

Appendix 2



Contract Monitoring Report: Third Sector Commissioned Services 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Introduction

This report provides contract monitoring information on third sector provider partners, for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The previous contract monitoring exercise for third sector partner providers covered the period April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Overview of the monitoring process for the third sector commissioned services

A total of 49 contracts have been monitored. These are all commissioned non-registered third sector provider partners and registered day care and respite contracts, with a combined contract value of approximately £4.9m.

An online Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) was developed and set up on Smart Survey. A copy of the SAQ and list of provider partners is provided as Appendix 1. SAQs submitted by provider partners, along with any supporting documentation, were compared against the contract requirements. Provider partners were contacted if further information, evidence or clarification was required. Commissioning Officers also conducted individual Monitoring Meetings with each provider partner.

Once queries identified from an initial review of the returned SAQ were resolved and evidence provided, the review process was completed and a risk assessment and resultant risk score determined and reports completed.

Any concerning risks identified and requiring action would be escalated to the Contracts Manager in the first instance with further escalation to the Commissioning Liaison Manager and onward escalation as required.

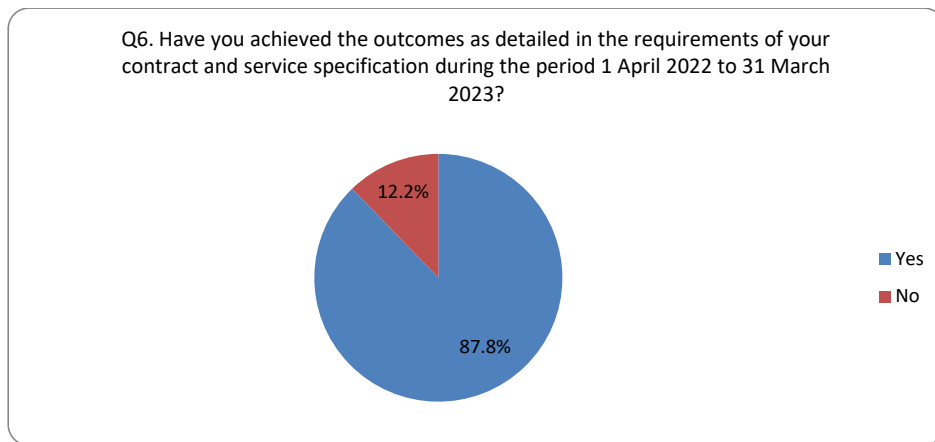
Results from contract monitoring

All 49 SAQs were returned by a total of 39 provider partners as some are contracted to deliver more than one service. Findings from SAQs were collated and this report provides an overview of the key findings.

The results in this report relate to the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023, reflecting the situation for that period only. Contract monitoring for third sector provider partners for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 is scheduled to commence in June 2024.

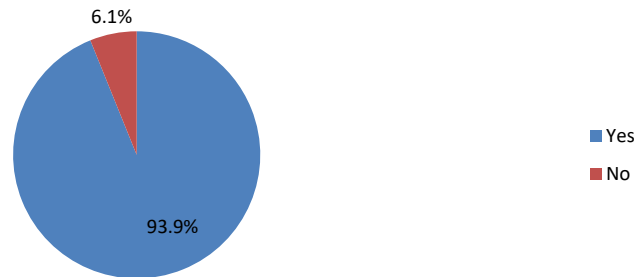
- Compliance

88% of commissioned services reported that outcomes against the requirements of their contract and service specification were met during the reporting period. 6 services (12%) reported that they had not achieved the required outcomes. Of these, two services cited gaps in staffing/recruitment issues impacting their ability to meet contractual outcome requirements; two services reported they were still experiencing ongoing adjustments following COVID-19 and two services were not fully open during the period:



94% of commissioned services maintained communication with people who use their services to encourage feedback. This included the use of surveys, questionnaires, social media and verbal feedback. The 3 services (6%) who did not seeking feedback formally were not fully open throughout the period. Further, one of those services could not supply evidence for the part of time they were open in the period:

Q28. During the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, did you maintain communication with people who use the service and people who deliver the service to encourage feedback (for example, survey, newsletter, other correspondence, etc)?

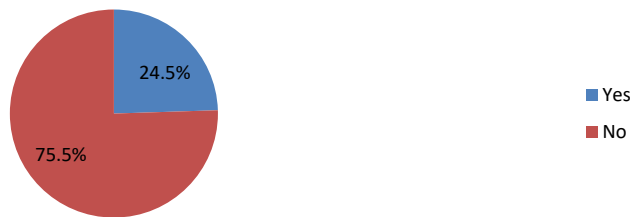


Commissioning Officer review of responses found that for 92% (45 out of 49) of commissioned services, training of staff and volunteers continued to take place during this reporting period. This was predominantly training via digital learning platforms and included COVID-19 related training such as TURAS Infection Prevention and Control modules, first aid, hygiene, adult support and protection and data protection.

- Intelligence

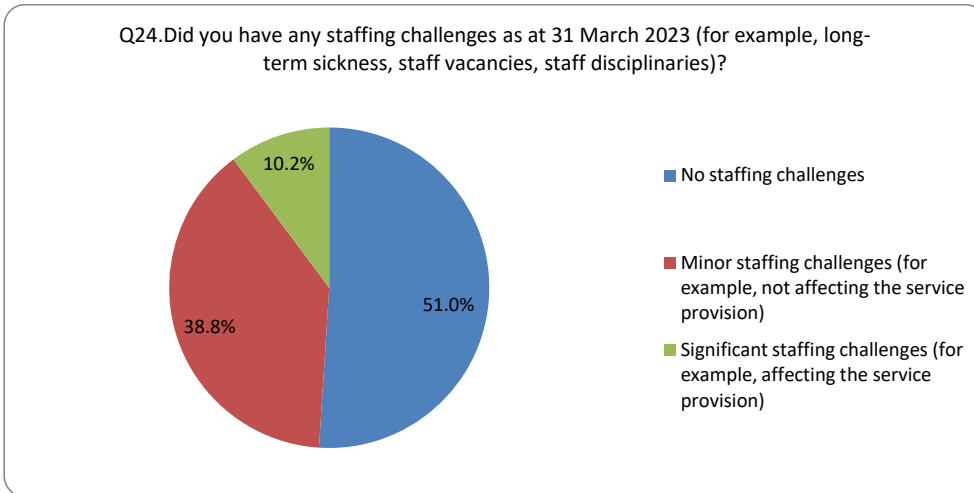
12 of the 49 commissioned services (24%) reported there had been changes to senior or local management personnel during the reporting period. In addition, 26 out of 49 (53%) of the services further reported changes in organisational structure.

Q9. Have there been any changes to management personnel during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023?



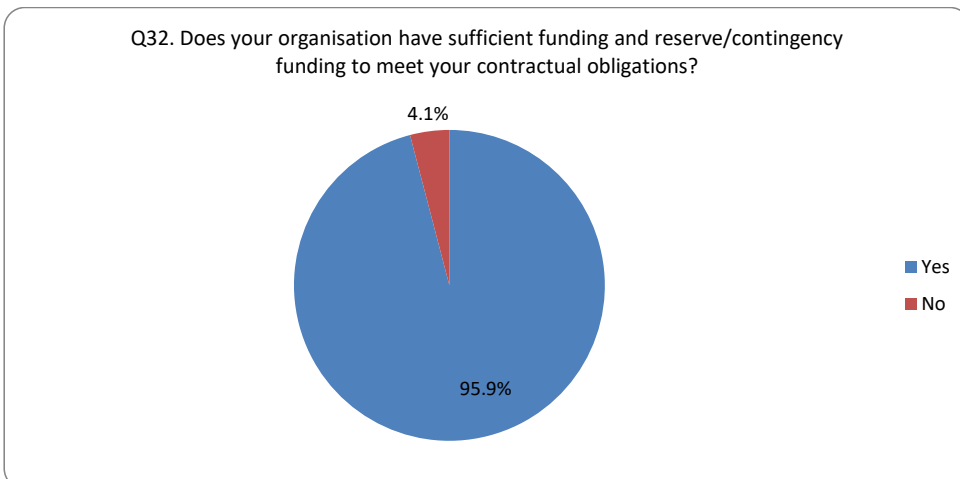
10% of commissioned services reported that they had significant staffing shortages which affected the service, mainly due to recruitment challenges and sickness absence issues.

39% reported experiencing minor staffing challenges not affecting service provision whereas 51% reported no staffing challenges:

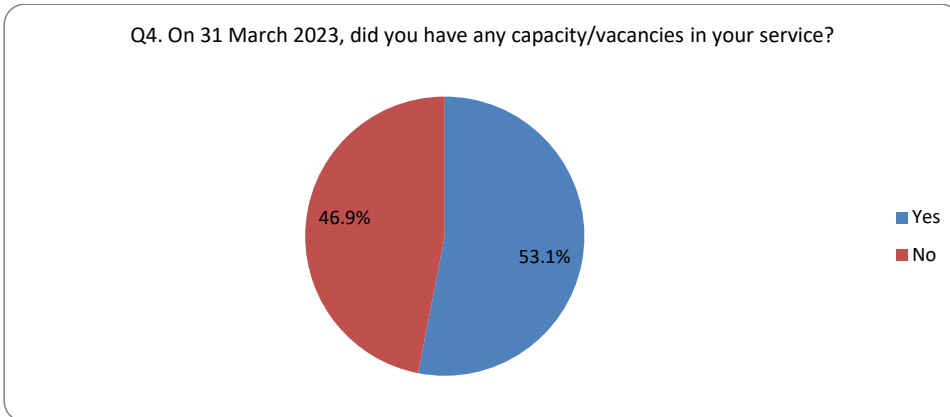


Provider partners were also asked to provide the reasons for staff leaving their service and of the total approximate leavers over the period, 18% of staff left for a new job out with the Health and Social Care sector. Other reasons included new job in the statutory sector (15%); new job in the independent care sector (9%); retirement (21%) and ill health (8%) and other/not known (29%).

96% of commissioned services reported having sufficient funding and reserves to meet their contractual obligations. 2 services (4%) expressed concerns regarding sufficient funding to meet the rising cost of wages, utilities and improvements to vehicles and equipment:



53% of commissioned services had capacity/vacancies in their service at 31 March 2023.



- Risk Assessment

On receipt of a SAQ, the Contracts Team complete an initial review based on information from the provider partner and assign risk scores. Where needed, further information is requested and any additional support to aid completion provided by the Contracts Team. The SAQ was then reviewed again designated as 'Completed' and final SAQ risk scores assigned.

The results of each Monitoring Meeting were also reviewed and a Monitoring Meeting risk score assigned. The SAQ and Monitoring Meeting risk scores were combined and an overall final risk score determined.

Risk scores were based on provider partner responses to SAQ questions and Monitoring Meeting findings in relation to:

- Achievement of outcomes
- Changes to management personnel
- Organisational changes
- Staffing challenges
- Staff/volunteer training
- Communication/encouraging feedback
- Funding
- Policies and procedures
- Public/Employer Liability insurance

The higher the risk score percentage, the lower the risk.
To summarise for the 49 completed CMRs, final risk scores:

Risk score achieved	Number of commissioned services
100%	5
99% - 75%	41
74% - 61%	0
60% and below	3
	49

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Risk scores resulting from this contract monitoring exercise show that based on the information available there are no significant risks associated with 46 out of 49 (94%) of provider partners.

- High Risk (60% and below)

Services which received a risk score of below 60% were escalated to the Contracts Manager in the first instance and then to the Commissioning Liaison Manager and Commissioning Managers for further action in conjunction with operational Social Work colleagues where applicable. Of the three services with high risks, one service had a score of 60% and two services each scored 33%.

For the three services for whom high risks have been identified: one service experienced temporary cessation of service provision due to flood damage to the respite property and was awaiting repairs; one service reported they had not provided a service and their funding will not be continued for 2023/24; and one service experienced declining service users numbers about which they had informed the Partnership and following discussions between Commissioning, Social Work and the Provider, the people using the service were reviewed and moved to alternative provision. The service ceased as from September 2023 and funding has been discontinued and action underway in conjunction with DGC Legal and Finance colleagues to recoup pro-rata monies paid. This service also experienced a cyber-attack in December 2023 which prevented them from accessing and supplying sufficient evidence in substantiation of their SAQ.

A summary of the scale/scope of the risk in relation to the three services with low percentage scores is provided below:

	Provider Partner 1	Provider Partner 2	Provider Partner 3
Risk Score	60%	33%	33%
Reason for low % score	Not achieving contract outcomes; staffing/recruitment challenges; not maintaining communication; funding/sustainability concerns; service temporarily closed due to building repairs	Not achieving contract outcomes/ not providing a service	Not achieving contract outcomes; lack of supporting evidence; not providing a service
Annual Contract	£25k	£178k	£100k

Value			
Service Type	Respite/Short Breaks	Registered Day Care	Non registered community support - Learning Disabilities/Mental Health
Planned Action	Service provision has recently resumed due to completion of building repairs.	Contract has been terminated and funding discontinued	People using the service moved to alternative provision. Contract has been terminated and funding discontinued and added to budget savings

Comparison to previous contract monitoring

The contract monitoring overall risk scores of third sector commissioned services, for the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 compared to the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 are as follows:

	Risk Level	1 Apr 2021-31 Mar 2022	1 Apr 2022-31 Mar 2023
Risk score achieved		Number of provider partners	Number of provider partners
100%	Very Low	3	5
99% - 75%	Low	39	41
74% - 61%	Moderate	5	0
60% and below	High	3	3
		50	49

Of the three services in the high-risk category for the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022, two have remained in the high-risk category (Providers 1 and 2 in the table above) for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 monitoring period and the other has moved to the low-risk category.

The remaining service provision (Provider 3) in the high-risk category for the 2022-2023 period was in the low risk category for 2021-22 but moved to high risk in 2022-23 due to issues identified in the scale/scope of risk table above.

Issues Raised and Planned Actions

Assessment of risks identified some common issues raised by provider partners and a summary and planned action(s) is provided in the table below.

Issues raised	Planned Action(s)
<p>12% of third sector commissioned services reported not achieving outcomes against the requirements of their contract/service specification</p>	<p>Many third sector contracts are out of date and in need of review. Over time and because of COVID-19, commissioned services have developed new ways of working. The HSCP Strategic Commissioning Plan highlights the need to ensure that services in the region are aligned to the needs of the community.</p> <p>A Contract Review of third sector commissions is currently underway, starting with Day Services, and is being led by Commissioning in conjunction with DGC Procurement and DGC and NHS Finance.</p> <p>To consider how we better commission for outcomes and support partners to establish measures for outcomes.</p>
<p>24% of third sector commissioned services have experienced changes to management</p> <p>53% of third sector commissioned services have experienced changes in organisational structure</p> <p>10% of third sector commissioned services reported significant staffing challenges affecting the service</p> <p>39% of third sector commissioned services reported experiencing minor staffing challenges</p> <p>18% of staff who leave third sector commissioned services are leaving for new jobs out with the health and social care sector</p>	<p>Reflects wider national situation due to longstanding recruitment and retention issues in Health and social care in conjunction with sector pressures, including ongoing effects of COVID-19.</p> <p>The HSCP developed a partnership workforce plan, working with provider partners to help address these challenges.</p> <p>Provider partners cite recruitment issues and staff sickness absence as key reasons. Commissioning Team will continue to monitor and follow up provider partners to help ensure this is rectified going forward.</p> <p>IJB has directed that recommissioning of third sector supports is contracted for 3-5 years to help ensure forward</p>

	<p>planning/ mitigating short-term staff contracts.</p>
<p>53% of third sector commissioned services reported capacity issues and vacancies in the service</p>	<p>Individual meetings between Commissioning and providers have been taking place to determine challenges faced by providers.</p> <p>Contract Review of third sector contacts to ensure services are operating at fuller capacity. Contracts Team to continue to monitor and follow up provider partners to help ensure this is rectified going forward.</p> <p>Community Directorate conducting ongoing work with Third Sector providers in relation to supporting wider system pressures/packages of care.</p>
<p>Carers Support Services highlighted experiencing an increase in complex referrals, requiring more complex support and resulting in increased challenges and pressures for Carers and for provider partner staff</p>	<p>Provider partners cite lack of early intervention due to pressures in the care and support at home sector, resulting in an escalation of pressures faced by Carers. Carers Programme Board will work with partners to consider options for supporting these pressures.</p> <p>A D&G Carers Strategy and Delivery Plan is in development and the Carers Commissioned Services will be reviewed and re-tendered before end of March 2025. This provides opportunities for good conversations and potential redesign of how services are delivered.</p>