

2009/2014 Business Plan

avante[®]
care & support

Introduction

Avante Care and Support is part of the Avante Partnership, previously known as KCHT. This plan should be read in conjunction with Avante Partnership's 2009-14 Business Plan.

Avante Care and Support is a well-established and respected regional provider of care and support services in Kent, Medway and the London Boroughs of Bexley and Greenwich. The organisation primarily supports older people in registered care homes, sheltered housing schemes and in the community. Avante Care and Support also supports adults with disabilities in the community.

The Plan aims to set out how Avante Care and Support will contribute to the Avante Partnership's delivery of its 2009/2014 Strategic Objectives to:

- **Be one of the Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work for**
- **Strengthen our financial viability to invest in services**
- **Provide inspiring places for people to live and work in**

In addition to contributing to these corporate objectives, Avante Care Support has its own strategic objectives and by 2014 we will:

- **Become nationally recognised as experts in the support of people with dementia**
- **Be the most customer focused provider of care and support**

This Plan sets out our strategic direction and intentions through to 2014. It also details our view of the world in which we will be operating over that period and sets our strategy and Plan within that context.

Who is this Plan for?

All Avante Care and Support staff will receive a copy of this plan.

Copies of the plan will be available to support future Avante Partnership and Avante Care and Support marketing strategies, and be included in tenders and new business proposals .

The plan will be circulated to all external stakeholders and partners. Where possible, we will deposit copies in local libraries and community facilities including Doctors surgeries.

The plan will be posted on our website, available for downloading. It will also be available for circulation as and when required.

The 'accessible' version of the plan will be made available as and when needed

What do we want people to take from this document?

The purpose of this document is to tell the reader who/what Avante Care and Support is, why we exist, where we're going and what we believe in.

We want our stakeholders to have confidence in us and in the future direction we want to go and we are confident that the Plan will give them that.

What do we then want people to do?

Having read the Plan, we then want people to engage with us. We want them to ask us questions about where we're going and how they can work with us in partnership. We want Commissioners and other organisations to approach us with new opportunities. We want people to know more about Avante Care and Support.

We want our staff to be clear about the future direction of the organisation they work for. We want residents, service users, families and carers to understand why we're making the decisions we are.

The Organisation Working Together to Develop Our Strategy

Our 2009/2014 strategy and Business Plan has been developed over the last 12 months through a series of Away Days and meetings involving the Board, the Management Team, managers, staff and the Staff Council. The feedback received from across the organisation shows overwhelming support for the change agenda set out within this Plan.



Our Fundamental Beliefs

In developing our strategy and Plan, the Board and Management Team have worked together to develop our Vision, Mission and Values. We believe these are powerful and uplifting statements of intent that will bind our organisation together and tell the world what Avante Care and Support stands for.



Our Mission

'To enhance quality of life by providing creative support that respects individual choices and aspirations'

Our Vision

'Enabling people to realise their potential and have opportunities to live the lives they choose'

Our Values

We passionately believe in...

- **Integrity**

This means we will be true to our values, be honest, reliable, open, transparent, trustworthy and keep our promises

- **Equity**

All staff, families and service users are stakeholders in Avante Care and Support and share in the responsibility for making it a success

Being fair to all individuals regardless of background or situation

- **Dignity**

Treating people as you would like to be treated, valuing diversity and demonstrating respect for others

Developing our 2009/14 Business Plan

This Plan sets out a new, challenging and exciting strategic direction for Avante Care and Support. It is important that we review and refresh our thinking about where we are going and how we are going to get there; anticipating how our operating environment will change in the next few years and how we will develop the care and support we provide in ways that continue to further our Mission and deliver our Vision in that changing environment.

The process of developing this Plan has included

- Three Board and Management Team Away Days
- Two externally facilitated Management Team Away Days, followed by several Management Team meetings and discussions
- An Away Day in February 2009 involving the Management and Business Teams, Home and Service Managers
- A series of consultation meetings with staff across the organisation

This Plan is being developed at a time of significant change in the external operating environment.

The UK is in the midst of what we are told will be a 'long and deep recession' with the employment and housing markets being severely affected. In the area of employment, the current economic climate has had a positive impact not just for Avante Care and Support, but providers of social care generally as staff recruitment and retention has improved.

At the same time as the changing world economic situation, the Government has in the last 12 months set out to change in the way that services are commissioned, paid for and provided. These changes have been set out a series of policy documents which, when taken together will transform the delivery of adult social care. These include, in no particular order:

- 'Shaping the Future of Care Together' – the Green Paper on the funding and reform of adult social care
- 'Putting People First' - a concordat that builds on 'Independence, Well Being and Choice' produced in 2005. Both will drive the personalisation and choice agenda
- World Class Commissioning – primarily focusing on the NHS, but will influence the way local authorities commission services into the future through joint commissioning arrangements. World Class Commissioning will shape our future relationships with Health.
- The Department of Health's 'End of Life' Strategy
- The national Dementia Strategy for England
- High Quality Care for All – the Darzi Review
- 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods': a national strategy for housing an ageing society

These changes in policy direction and will place new and different demands us. We will respond positively to these changes.

Profile of Avante Care and Support

Our current service portfolio as at 1 April 2009 is as follows. A wide range of local authorities commission our services and we also provide services to a large number of private clients.

We provide a wide range of care and support services to older people. These include

- 19 Registered Care Homes
- Respite Support
- Day care for older people including those with dementia
- Domiciliary and Homecare
- Management of 15 Sheltered Housing schemes
- Community Support for people with disabilities

Service	Turnover £'000s	No. of Residents/ Service Users
Residential care/daycare	23,845	1,329
Community Support	1,903	752
Total	25,748	2,071

Avante Care and Support employs c1300 people



Our Philosophy of Care

Influenced by 'The Eden Alternative' and 'Eden at Home'

- The greatest challenges faced by people we care for and support are loneliness, helplessness and boredom.
- Overcoming the challenges of loneliness, helplessness and boredom is the responsibility of us all.
- We believe in the principles of an ordinary life. This should include regular contact with nature, animals and others in the community. It is these relationships that enhance our lives.
- The warmth and companionship of people and animals is the antidote to loneliness.
- Being part of the community is all about giving, as well as receiving care and support. This is the antidote to helplessness.
- Variety, spontaneity, unexpected and unpredictable interactions and happenings create an environment that is the antidote to boredom.
- Meaningless activity corrodes the human spirit. The opportunity to do things that we find meaningful is essential to human health.



- Medication should be the servant of genuine human care and support never its master.
- Older age should not be a barrier to personal growth and learning.
- We respect the views of older people and believe that they or their advocates should be at the forefront of decision making that affects their lives.
- Death is part of the cycle of life and we recognise people's right to die in their own home.



Our Philosophy of Care will fundamentally change how we deliver care and support, both in a residential setting and in the community. We want to create environments 'Where Life Begins Again'. We know that such environments are better for people to live in and for staff to work in. We know that such environments enable people to flourish, no matter what their ages or complexity of their support needs.

Delivering our Strategic Objectives

The following sections of the Plan provide an overview of the future direction for Avante Care and Support.

Become nationally recognised as experts in the support of people with dementia

The following statistics are provided by the Alzheimer's Society.

- There are currently 700,000 people with dementia in the UK.
- There are currently 15,000 younger people with dementia in the UK.
- There are over 11,500 people with dementia from black and minority ethnic groups in the UK.
- There will be over a million people with dementia in the UK by 2025.
- Two thirds of people with dementia are women.
- The proportion of people with dementia doubles for every 5 year age group.
- One third of people over 95 have dementia.
- 60,000 deaths a year are directly attributable to dementia.
- Delaying the onset of dementia by 5 years would reduce deaths directly attributable to dementia by 30,000 a year.
- The financial cost of dementia to the UK is over £17 billion a year.
- Family carers of people with dementia save the UK over £6 billion a year.
- 64% of people living in care homes have a form of dementia.
- Two thirds of people with dementia live in the community while one third live in a care home.

69% of the people we currently care for and support have dementia and we expect this percentage to rise over the life of this plan. With changes in commissioning criteria, increased personalisation; including the introduction of Individual Budgets, we expect our residential care homes to increasingly be focused on the care and support of people with



dementia. We are planning for this change by increasing our knowledge and understanding of dementia at every level within our organisation. We will increase our investment in dementia practice development, ensuring it is driven by our Philosophy of Care.

We have a positive relationship with The South East Dementia Centre at Canterbury Christ Church University. We will maintain and develop this relationship over the life of this plan.

In year 2 of this Plan, we will employ a dementia specialist as our Practice Development lead.

We know that to achieve our strategic objective of being nationally recognised, we will have to establish ourselves as more than just a high quality provider of care and support to people with dementia. We will have to find and develop a unique differentiator that sets us apart from other providers. We are currently undertaking research and investigating what that differentiator will be.

We use our knowledge and expertise gained in the support of people with dementia in residential care settings to expand our service offering through our Community Support services as we know that more and more people with dementia will be supported at home, with residential care becoming the service of last resort.

Be the most customer focused provider of care and support

We understand the 'direction of travel' for the delivery of care and support for older people in the coming years. The Government is determined to turn their commitment to personalisation and are keen to move the agenda forward.

We understand that increasing numbers of people in the future will be supported in their own homes and that the 'Baby Boomer' generation of people who will pay for their own care and support will demand higher standards of 'customer appreciation' from those who provide it. We must and will develop an understanding of this new 'commissioner'. Their decision-making process on which they will buy their service from will be based as much on their relationship with the individual(s) who provide that face-to-face care and support as on the organisation itself. In preparation for this change we will focus our attention and resources on developing a series of customer relationship strategies. This will involve:

- Customer relationship management training for all front-line and office based staff who regularly are the first point of contact for our customers. In year 1, we will focus this training on our Community Support staff.
- Ensuring that our ITC strategy supports the highest quality of customer contact and responsiveness
- Ensuring our recruitment and retention strategy development focuses on maximising flexibility within our workforce to meet the changing needs of customers
- Marketing our services so customers understand who we are and why they should buy their care from Avante Care and Support

We know that we will continue to have a substantial portfolio of residential homes for many years to come. It is therefore important that we extend our thinking about the impact of the Government's personalisation agenda and our related customer care strategies to our residential care homes. This is particularly important as we look to invest many millions of pounds into the redevelopment of our residential homes portfolio and we need to be confident that our homes will continue to attract customers into the future. With external support we have undertaken an audit of our residential care homes against a series of key questions, including:

- **Is this service compliant with modern personalisation provision?**

If no...

- **What is the potential for this service to become compliant with modern personalisation provision?**
- **What is the cost of achieving this compliance and does it represent a sound business case for investment?**

The outcomes of this audit is influencing changes in our management and organisation of our residential care homes.



Developing our Community Support Capability

We have now combined our 'Care at Home', 'New Outlooks' and 'Supported Living' services to create a new 'Community Support' service.

Government policy developments in the areas of Individualisation and Personalisation indicate that growing numbers of people will be supported to purchase their own care, rather than have that care provided directly or indirectly through local authorities and/or health. These changes are now driving changes in local authority commissioning strategies that will significantly affect the markets that support people in their own homes and in the community.

More and more people who previously would have been eligible for and accessed residential care are no longer able to do so, and they are increasingly being cared for in their own homes.

Elsewhere, through the raising the eligibility thresholds, many older people who previously received domiciliary support are now receiving fewer hours' support and in some cases, are no longer eligible for any local authority support. This will generate a whole new group of private domiciliary clients, who as self payers will be looking for high quality organisations to provide them with support.

It is against this strategic backdrop of opportunities in the domiciliary market that Avante Care and Support has created its Community Support Team and service that now operates right across the organisation under a new leadership and management structure that will allow us to take a more strategic view over the care and support of individuals in the community.

Supporting this overall Business Plan, we have developed a more detailed Operational Plan for our Community Support Service that we believe will enable us to become an increasingly significant provider in the community support market.

Developing a Quality Assurance Framework

Our new Philosophy of Care will shape and structure how we look at outcomes for people we support across our services; establishing outcomes for the people we care for and support. It is equally important that we understand and constantly review the quality of the services we provide. To that end, we will develop a Quality Assurance Framework that will allow us to measure our service quality and have appointed our first Quality Assurance Manager to lead this important area of work.

Our Quality Assurance Framework will be based on an annual Service Review process that will seek and undertake:

- Resident and relatives feedback
- Stakeholders views
- Service self-audit by managers
- Staff questionnaires
- Internal audits carried out by senior operational management/Quality Assurance Manager
- Root Cause Analysis data inc analysis of accidents, incidents and complaints

We will develop a measurement and scoring system for the Service Review to enable each service to focus on action and continuous improvement. Best practice will be identified and shared across the organisation. Scores will be charted on a year-by-year basis and the results of each service will be reported and made available to everyone wishing to see them.

The results from annual Service Reviews will help us to:

- Celebrate what works for residents and their achievements
- Provide evidence that we are delivering our Philosophy of Care and 'Living our Values'
- Highlight areas of good practice across the organisation
- Publicise best possible innovative and creative activities
- Provide Trustees with the reporting framework they need to answer the 'How do we know' question that they must be able to answer if they are to fulfil their governance responsibilities
- Give external stakeholders confidence in Avante Care and Support as a provider

Committed to our People

We are proud to have a diverse workforce. Over the life of this plan, our recruitment and employment policies and processes will continue to be developed to ensure that we maintain and value this diversity. We will be creative in our recruitment initiatives, with a focus on recruitment campaigns and selection processes that ensure that we recruit people with the values and behaviours needed to enable us to deliver services as demanded by our philosophy of care.

We will continually strive to create an excellent working environment and personal support systems for all our staff. All new staff will have comprehensive induction training when they join the organisation, and during their employment they will complete and be refreshed on the statutory training required. We will maintain our commitment to regular individual supervision for staff, with services continuing to hold regular staff team meetings.

Learning and development opportunities will continue to be made available to staff. In year 1 of this Plan, we will focus on training all staff on our new Philosophy of Care. Over 40 staff, including the Chief Executive and members of the Management Team have now taken part in the Eden Alternative's 3 day course and are now 'Eden Associates'. We have appointed 'Eden Champions' in each of our services. Each member of our over 1000 strong staff who deliver care and support will be trained on our Philosophy of Care.

We will continuously increase the level of staff's knowledge of dementia, building on our partnership with the South East Dementia Centre at Canterbury Christ Church University. We understand that we can only deliver our strategic objectives if we are able to harness the enthusiasm and commitment of our staff.

In developing innovative people strategies, we will need to:

- Match and develop the skills and experience of the people we employ with the needs and ambitions of people we care for and support

- Learn from and share best practice in values driven recruitment
- Create environments that enable every member of staff to reach their potential and to take responsibility for giving their best
- Develop a supportive leadership culture

Employee engagement is very important to us and we will build on what is a positive relationship with the Trade Union and Staff Council.

Even within an employment market place where recruitment is likely to become easier for the next 12 months, we will still be challenged to trying to find competent employees who share our values. We will not lower our standards and expectations in the recruitment of our staff.

We have begun the development of a 5-year Organisational Development strategy. Within that, our 2009/10 Organisational Development priorities will be:

Leadership Development

It is clear that developing our current and future leaders will be one of the key determinants of our success as an organisation and the delivery of this plan.

Competencies

We will develop a competency framework for leaders across Avante Care and Support based on the NHS Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF) and the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF), starting with our residential home managers. A new supervision and appraisal process will be developed that will incorporate this framework to ensure that leaders are appraised not just on their current performance, but on their potential as well.

360-Degree Appraisal

We will develop and implement a 360-degree appraisal process that will form a key element of all Leaders' appraisal and annual assessment process.



Staff Engagement and Communication

In addition to powerful leadership, a characteristic of high performing organisations is that they engage, involve and communicate with staff as part of a continuous process. We currently have a number of communication channels with staff, and these will be reviewed during 2009/10. We have already improved communication through the production of more regular newsletters for staff, a newsletter for our managers called 'Managers Matter', regular staff briefings and visits to our homes and services by members of the Management Team.

Regional Development Centres

The purpose of these Centres; one covering Kent and Medway and the other covering London is to:

'Facilitate the development of excellence in leadership and management amongst our operational managers'.

These centres will aim to embed our Leadership Philosophy of Trust, Accountability and Responsibility in our operational managers and provide them with the management tools required to successfully lead their teams and services. An initial series of 6 x half-day monthly workshops will be held in London and Kent/Medway regions starting in September 2009 through to March 2010.

Governance

It is Avante Partnership's policy that the individual organisations that make up the Partnership should exercise as much independence as possible, within the context of the overarching Partnership strategy and policies. Avante Care and Support has its own Operating Board that reports to the Avante Partnership Board and will be held to account for Avante Care and Support's financial and operating performance.

Avante Care and Support's Operating Board is its governing body and as such is responsible for all aspects of the organisation's business.

The role of the Avante Care and Support Board is to:

- Ensure the proper governance of the organisation
- Set and monitor Avante Support's strategy and performance against its Business Plan
- Exercise sound financial control
- Take the key decisions
- Scrutinise and monitor performance

The membership of Avante Care and Support's Board includes Trustees of Avante Partnership and co-optees who are able to provide the expertise and sector specific experience the organisation will need to support the delivery of this plan.





To find your nearest location visit:

www.avantecaresupport.org.uk
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