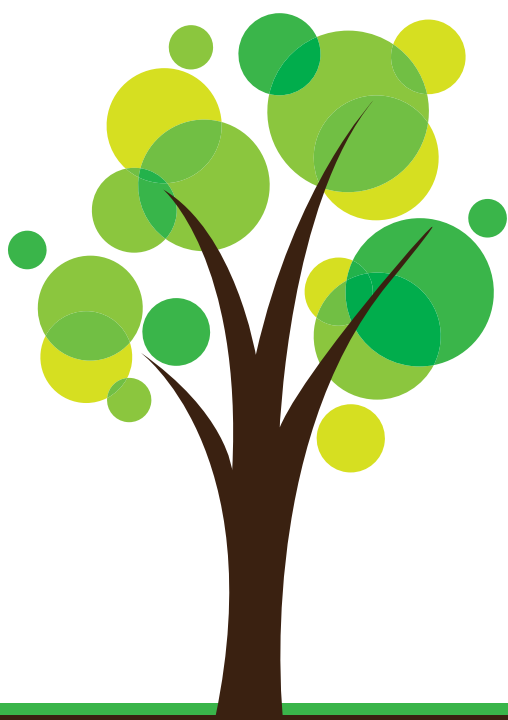


**RICHMOND AND WANDSWORTH  
ADULT SOCIAL CARE  
AND PUBLIC HEALTH  
PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2018 – 2019**



**ADULT SOCIAL CARE ACADEMY**  
*Growing, nurturing, supporting and inspiring*

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# 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Welcome to the second annual Principal Social Work report for Richmond and Wandsworth Adults Social Care and Public Health. This report highlights the role of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) in promoting excellence in social work and the achievements of the PSW for 2018/19.
- 1.2 The report details what has been achieved so far and what will be done next year to continue to raise the standing of Social Work and support a progressive, highly skilled and confident Social Work workforce in Richmond and Wandsworth.
- 1.3 In accordance with best practice an annual report will be prepared at the end of each year and formally presented within the council's governance arrangements.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The Care and Support Statutory Guidance defines the role of the Principal Social Worker for Adults; functioning at the strategic level of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) the PSW should:
  - Be visible across the organisation (from elected members, senior management, frontline social workers and those who use our services)
  - Have a broad knowledge base on safeguarding and Making Safeguarding Personal
  - Lead and oversee excellent social work practice.
  - Support and develop arrangements for excellent practice.
  - Lead the career development of Social Workers
  - Support effective Social Work supervision and decision making
  - Oversee quality assurance and improvement of Social Work practice.
- 2.2 The national network of Adult Principal Social Workers is supported by the Chief Social Worker, Lyn Romeo who sits within the Department of Health. The Chief Social Worker provides a voice for Social Work within Government, supporting key developments in policy, education and Social Work practice.


**2.3** In her annual report, The Chief Social Worker sets out her priorities for 2019/20, to guide Principal Social Workers nationally:

- Embed strengths based social work practice
- Support the quality of social work practice and leadership
- Improve knowledge and application of what works and what is the right approach to supporting people to have better lives
- Promote the value and contribution that social work and social workers bring to the health and social care system.

## **3 Progress**

**3.1** The PSW for Adults in Richmond and Wandsworth is responsible for the Workforce Development and Professional Standards Team which oversees the Quality Assurance Framework and the training and development strategy for the Adult Social Care Workforce.

**3.2** Highlights of the work undertaken and overseen by the PSW since March 2018 are outlined below:

- 
- **ASYE and NQSW programme**
  - **Academy**
  - **Practice Standards framework**
  - **Recruitment and retention strategy and board**
  - **Training offer**
  - **Quality assurance of practice and creation of the Quality Assurance Group.**
  - **Mentoring and supporting front line staff and managers**
  - **Strengths based practice**
  - **World social work day celebration**

## 4 Practice Standards Framework

- 4.1 The PSW has continued to lead and support the quality assurance of practice via progressive development of the Practice Standards Framework which includes a bi-monthly peer audit programme, an external audit and thematic audits throughout the year.
- 4.2 Progression of the quality assurance programme has included the introduction of Practice Standards for operational staff across the department and the development of a Quality Assurance Group which includes senior operational managers, the aim of this group is to ensure that senior staff have oversight of the quality of frontline practice and are able to use this information to lead, inform and take forward improvement actions.



## 5 Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

- 5.1 The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) programme has been designed to provide Newly Qualified Social Worker's (NQSW's) with the opportunity to develop their practical knowledge about key elements of social work practice.

In 2017 there was a successful project to recruit 15 NQSW's who all went on to complete the ASYE programme, 13 of the 15 Social Workers have been retained to date.

- 5.2 Since February 2019, an additional 9 NQSW's have started in the service. Supporting newly qualified staff is an important strategy for 'growing your own' workforce and retaining high quality professionals and good outcomes for service users.

➤ By February 2020, Richmond and Wandsworth Adults Social Care and Public Health will have supported 30 NQSWs through the ASYE programme. ⬅

## 6 Adults Social Care Academy

**6.1** In March 2018, The Workforce Development and Professional Standards Team, under the leadership of the Principal Social Worker launched the Richmond and Wandsworth Adult Social Care Academy.

The Academy has been a successful model for supporting the ASYE programme as well as increased visibility of the Continuing Professional Development offer and career development opportunities for Adult Social Care staff. The Academy provides a beacon for professional standards and supports a model of continued learning within the organisation.

**6.2** The Adults Social Care Academy has introduced a series of practice tools for frontline staff including the Practice Standards, Recording Tips, Safeguarding Adults' Roles and Responsibilities and a Strength Based Practice booklet. The Adults Social Care Academy library situated within the Wandsworth Town Hall extension is a valuable resource and reflective space for staff within the department.

**6.3** **Key to the retention strategy,**



The Academy supports a robust Continuing Professional Development Framework via a diverse range of development opportunities comprising of an annual training programme with a contracted provider, a career progression scheme including an offer of 5 BIA's, 5 AHMPS, 2 Practice Educators and 10 post graduate certificate opportunities per year.



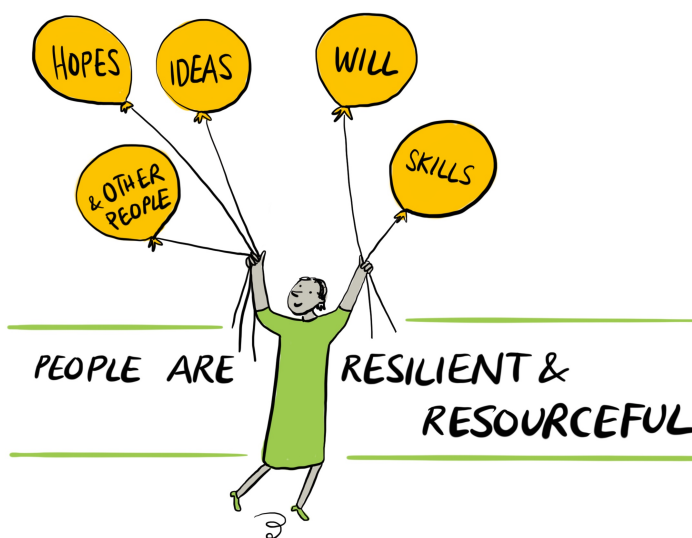
**6.4** The PSW has continued to provide strategic leadership to the South West London Teaching Partnership. In 2017, the partnership successfully bid for funding from the Department of Education to support further development with Kingston University. The Teaching Partnership aspires to drive up standards of Social Work practice across the whole Social Work spectrum from undergraduate training to post qualifying Continuing Professional Development.

# 7 Strength Based Practice

- 7.1 A key piece of work undertaken by the PSW and the Workforce Development and Professional Standards Team has been embedding a Strength Based Practice foundation programme across the Adult Social Care services in partnership with Making Research Count. Alongside other initiatives, the programme will help to transform culture and enable frontline practitioners to undertake interventions informed by person centred conversation and relationship focused practice.
- 7.2 The Principal Social Worker has initiated several collaborative events with Voluntary Sector partners to support staff to understand the resources available in the local communities and develop good working relationships with community partners.

» This has included a series of 'get to know your community' sessions where staff have had the opportunity to visit voluntary organisations and learn about the services available.

A Wandsworth voluntary sector event is scheduled for June 2019, with over 20 community partners involved.



(An excerpt from the Richmond and Wandsworth Strength Based Practice Handbook, illustrated by Sandra Howgate)

## 8 World Social Work Day

- 8.1 In March 2019, the PSW coordinated a highly successful professional development event for Social Care Staff in celebration of World Social Work Day. The event was themed around Strength Based Practice and included a performance on Strength Based Practice by Acting Out Productions and contributions from Learning Disability organisation Certitude and most powerfully, a local service user speaking of her experiences of Social Services. This was an important opportunity for staff to celebrate good practice and appreciate and learn about the vital role of human relationships in supporting people. A themed conference will be held annually as a continuing professional development event for Adult Social Care Staff.

## 9 Recruitment and Retention

- 9.1 The PSW has led the development of the recruitment and retention strategy. The recruitment and retention strategy seeks to support the development of a stable workforce which is an integral part of embedding good practice within a consistent staff group.

9.2

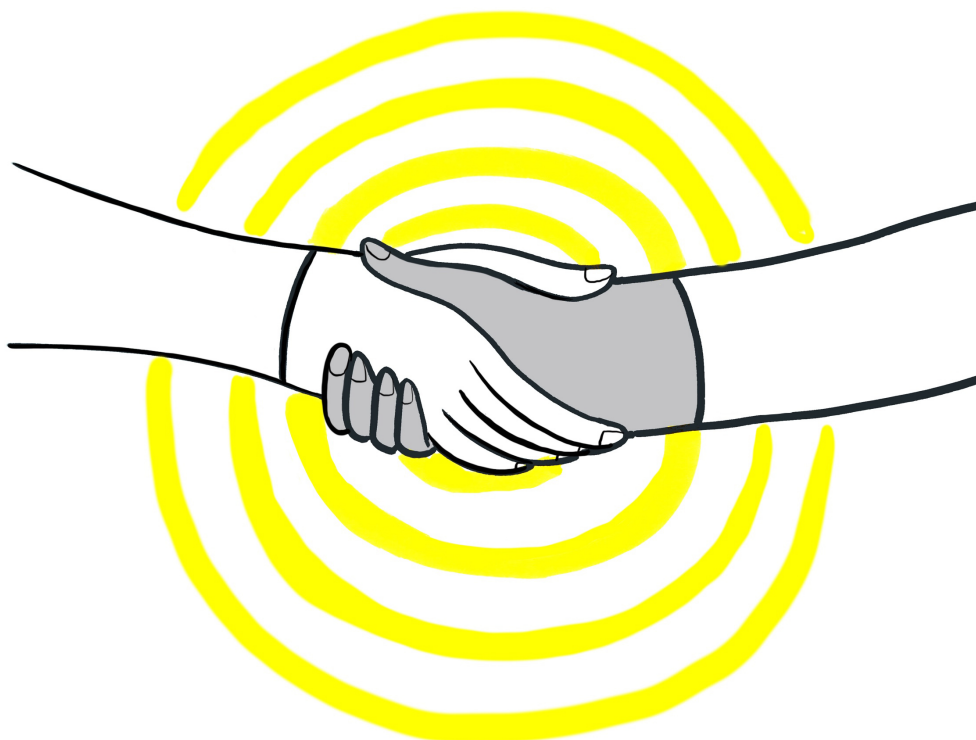
» This year, the PSW has an article featured in the National Compass Jobs magazine with a key focus on Strength Based Practice in Richmond and Wandsworth, also highlighting the benefits of working within the Shared Staffing Arrangement and local communities this was a positive forum to promote social work practice within the councils. «

- 9.3 Effective induction in Social Work is an important step in retaining high quality staff that are motivated and share the values of the organisation. The PSW continues to oversee the induction framework supporting managers in Richmond and Wandsworth to provide meaningful and good quality induction for new staff.
- 9.4 In 2018, the PSW initiated a process for completing exit interviews for operational managers and staff. Gathering information from individuals exiting the organisation will further enable a positive learning culture by ensuring that the department makes informed adjustments based on themes and key areas arising from those who leave.



## 10 Voice for Social Work

- 10.1** The PSW strives to provide a voice for Social Work within the organisation via development of professional events and feedback to senior managers regarding pertinent issues in social work. The Social Work Health Check is a key way to improve recruitment and retention. This year approximately a quarter of this staff group responded.
- 10.2** The PSW will continue to support the development of a specific action plan based on the findings of Social Work Health Check. The Workforce Development and Professional Standards team will support a greater level of engagement with staff about the findings and associated actions to ensure social workers and other staff know their feedback is welcomed and recognised by senior managers.



# 11 Local, Regional and National Practice Leadership

- 11.1 The Richmond and Wandsworth PSW is now the co-chair of the London Principal Social Work network. Alongside this, the PSW attends quarterly national PSW events that provide opportunity for the Chief Social Workers for adults and children to share the direction of travel, answer questions and receive feedback from PSW's.

These events also provide opportunity for the sharing of good practice and national agendas.



## 12 Priorities for 2019 – 2020

### 12.1 Quality Assurance

- 12.1.1 Quality Assurance remains a priority for 2019 – 2020. This includes embedding learning from audits to drive forward practice improvements. Engaging managers to consistently lead and set clear expectations in relation to practice quality will help to strengthen the impact of audits and ensure that all staff are clear on the practice expectations within Adult Social Services.

### 12.2 Strength Based Practice

- 12.2.1 Embedding a consistent strength-based practice model across Adults Social Services will be an important priority for 2019 – 2020. Work is currently underway via the strength-based practice foundation programme however a second stage of work to consolidate and develop staff skills will continue, including the introduction of motivational interviewing for frontline staff.

### 12.3 Social Work Apprenticeships

- 12.3.1 Following a 12-month delay, the first Social Work apprenticeships will be introduced toward late 2019 to early 2020. The apprenticeships will be an exciting opportunity to invest in existing social care staff to provide the social work training.
- 12.3.2 The initial stages of workforce planning and engagement with HR regarding the proposed apprenticeship model has already begun and will progress further throughout 2019.

## 13 Conclusion

- 13.1** The PSW provides professional leadership to the Social Work Workforce, helping to raise the profile of Social Work both internally and externally by providing the professional knowledge required to drive local and regional practice development.

The progress made in 2018/19 has helped to shape the way forward for the coming year. It is anticipated that 2019/20 will enable positive progress in the way that we promote a learning culture that aims to support high quality relationship-based practice in adult social care to enable excellent outcomes for our local communities.

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