

Mental Health Social Care Leadership Symposium: Workshop notes

social care
institute for excellence



Implementing the White Papers

From a social care perspective the two White Papers, *Our health our care our say* and *Strong and prosperous communities*, underline the need for a stronger focus on outcomes in health and social care services, with greater emphasis upon communities, citizenship and personalisation. Most workshop participants felt that these themes did not have a high profile in the mental health sector: NHS managers are preoccupied with other priorities and do not generally see implementation of the White Papers as core business, while local authorities do not generally have robust arrangements in place to ensure that social care policy is implemented in the sector. The consequences of these deficits are significant (e.g. very low take-up of direct payments among people with mental health problems). However, it was recognised that the White Papers represent an opportunity to reinvigorate the social care contribution to mental health services. Key to achieving this will be a more proactive approach by local authority social care leaders.

12 March 2007

Colin Williams, North East Social Care Change Agent