TRANSFORM

How CareCubed can help your organisation

Benefits of the iESE care pricing tool explained

How local authorities are using CareCubed

Case studies from Essex County Council, Moray Council, Haringey Council and The Disabilities Trust

care³
care · clarity · cost

Also inside:
- **New CareCubed modules trialled**
- **CareCubed charter redrafted**
- **Coronavirus CareCubed changes**
- **Your CareCubed team introduced**
- **How iESE supports the CareCubed journey**

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The public sector transformation partner

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WELCOME LETTER

CareCubed offers wide-ranging benefits

Welcome to our special CareCubed edition of Transform. CareCubed is iESE's flagship digital product, now used by more than 60 local authorities, including 50 per cent of London Boroughs. The tool offers a unique solution to both providers and commissioners to help them agree the right care at a fair price for both parties.

Research by Grant Thornton UK LLP found that 47 per cent of councils overspent on their adult social care budget in 2018/19. This number almost doubled for children's social care, with 82 per cent of councils overspending. Now, at a time when the public sector was already feeling the pinch of austerity, Coronavirus has escalated the financial pressure and the bill for the first six months of the pandemic is about to hit the mat.

An adult and children's version of the tool is available in both Scottish and English versions. We are currently also trialling additional modules for health, older persons, and mental health (see news below).

CareCubed is not designed to cut margins and squeeze providers out of the market and, in some cases, could result in an uplift. In March, for example, we made updates so that the cost of PPE was reflected in pricing. In September we held focus groups with providers and commissioners to redraft our charter and set out the expected behaviour for both parties (see page 3). By working together, the care market can be shaped in a sustainable way for the future.

As well as negotiating fairer pricing for all, the tool can also give a bird's eye view across your caseload, giving a wider strategic view. If you are already a CareCubed user, this issue will help you get the best from the product. If you are not a subscriber, you are a local authority in the minority and should consider how it might benefit you.

Dr Andrew Larner and the iESE team

Dr Andrew Larner, Chief Executive

 @LaverdaJota

NEWS

CareCubed modules for health, older persons and mental health trialled

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF CARECUBED CHILDREN'S IN LATE 2019, IESE IS EXPANDING THE CARECUBED PORTFOLIO FURTHER, WITH VERSIONS FOR HEALTH, OLDER PERSONS AND MENTAL HEALTH CURRENTLY BEING TRIALLED AS PROTOTYPES.

Historically, CareCubed has been used primarily for adults with complex needs including, but not exclusively, those with a learning disability and/or autism. But the structured approach and transparency afforded by CareCubed is applicable across other areas too.

"With the ongoing pressure on care budgets, and the increase in joint commissioning across health and social care, we wanted to bring the benefits of CareCubed to a wider range of services" explained Vanda Leary, Digital Business Lead at iESE.

The new CareCubed versions for health, older persons and mental health have been developed based on feedback from our current customer base of around 70 organisations. Each of the new versions incorporates new features particularly relevant to the specialist area.

CARECUBED HEALTH allows needs to be mapped against the Continuing Health Care (CHC) domains and allows splits of funding to be identified across health and social care. This unique functionality means CareCubed can now be used across health and social care organisations and will provide a complete picture of jointly funded packages. As a cloud-based system, CareCubed will provide a perfect mechanism for closer collaboration across health and social care teams.

CARECUBED MENTAL HEALTH is tailored to the range of mental health needs and emphasises support for recovery outcomes. This will be very helpful for S117 cases where aftercare is required and comes at a time when demand for mental health services is rapidly increasing, with an expectation that the pandemic will result in a further surge in cases and increased costs.

CARECUBED OLDER PERSONS allows framework contract rates to be applied to needs and compared with the CareCubed guide price, as well as calculating rate of depletion of service user capital if they are part-funding the placement. This significant cohort of placements can now be benchmarked in CareCubed offering benefits to commissioners, providers and families.

The new versions will be trialled with commissioners and providers over the next few months ready for release in Q1 2021.

iESE is also looking at the Health and Social Care Partnership space. If you are interested in hearing more about this, would like to take part in a review workshop or become an early adopter of one of the new modules, **please get in touch via carecubed@iese.org.uk**

iESE welcomes tranche of new clients

IESE HAS CONTINUED TO SUCCESSFULLY ONBOARD NEW CARECUBED CUSTOMERS THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC. THE TOOL IS NOW USED BY A THIRD OF ALL COUNCILS IN ENGLAND AND MORE THAN 50 PER CENT OF LONDON BOROUGHS.

Portsmouth City Council (PCC) adopted the tool to be used in children's services and began its implementation in March with iESE's support. The feedback from PCC has been very positive and Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services at PCC, said: "We have been very pleased with how the implementation has gone. It has been very quick and easy, and the technology and approach from iESE has allowed us to continue to get trained and start benefiting from the tool quickly. We have appreciated the flexibility of the iESE team in supporting us remotely."

Other local authorities which have successfully subscribed to CareCubed in recent months include Somerset County Council, Doncaster Council, Lewisham Council, Lancashire County Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Enfield Council, Camden Council, Redbridge Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

New charter for CareCubed users

IESE HAS UPDATED ITS CARECUBED CHARTER IN CONJUNCTION WITH COMMISSIONERS AND PROVIDERS. THE CHARTER AIMS TO ACT AS A PROTOCOL FOR USERS AND SETS THE EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR FOR BOTH PARTIES.

It is hoped that by actively applying the principles within the charter, commissioners and providers are more likely to build trust and mutual respect, achieve a better balance of risk and streamline the negotiation process. The overarching aim is to ensure positive outcomes are achieved for people who rely on care and support services, through the effective use of resources and with providers and commissioners working as partners.

User groups took place in September with commissioners and providers to gather feedback on the existing version of the charter and consider "what good looks like" in working together. The commissioners and providers came up with strikingly similar descriptions of what a good working relationship should be – with emphasis on collaboration and openness. Feedback on the charter was broadly positive with some useful suggestions for updating. It is hoped that once it is finalised, subscribers will sign the updated protocol and agree to be listed as a signatory on the iESE website as the mark of a good participant.

"The charter aims to make it clear that working collaboratively and transparently is in the best interests of providers and commissioners alike said Dr Andrew Larner, Chief Executive at iESE. "We coined the term 'fair price, fair care' and having a charter is about wanting to articulate what it means to be a good provider and a good commissioner."

To read the charter, please go to: www.iese.org.uk/ carecubed-charter

CareCubed Coronavirus update

UPDATES MADE DURING THE INITIAL STAGES OF THE PANDEMIC ASSISTED CARECUBED USERS WITH MAKING PLACEMENTS AND CONTINUE TO BE VALUABLE AS THE SITUATION EASES.

iESE held online workshop sessions with subscribers at the start of lockdown in March and listened to feedback to understand what updates would be helpful. The resulting changes allowed users to capture temporary adjustments affecting the cost of care including PPE, greater staff absences, increased use of agency staff and the cost of any support given in the setting which was temporarily inaccessible outside.

It is anticipated that CareCubed will be valuable when re-assessing the backlog of emergency placements made during the height of the first wave when patients were discharged from hospital to social care settings to free up NHS beds. Whilst negotiation between provider and commissioner did not stop completely, many cases will need to be reviewed as a result of not having undergone the negotiation steps they might normally have done.

"When it comes reviewing the arrangement, CareCubed makes it very quick and easy to look at the impact and see which, if any, of those increases or changes in approach or cost might need to be longer term and which have gone and have an informed discussion with the provider or commissioner. As a tool which is evidence-based and transparent it will assist both parties," said Vanda Leary, iESE's Business Lead on Digital.

During the pandemic iESE also continued to on-board new CareCubed clients, including to its recently launched children's version. "Despite the difficult circumstances the first implementation of Children's CareCubed went live in early May and within two weeks the local authority concerned had made savings many times the amount of their subscription. Two more local authorities went live during June and we were able to deliver all of our training support remotely," she explained.

Your CareCubed team:

VANDA LEARY, DIGITAL BUSINESS LEAD
Vanda has been with iESE for eleven years and has more than 30 years' experience in delivering successful IT and change projects as a customer and supplier.

Vanda previously managed the Care Funding Calculator (CFC), including its transition to CareCubed. Now, as the iESE Digital Business Lead, she directs development of the CareCubed product and oversees operational support for commissioners and providers.

CRAIG WHITE, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Craig has more than 20 years' experience building software businesses and providing innovative solutions that make a real difference to all parts of the public sector.

Craig joined iESE in October 2019 to provide strategic sales leadership, including growing and supporting the customer base of CareCubed.
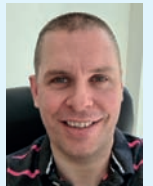
JIM WEIR, SENIOR CONSULTANT
Jim is a social worker by background and has many years of Senior Management experience working in healthcare and adult social care in the US and UK. He has been working with iESE since 2016, helping in the development and transition to CareCubed and now leads the training and provides operational support to new and existing subscribers of the CareCubed tool.

NATALIE TRENTHAM, ASSOCIATE TRAINER/CONSULTANT
Natalie has worked in Children's Services for 36 years as a practitioner, senior manager, Ofsted inspector and consultant. She was part of the DfE Commissioning Team as well as the South East and London Lead for the Children's Commissioning Support Programme. As a Carecubed trainer she is dedicated to improving outcomes for children and enjoys working in partnership.

VIVIEN ZIWOCHA, CARECUBED ASSOCIATE
Vivien has almost 20 years' experience in health and social care. She has delivered successful projects and consultancy assignments as a customer and supplier. Her focus on delivery of value for money, person-centred commissioning, aspires to deliver aligned successes for all stakeholders.
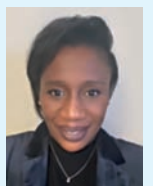
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Introducing CareCubed: the market-leading online care pricing tool

CareCubed offers a transparent solution to help local authorities and care providers come to an agreement on the cost of placements to achieve 'fair price, fair care'. The tool is available as an annual subscription for care commissioners (local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups) and providers to help price adult services and children's services in England and Scotland. iESE plans to launch other modules soon.

What is CareCubed?

Care commissioners have a duty under the Care Act to secure the right placement for an individual's needs. There is also a duty to ensure placements offer value for money for the public purse. It has historically been difficult to compare the options available when specifying a care package but the iESE tool CareCubed has revolutionised the market and brought transparency to negotiations between care providers and commissioners.

Historically, when complex care has been required, or is in the sensitive area of children's care, some local authorities have had a blank chequebook approach. With some placements priced around £3,000-£5,000 per week this is unsustainable, but councils need providers to continue offering their services whilst working closely with them to understand their cost base and help shape their local care market.

CareCubed is the market-leading, secure online tool which generates a guide price for a new care placement, or one which is being renegotiated, based on the details entered about the client. The tool produces an initial guideline of the cost of care as a starting point for discussions between a provider and commissioner based on the information input.

The tool works using model benchmarking data, updated annually, which reflects all costs, including those which may change as a result of regulation, such as minimum living wage or pension rules, or due to inflation or changes in the labour market. The tool factors in local and regional specifics and national changes. For example, iESE made temporary changes to the tool to reflect costs affected by the pandemic, such as the increased cost of PPE, greater need to use agency staff to cover staff absence and the cost of providing services in the setting which would usually be sourced outside.

How does it work?

Each subscriber organisation has their own secure account with multi-user access across devices, including laptops, tablets and smart phones. The tool, which is intuitive, easy-to-use and fully GDPR compliant, records each case input and the

decision made. This means that next time an individual's care is assessed it is easy to see what was decided last time and why. It provides evidence that the organisation has given

consideration to ensuring the cost is fairly reached and that the individual's needs are being met. It also gives a bird's eye view across all cases, helping to shape strategic decisions.

> "The training was great and it was good to see that you have people from iESE who have been practitioners, people who have worked operationally and in social work and for provider organisations."
>
> *Marion Kelly,*
> *Programme Lead in the Department*
> *of Health and Wellbeing,*
> *Bradford Council*

CareCubed is now used by one third of all councils in England.

CareCubed is used by more than 50 commissioning authorities.

It is used by more than 20 providers.

> "CareCubed is an evidence-based tool that uses an effective combination of verified national benchmarking data, local intelligence and individual outcomes to facilitate a meaningful dialogue between commissioners and providers."
>
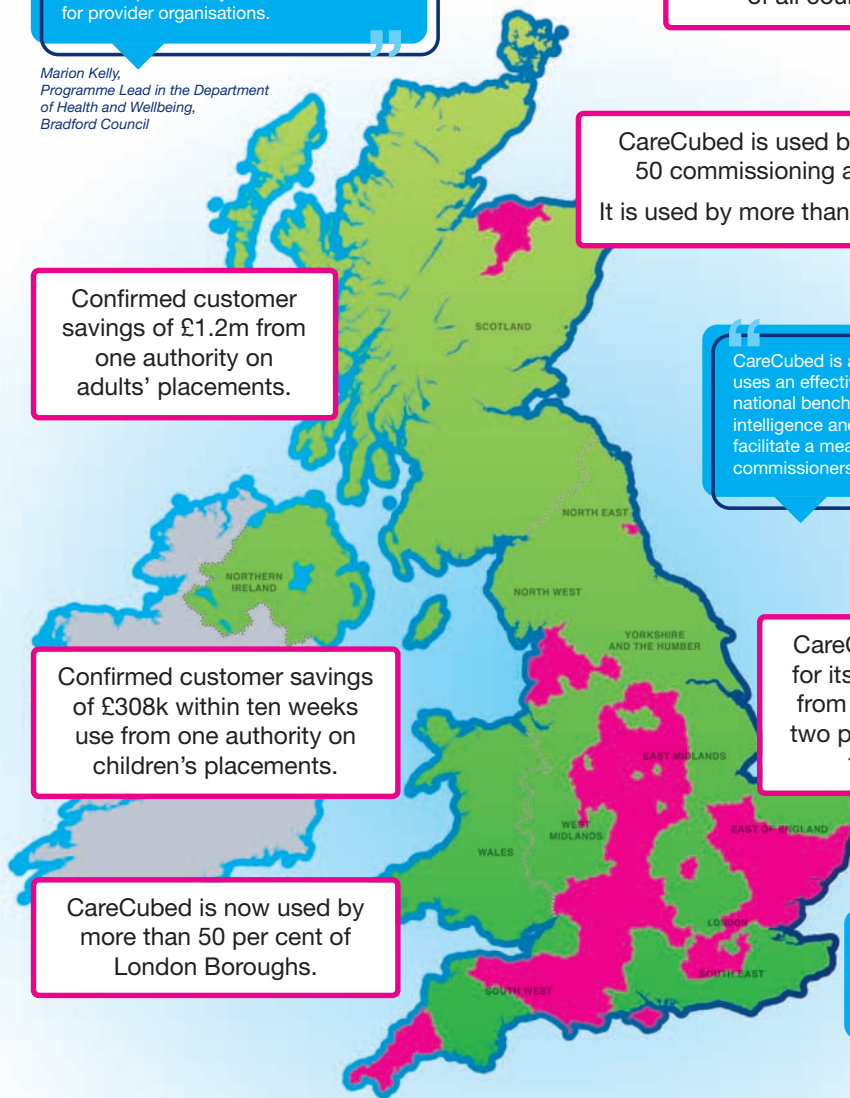> *Kate Alcock, Commissioning Manager,*
> *Adult Social Care, Cornwall Council*

Confirmed customer savings of £1.2m from one authority on adults' placements.

CareCubed typically pays for itself for multiple years from savings from one or two placements within the first few weeks.

Confirmed customer savings of £308k within ten weeks use from one authority on children's placements.

CareCubed is now used by more than 50 per cent of London Boroughs.

> "We've never had anything as transparent, equitable and as user-friendly as CareCubed."
>
> *Victoria Bayley,*
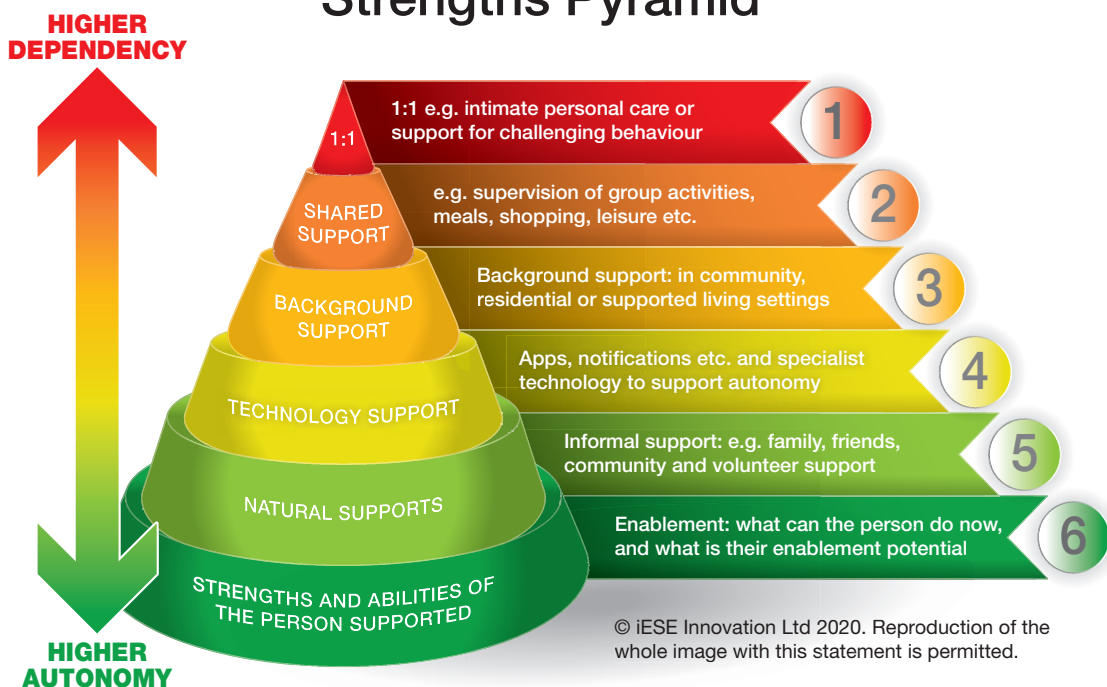> *Lead Commissioner,*
> *Specialist Commissioning Team,*
> *Wiltshire Council*

● *Pink areas of the map show local authorities already using CareCubed.*

The CareCubed Journey – Strengths Pyramid

HIGHER DEPENDENCY

HIGHER AUTONOMY

1:1 – **1** 1:1 e.g. intimate personal care or support for challenging behaviour

SHARED SUPPORT – **2** e.g. supervision of group activities, meals, shopping, leisure etc.

BACKGROUND SUPPORT – **3** Background support: in community, residential or supported living settings

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT – **4** Apps, notifications etc. and specialist technology to support autonomy

NATURAL SUPPORTS – **5** Informal support: e.g. family, friends, community and volunteer support

STRENGTHS AND ABILITIES OF THE PERSON SUPPORTED – **6** Enablement: what can the person do now, and what is their enablement potential

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What does it cost and who is it for?

iESE operates a tiered pricing structure to suit the range of organisation sizes for both commissioners and providers. There are currently a third of all UK councils signed up to the tool. Provider take up is lower, but we are seeing more come on board as they recognise the transparency CareCubed gives to negotiations.

There are currently two versions of the tool – adult and children's – and both are also available as a Scottish version using Scottish data. iESE is currently working on the launch of some other versions of the tool too, including an NHS version, eldercare and mental health (see page 2).

The tool will often help save on placement prices, although it is not designed to pressure providers or squeeze them out of the market. Providers are also able to sign up and, through collaboration, can help ensure the local care market is sustainable. As well as helping with cost savings, there are occasions when case reviews lead to an uplift being agreed because the provider's costs are well evidenced through the tool for the local authority to see.

"CareCubed is an evidence-based tool that uses an effective combination of verified national benchmarking data, local intelligence and individual outcomes to facilitate a meaningful dialogue between commissioners and providers," said Kate Alcock, Interim Head of Strategic Commissioning at Cornwall Council. "Through the use of iESE's care pricing tool, some providers have really embraced the opportunity to work in partnership with the council, substantially remodelling their provision to better match individuals' needs."

Whilst providers are able to subscribe, the tool also has sharing and collaboration functions meaning commissioners can input their data, download the information as an Excel spreadsheet or PDF and share this with the provider, regardless of whether they also use CareCubed or not.

Meeting duty of care requirements

CareCubed's structured and person-centred approach to recording needs makes it easy to track the requirements of people with complex conditions, including those with fluctuating or intermittent needs, rehabilitation or re-enablement goals and those with deteriorating conditions. This approach helps commissioners and providers ensure needs are met in the most cost-efficient way whilst delivering flexible and transparent support.

The tool also encourages commissioners and providers to consider the level of care needed when sourcing placements. The CareCubed Hierarchy of Need pyramid (see above) aims to get commissioners to consider what other options are available before automatically opting for the most expensive type of support (one-to-one care).

By working through the hierarchy, care commissioners might be able to reduce the hours of care commissioned, reducing the overall cost for the local authority, and helping the client retain independence. The top tier of one-to-one care is the most restrictive for the individual, whilst the bottom tier of technology helps the individual remain independent.

Jim Weir, a Senior Consultant at iESE, said: "From what I have seen from going into local authorities to teach them about CareCubed is that not many are looking at care commissioning this way. The hours being input for care are all extremely high. Our Hierarchy of Need table is available to all CareCubed users to act as a graphic reminder of the options."

As iESE's flagship digital tool, the organisation is committed to its continual development and investment in the product. We offer email and online support as part of the subscription fee and access to online documentation and user forums for sharing experience. To find out more about how iESE supports CareCubed users, see page eight.

• To find out more about CareCubed and the Hierarchy of Need contact carecubed@iese.org.uk or visit www.iese.org.uk/carecubed

END

Case studies:
The benefits of CareCubed

CareCubed can be used by providers, local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Here you can read a range of case studies about how the tool is being used and the benefits it is delivering.

Essex County Council save £500K with CareCubed Adults

Essex County Council (ECC) spend c.£79m per annum on residential services for adults with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities and/or autism, physical and/or sensory impairments.

This was identified as an area where ECC needed to enhance its knowledge and develop a more robust commercial approach. It was paying a wide range of fees (from £800 to £5,000 per week) for complex and varied care packages, dependent on individual care needs and location, across 990 adults in 369 homes in Essex and outside of the county.

"Demand for care amongst working age adults is rapidly increasing and at the same time our budgets are shrinking. It is critical that we make sure every pound delivers maximum value to our residents and helps them live the best life they possibly can. CareCubed plays a key strategic role in ensuring that we do this," said Nicole Wood, Executive Director of Finance and Technology at ECC.

It was identified that a consistent approach to sourcing and negotiating placements and rates was required to assure best value was being received. A lack of knowledge impacted the perception of the provision being overpriced and that providers were profiteering. A major driver for this work was to prove or disprove this.

ECC reviewed tools that could assist with its goals and procured CareCubed. This led to a review of the existing placement approaches, along with the development of an implementation plan for the future roll out and use of the software.

At the time of writing, ECC had demonstrated a saving of £367,000 per annum on new placements and a further cost avoidance of £143k per annum on negotiated uplifts with providers. "CareCubed was implemented in just a couple of days and was simple to use meaning we could deliver immediate results. Using CareCubed for adults has delivered significant savings/cost avoidance of over £500,000 which can now be spent on other residents requiring care or other council services," said Steve Ede, Head of Procurement at ECC.

ECC employ a specialist placement team to source and negotiate placements in residential services and this team was identified as integral to the success or failure of the tool and the reduction in costs for placements.

Success of the tool has also been measured on qualitative measures, such as improvements to practice within the organisation driven by the introduction of the tool. The approach has opened dialogue on rates with a large number of providers and has contributed to improved relationships with these providers, as well as open and constructive dialogue about what makes up their cost bases.

The system has been embraced by the placement team who are primarily responsible for using it in day-to-day business and forms a key part of their uplift approach to ensure fair rates are paid across the market too. ECC was a finalist for a CIPS Excellence in Procurement Award for Best Use of Digital Technology for its implementation and use of CareCubed.

- **To download the full case study, please go to: https://iese.org.uk/downloads/case-study-significant-financial-savings**

Moray gets control over budgets with CareCubed

When commissioning care services for adults with learning disabilities, Health & Social Care Moray in Scotland kept experiencing a familiar yet frustrating situation - a lack of control and clarity meant the partnership was facing increased costs for similar levels of care from the same providers.

As Aimee Borzoni, Commissioning Officer for Health & Social Care Moray, explains: "We have a number of houses where four or five people with learning disabilities are living together. But, when individuals moved in, providers were adding extra costs onto our rolling contracts – and because we had no starting point for what we should be paying, we were in no position to challenge it."

The situation in the North East of Scotland is not unique; in fact, it is a common theme faced by commissioners across the UK. The support CareCubed has provided Moray as it transforms its approach to commissioning care services has been invaluable. In fact, it now uses the online tool every time it reviews an existing contract or procures a new one for its 150 adults in residential care or supported living services.

"We are finding that using CareCubed for contract work is supporting us to set the right budgets, while still ensuring the services provide quality support," said Roddy Huggan, Commissioning Manager for Health & Social Care Moray.

Moray can now commission often complex care services with ease, knowing they are paying a rate which is fair for the individual, provider and taxpayer. In one example, it has generated savings of £7,000 a month for care provided to just seven people.

Moray is also rolling CareCubed out to the commissioning of care services for 450 people with learning disabilities within the area as it adopts a "progression model" to assist these adults with moving towards greater independence. With

CareCubed's help, this means care costs for now and the future are taken into account, meaning budget setting has become easier and long-term forecasting can be done more efficiently, while ensuring the appropriate care is provided to support the individuals.

> • **To download the full case study, please go to: https://iese.org.uk/downloads/case-study-greater-control-of-care-costs**

National charity adopts CareCubed

The Disabilities Trust is a leading national charity offering specialist community-based and residential support for adults with acquired brain injury, complex physical or learning disabilities and for people with autism. The Disabilities Trust, which supports more than 500 people across the UK, recently celebrated its 40th anniversary.

The Disabilities Trust wanted to achieve greater transparency and consistency in their dealings with commissioners. With the ongoing situation of stretched council finances, it was important for The Disabilities Trust to be able to be clear as to what commissioners are paying for, demonstrating value for money as well as ensuring that The Disabilities Trust remains financially viable. Working with commissioners from 250 different local authorities was a challenge in itself with such a variety of different approaches in place. Therefore, The Disabilities Trust adopted CareCubed as a well-known and unbiassed tool that could be used across the geographical spread of its care settings.

The Disabilities Trust already had a core staffing level and core fee defined for each of its settings, but where individual needs were greater than core, local operations managers needed to make adjustments. CareCubed allows for a granular assessment of need to make it absolutely clear what support is to be provided for an individual with complex needs, therefore assisting operations managers to ensure the right package of care is in place with nothing left out. This granular assessment of needs and comparison with core offer has also led to some individuals being supported to step-down to lower-intensity settings and also provides a useful baseline for re-assessment should needs change.

Previous negotiations with commissioners had often been time-consuming, with a lot of back-and-forth discussion and queries. Now, using CareCubed, The Disabilities Trust is readily able to provide a thorough and easy-to-understand breakdown of care needs and how this relates to the placement price. Lynsey Robertson, Director of Business Development and Programme Management at The Disabilities Trust, said: "CareCubed's clear and visually appealing outputs have shortcut the process and helped take the heat out of negotiations. CareCubed reduces uncertainty for us as a provider, and promotes greater collaborative working with commissioners and shared accountability for changes."

The Disabilities Trust is also using CareCubed internally as a benchmark comparison on their overheads and supports long-term financial planning and sustainability. Michael Foley, Funding and Assessment Manager at the organisation, added: "CareCubed's benchmark figures allow us to identify outliers on overhead costs and take action to achieve efficiency saving at a service or unit level."

The Disabilities Trust has implemented CareCubed in stages, starting with a pilot group of assessments where it found adjustments were needed for about seven per cent of the pilot group. CareCubed training has taken place with senior staff to build advocates for CareCubed and for a change in approach. This is now being cascaded to other staff, in readiness for a major review and reassessment of needs and placement fees for several hundred people.

CareCubed Children's reaps big savings for Haringey

The new CareCubed Children's module saved Haringey Council £307k in the first four months of implementation across only eight cases. This represents a staggering return on investment at a time when all councils are facing unprecedented financial pressures. The authority is now renegotiating all residential and semi-independent children's placements and embedding the tool for new cases.

Diana Sherwood is an interim at Haringey Council. She implemented CareCubed Children's at the organisation and embedded some processes around it to enable the council to understand whether they were getting value for money and ensuring providers turn a sensible profit to continue providing vital services for residents.

The first step was to understand the current financial position of placements against benchmarked data. "First and foremost, we are committed to ensuring that our residents get the support and services they need, and CareCubed gives us a level of transparency that we didn't have before, but ultimately allows us to focus on person-centered care with both us as commissioners and our providers having a clear, shared understanding of each placement, said Sherwood. "It was vital for us to quickly understand our current position and we could then focus our efforts on those placements where there was clearly a discrepancy that needed to be understood," she added. This resulted in saving £307k in-year for 20/21 and £410k for the full-year equivalent across an initial eight cases, proving CareCubed could quickly provide benefits.

These savings will impact the council's medium-term financial position too. "Had we not done this work we would have cumulatively been paying £132k more in 2023, £204k more in 2024 and by the time you got to 2025 we would have been paying £346k more. It impacts your future budgets, helping councils stay financially viable and avoid cutting other services," she explained.

Sherwood acknowledges that not all providers will want to engage but most do because having transparency is a good thing for all involved and manages the risk and expectations placed on providers. "Providers engaging with the tool is making a huge difference to the commissioning process and, most importantly, ensures the resident gets the best possible support. We can agree 'template' costs with providers once rather than spend weeks or months discussing each placement, and we are able to work together on placements within a single system rather than spreadsheets and emails. It will also make uplift discussions much faster and smoother and help with the transition from child to adult care as we are using the tool consistently across both council departments."

For providers not already using CareCubed, the council can share the information in a variety of ways. "When I do a CareCubed calculation I download it as an Excel spreadsheet or PDF document and send it to the provider to give them the opportunity to look through and see where the differences are with their breakdown of costs," Sherwood says. "The tool compresses it all into a few pages and summarises all of the sections. One side of the spreadsheet will remain as the expected range of costs calculated by CareCubed. On the other side, providers can input their own variations so the council can look at them or ask for further details if required."

Sherwood said implementing CareCubed was quick and easy and support was readily on hand from iESE. She believes the product is a safe "invest to save" initiative. "We were up and running with the system within two days and could immediately start to deliver the benefits. We successfully negotiated £71,000 per annum saving on the first placement in the first couple of weeks. The sooner councils start using the product, the quicker those tangible benefits are achieved," she added.

END

How iESE supports your CareCubed journey

iESE's Business Development Manager, Craig White, works closely with CareCubed customers to help them get the best from the product. Here, he updates users on the help available and how to access it.

The past six months have brought significant changes for iESE and our customers, whose heroic efforts have saved so many lives. Throughout the pandemic we have continued to work hard to deliver and improve our services whilst doing all we can to support commissioners and providers.

The care sector was already under massive financial pressure prior to Covid-19 and now CareCubed has a critical role to play in shaping a fair and equitable market and ensuring value for money.

Whilst local government has had to quickly embrace the idea of homeworking, the iESE team adopted a remote working model some time ago and has supported our customers with this transition. CareCubed is a cloud-hosted solution and so the service has continued to function as usual, the only shift being that onboarding training and continued support for the use of CareCubed is currently offered through web-based learning and virtual meetings.

At the start of lockdown, we engaged with customers (commissioners and providers) to discuss the issues specifically arising from Covid-19. As a result, we implemented some quick changes to the software to support with new costs arising from Covid-19, such as the expense of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and temporary uplifts as individuals were moved out of hospital beds and into temporary care.

In May we further extended our support by offering 40 free workshop sessions to commissioners to run through anonymised placements and demonstrate the value CareCubed provides.

Our customer base is rapidly growing with existing customers renewing contracts and many more councils and providers starting to use CareCubed. This means we need to continuously evolve the support we provide our customers and work in partnership to develop the product further to meet user requirements.

Here are some of the changes we have made and a reminder of the existing services available to all customers:

Technical support

The default channel for all technical queries is currently the CareCubed email address, however we will shortly be providing a webform to log any technical issues, questions and enhancement ideas. This will integrate with our case management system, allowing us to keep an audit trail and tap into the skills and experience across our team to provide fast resolution.

Account management

Your account manager can discuss any commercial/contractual points and help ensure you maximise the benefits of the product. CareCubed can be used widely across your team and we have lots of example cases from across the country. Whilst face-to-face account management meetings are not currently possible, we can offer virtual meetings via Teams or GoToMeeting. Your Account Manager can support you in many ways, including:

- Providing awareness presentations for senior managers about the power of CareCubed and the benefits the tool can deliver.
- Offering guidance on implementation approach, re-implementing CareCubed, knowledge transfer and widening the use of the product for maximum benefit.
- Supporting with commissioner/provider engagement and demonstrations of CareCubed.
- Providing examples of how CareCubed can be used for one-off reviews, uplift requests, as a mechanism for partnership working across councils and providers, and as a strategic tool for redesigning service provision.

Pictured: Craig White,
iESE Business Development Manager

Implementation support and training

We have revamped our implementation and training offer so this can all be delivered remotely. Our self-directed training materials, such as online videos, allow customers to start using CareCubed immediately after registering, plus a range of formal training courses help further develop the skills of our users. For example, we offer negotiation training and 'surgery sessions' which provide hands-on support by working through real cases with our customers.

Our new approach to implementation uses a mix of support from iESE and ultimately results in new customers being onboarded very quickly and working closely with us to ensure an immediate return on investment.

We also run a series of virtual and physical events (Covid-19 allowing) throughout the year to share information about best practice use of the tool. Our user forums will be virtual for the foreseeable future, but we do plan to now meet more frequently with customers for short focused sessions.

To see a list of events and register your interest visit: **https://iese.org.uk/project/carecubed-user-forums**

• To find out more about how we can help with CareCubed support or to book a tailored session please email: craig.white@iese.org.uk

END