

Case study: Reading Borough Council

Improving community Services with QAS Pro



Reading Borough Council

Reading Borough Council is a progressive and successful local authority, providing a wide range of quality services to the Reading community. Within Reading Borough Council, Community Care Services provide social care in partnership with a range of local voluntary organisations, private care agencies and other statutory services. This ensures that vulnerable adults have the support they need to be as independent as they can and live safely in their own homes for as long as possible. In addition, Education & Children Services provide family support for children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk because of disabilities, behaviour or family circumstances.



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Jonathan Burt
IT Manager
Reading Borough Council

Situation

The most vulnerable residents within the Reading community rely on the Council for its support, whether that be sending out a social/care worker, counsellor, nurse or health visitor or providing essential services such as meals on wheels. Care workers tend to contact residents via telephone, fax, and letter or through home visits. If the contact data for residents is not accurately captured and stored, there is a risk that the support or care they need may not reach them at the appropriate time. This could have a negative impact on the resident's perception of the Council and lead to dissatisfaction and complaints.

Reading Borough Council had previously relied on paper forms to

collect information about an individual who may need certain services provided by the local authority. Data such as name, address and relationship networks was collected by the Council and stored in a central database. The full case history and documentation was stored offline in separate files. Changes to the database such as address, carer, associate or guardian information were often entered by hand, which was time consuming and could lead to mistakes. It was recognised that a solution was required to update and maintain residents' records to provide a more efficient response to social care, allowing the Council to keep track of services delivered within the department.

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Solution

The Council decided to invest in CareWorks RAISE to electronically support and manage social care and child protection records. CareWorks RAISE is a client management system used to improve the way in which social care professionals and their managers work. It reduces paperwork and enables better sharing of information through electronic record management.

QAS Pro was integrated within CareWorks RAISE to ensure that contact data entered into the system was accurate. QAS Pro returns a full address from a postcode and premise number, reducing manual entry errors and saving time.

Results

Following the implementation of CareWorks RAISE with QAS Pro, Reading Borough Council's community care service was more streamlined and effective. The 600 users of QAS Pro were instantly able to access one shared source of information about residents, and capture the name and address of carers and patients accurately first time. Reading Borough Council cannot change the way in which residents contact the council, i.e. by phone, letter, fax or email, but it can ensure that any details received are inputted correctly into the new system.

The result is that staff can manage their time more effectively which in turn saves the Council money. These funds can then be better spent on ensuring residents in the borough are safe and continue to be well cared for. The new system has also helped the Council meet its targets set around data protection. Jonathan Burt, IT Manager, said: “Before we introduced QAS software we had no address management solution, so the system contained some badly formatted, incorrect address data.

Introducing QAS Pro with CareWorks RAISE ensures we capture better quality data, first time. We are seeing fewer complaints and our carers are able to give a more appropriate and timely response. It is inevitable that our resident and supplier information will change over time but, with regular data updates, we are ensuring ongoing maintenance and accuracy of the data we hold.”

Future plans

At some point in the future it is likely the Council will have to share and integrate its data with other Government departments. The Council is now confident that the information it holds on its residents is accurate and correctly formatted and could be matched more successfully to these other data sources.