

Mr. C. Bury,



■/08/2013

Alistair Neill,
Brockington,
35 Hafod Road,
Hereford,
Herefordshire,
HR1 1SH.

Dear Mr. Neill,

I am writing to you to air my concerns and also make you aware of what appears to be the lack of knowledge and support provided by the local access team and social workers employed by Herefordshire Council.

Some weeks ago I wished to make a formal complaint on behalf of my elderly mother, Mrs. M ■. Bury, concerning the local management of a service provider contracted by your Council, after a care assistant caused damage at mother's property to a bath side panel.

Due to what we considered to be a poor service provided to my mother from the contractor, I telephoned the local access team to explain that I wished to have that particular care agency changed for another company in which we could have more confidence. I wished to make a formal complaint about the situation and was informed by the access team that they did not know of the department or the procedure for making such complaint and that I should telephone the social worker. When I contacted the social workers team I was told that I should telephone the local access team once more as the social workers team did not know of the correct department or procedure for making a complain on behalf of an elderly relative.

You will understand that the above experience gives me serious cause for concern for elderly and vulnerable adults, and those involved in their care, that wish to register a complaint and are simply ignored and passed between uninformed and seemingly unhelpful council employees. This is unacceptable and apart from being an embarrassment for Herefordshire Council, is a potential tragedy waiting to happen.

Our experience if this particular agency contracted by your Council to supply basic care is that some of its care assistants appear to have had little to no training with disability aids and have difficulty in assembling simple devices such as bath lifts. I am also led to believe that some such care assistants had not had their criminal records bureau check processed prior to being allowed to work with potentially vulnerable people. If this is true then this must be especially worrying to us all.

As this matter has still not been resolved, I request that you personally investigate the matter with a view to considering replacing the particular care agency involved in providing my mother's care, before any further incidents happen and I am forced to refer the matter to the Local Government Commissioner.

There are two other issues that I would like to inform you of that have just come to my attention:

Firstly, a financial query concerning the charges levied where care has been cancelled but I recall charges as having been incurred. My mother is an elderly pensioner who receives a care allowance to assist her with her costs of care. It is unacceptable that charges were levied on her by your Council for occasions where no such care was provided. Clearly any monitoring system that exists has proved wanting.

Secondly, I believe that my thirty six year old step brother D█, who has resided at █ for the past two years does not have his proper needs and interests protected by the Social Services Department.

█ who is autistic and suffers from epilepsy, appears to have serious deficiencies in his current care. █ needs dental treatment and, despite suffering pain, does not have an appointment with the dental team at The County Hospital until September █ next.

I understand that Herefordshire Council is currently undergoing a review of departmental establishments as part of a cost efficiency exercise. May I therefore suggest that less competent or committed social workers and contracted care agencies that are involved with the elderly and vulnerable people in the community are given much lower priority than staff and agencies that carry out their duties and responsibilities towards elderly and vulnerable people with complete professionalism and respect?

I would be happy to discuss all or any of the above matters with you if you would find this helpful and I would make myself available for this purpose.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as practicable after you have had the opportunity to investigate the issues that I have raised with you.

Yours sincerely,

█

C. Bury