000 people every year with a wide range of needs, including:

- Mental health
- Learning disabilities
- Homelessness and complex needs
- Young people and care leavers

Whether it's working with someone to achieve a positive change or providing specialist care, Look Ahead's experienced and passionate teams are committed to delivering high quality services across social care, health and housing that support independence and help transform lives.

www.lookahead.org.uk

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