East Renfrewshire HSCP

Rapid Access Team and Ask Sara Platform

Briefing Note

Dec 2021

Rapid Access Team / Ask Sara

Descriptor

The role of the Rapid Access Team in East Renfrewshire is to assess and support people with less complex needs over a shorter period of time in order to allow the dedicated AHP teams to work with those who need a more involved and longer-term support

Led by a qualified Occupational Therapist, this team have been trained to triage, assess and support people where a short-term targeted intervention is likely to produce the best outcome.

The team promotes self-management where appropriate by directing people to use a self-service platform, Ask Sara, which asks them a series of questions and offers recommendations for items which they can purchase themselves to maintain their independence. These items may be purchased privately, or people may use their SDS budgets. They may follow up the use of this platform with an additional assessment and/or home visit where deemed appropriate.

Features

- A short, focussed intervention at an early stage can often mitigate the need for more complex, long-term support at a later point or following a crisis.
- People can self-refer to the service, so they don't have to wait until they have been assessed by other services or spent time on a waiting list while their need increases.

Benefits

- Citizens can access support on their own terms, with choice and control over the route they take.
- AHP teams have more time to work with those with more complex needs and have capacity to offer the specialist interventions required
- The Ask Sara platform is available 24/7 so people can access at a time that suits them, and involve their circle of care in the process easily

Impact

- Allows options for individuals to access alternative support routes and to self-manage
- Provides options for earlier intervention, reducing resource intensive crisis support.
- The Rapid Access team can see people at a very early stage and will often divert a crisis before it happens by putting in place the right solution for an individual.

Considerations

- Need clear boundaries for servcies to triage effectively.
- Sufficient resource is required within the service to deal with volume of referrals based on the demographic of the area.
- Where a person is not digitally literate, alternative support should be given to access an online platform so that services are equitable.
- Any efficiencies may not be realised within the same service.
- In order for the Ask Sara platform to be effective, it must be advertised and have a resource available to support its development.

Potential Costs

- Approximately £50,000 per annum per post, including on costs
- Equipment budget to purchase supports for activities of daily living
- Development and licensing costs for a self-service platform