

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All Wards
REPORT TITLE Insight, Learning and Impact Report – Adults and Health Directorate - Quarter 4/End of Year 2025-26	
REPORT OF Executive Director, Adults and Health	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Health and Adults Social Care Scrutiny Committee	DATE 14 July 2026
SUMMARY OF REPORT This report focusses on the performance over the year 2025-26 for each division across the Adults and Health Directorate. In this report, Council Directors have been asked to provide a narrative covering key areas of challenge, opportunity, and learning. This report is divided into three main sections: • A summary table which highlights key responses from individual services for the year 2025/26 across the Adults and Health Directorate. • A more detailed narrative of those service responses • Appendix A contains the data dashboard. Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report. Contact Officer: James Coumbe – Insight, Learning and Impact Lead London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG Email: james.coumbe@camden.gov.uk Tel: 020 7974 5965	
RECOMMENDATION: The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report, including the most recent data and trends and the emerging challenges identified.	

SIGNED



Chris Lemann – Director of ASC Strategy & Commissioning and Deputy DASS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Insight, Learning and Impact (ILI) Quarter (Q)4/End of Year report covers the period between April 2025 – March 2026.
- 1.2 The ILI report is submitted to all scrutiny committees twice a year (mid-year at Q2 and end of year at Q4). Each scrutiny committee receive an extract of the full report, relating to their committee's remit.
- 1.3 The ILI report includes both service narratives and the data dashboard. The service narratives (in the body of this report) provide an overview of the key issues identified by officers for each service. The data dashboard (Appendix A) gives the committee the opportunity to view service performance data collected across the year and compared to previous years.
- 1.4 To produce the service narrative, all Adults and Health Directors were asked to provide a narrative covering key areas of challenge, opportunity, and learning, looking back over 2025/26 on the following points:
 - What were the biggest challenges to your service delivery i.e. what challenges are going to require the organisation's attention and focus
 - What are the biggest opportunities i.e. where could you most benefit from support to deliver improvement?
 - What have your services learned and what do you need to learn in the future e.g. from data or evaluation, regional or national research.
- 1.5 The main report begins with a short, tabled summary of service issues for 2025/26 in responses to the three key questions above. That is followed by a more detailed narrative of those individual service responses.
- 1.6 The Corporate Performance Data Dashboard for the Adults and Health directorate is at Appendix A which provides the latest performance data and previous years for the key measures from the services, and which accompanies this report.

2. Summary of responses

2.1 Adults and Health response summary

	Challenges	Opportunities	Learning
Adult Social Care Commissioning Innovation and In-House Provider Services	- Supported accommodation driven by housing pressures, providers withdrawing from the market and the difficulty of developing new accessible and affordable supported housing - Rising demand for Welfare Rights support - Increased numbers of unplanned prison releases - Staff sufficiency in Provider Services	- Camden Carers has partnered with Bridgit Care to support unpaid carers - Engage Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) with the new health and social care neighbourhood model - Newly established Adult Social Care Enablement Team - Create a stronger platform for prevention, safety and practice consistency	- Strong learning and development offer - Adult Social Care Data and Carers Services collaborating for the first time on person-level data to better understand carer profiles - Neighbourhood workshops delivered with Contact Camden have generated valuable learning to inform future preventative approaches
Adult Social Care Operations	- Demand, Complexity and Financial Pressures - Safeguarding and Mental Health - Mental Health Act Changes particularly within community mental health provision	- Progress in developing more integrated and preventative ways of working across Camden's five neighbourhoods. - Exploring new approaches to supporting residents at the point of first contact with Adult Social Care - Adult Social Care have been working closely with social workers based in hospitals to better understand residents' experiences	- Supporting workforce recruitment and retention - Strengthening safeguarding practice and partnership working - Expanding neighbourhood-based integrated care - Improving hospital discharge pathways - Promoting independence through early intervention and community support
Health and Wellbeing	Drugs and Alcohol Adulterated and high strength drug supply, reaching a broader range of residents with drug information messages	Health and Wellbeing Board Priority "Reducing drug related death and harm", new harm reduction interventions, scoping the current offer for prevention	Learning from the cluster of non-fatal overdoses in 2025, recommendations from Camden's Alcohol Strategy, the prevention scoping and learning from Camden's "Reducing Drug Related Death and Harm" event

3. ADULTS AND HEALTH

3.1 Adult Social Care Commissioning, Innovation and In-House Provider Services

3.1.1 *Challenges*

Supported accommodation remains a significant challenge, driven by housing pressures, providers withdrawing from the market or reducing involvement, and the difficulty of developing new accessible and affordable supported housing in Camden. Demand, complexity and costs are increasing, creating budget pressures and leading to a reliance on more out-of-borough placements. The commissioning of a **new supported living pathway** within Camden for people with serious mental health needs is a positive development (due to go live in 2026), alongside the opening of a new five-bed accessible project for people with learning disabilities opposite the Greenwood Centre. The service is learning more about how it can respond to the challenges collaboratively across the council, particularly through the work of the all-age **Accommodation Strategy**.

Rising demand for **Welfare Rights** support has left more than 70 cases awaiting allocation and increased waiting times to around 10 weeks. Contributing factors include cost-of-living pressures, deteriorating health, complexity in Universal Credit administration, and strict deadlines for disability benefit claims and reviews. Further welfare reform changes expected in the autumn of 2026 may increase demand further. The team secured nearly £2.8 million for residents in 2025/26, with confirmed outcomes for 397 people and 234 open cases.

Increased numbers of unplanned prison releases, linked to wider pressures in the prison system, have highlighted the need for **robust multi-agency coordination and escalation arrangements**. To support practitioners and providers, the Prevention and Wellbeing Team worked in partnership with Housing and Public Health on new **Prison Release Guidance** and will consider if the guidance needs further strengthening following feedback now it is in place. Recent work has highlighted the importance of stronger cross-service governance, escalation routes and information sharing, particularly where risks are shared across services. This has included identifying the need for stronger Probation involvement in prison release arrangements.

Over the past six months, **Provider Services** has focused on maintaining sufficient staffing to run services safely and consistently. High sickness levels and temporary staff have made it harder to sustain stable teams, particularly in services supporting people with more complex needs. Processes for supporting staff with performance or health issues remains vital, with significant resource dedicated from managers to proactively address these issues.

3.1.2 Opportunities

Camden Carers has partnered with **Bridgit Care** to support unpaid carers in Camden through an online platform, with AI-generated coaches available 24 hours a day to provide information and guidance. The system launched in March 2026, and a publicity campaign will run in the lead-up to Carers Week in June.

There are opportunities to engage voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners in the new **health and social care neighbourhood model**, including plans for a VCS coordinator in each of the five neighbourhoods. Grant funding will support the successful organisations to engage with and shape the neighbourhood health and care model over the next 18 months. The approach was collaboratively shaped across the council and with NHS colleagues in the Integrator (University College London Hospital (UCLH) and GP Federations). The work will support the voice of the VCS in the shift from the East Integrated Neighbourhood Team pilot to an approach in all five neighbourhoods, and the implementation of national Neighbourhood Health guidance.

In March 2026, Camden also took the first steps towards a **new model of care and support** in the home through locality-based reablement and neighbourhood homecare services, with a focus on relational, trauma-informed support, independence and stronger community connections. A newly established **Adult Social Care Enablement Team** will support therapy-led reablement and improved integration with health services in late 2026, coinciding with the mobilisation of new homecare and reablement providers.

The directorate is continuing to reach out to community groups as part of its work to develop **strategic co-production**. Co-produced training with residents is being prepared for launch across Adult Social Care, two wellbeing guides are in development with a launch event planned during Co-production Week, the Spring Co-production Newsletter will be shared in May, and further sessions on co-production and power sharing are planned with partners.

Recent developments have focused on improving the consistency and quality of **induction and mandatory learning** for all Adult Social Care staff. New courses have been introduced to address knowledge and practice gaps, and we will continue to promote a positive learning culture across teams, with an emphasis on relational practice, stronger supervision, new ways to learn beyond formal training spaces, and stronger partnerships across the council.

The Prevention and Wellbeing Service has progressed a range of improvement programmes, including new governance for the Adult Social Care Practice Guide, Single Sign On implementation planning, new arrangements for Camden Care Choices and the Practice Guide, lone working safety rollout, partnership work on

gambling harm and the alcohol strategy, regular Mosaic training and audits, and significant onward support through WISH Plus (warmth, income, safety and health). Together, these create a **stronger platform for prevention, safety and practice consistency**.

The **Borough Partnership Carers Board** is progressing forward planning for 2026/27, including engagement work to map carers' pathways into services, the carers workflow redesign on Mosaic and preparations for **Carers Week 2026**.

Provider Services is focusing on ways to realign some of its provision, including Breakaway and day services, to ensure that they are more effectively utilised by Adult Social Care practitioners to benefit residents drawing on care and support. Provider Services will also be introducing Care Vision to improve record-keeping and quality oversight, as well as expanding more flexible community-based support such as **Shared Lives** and outreach through **Bramshurst** in 2026/27.

3.1.3 *Learning*

Officers have continued to embed and strengthen the **learning and development offer** for Adult Social Care in 2025/26. A tailored, local learning model is helping colleagues access timely, relevant learning grounded in day-to-day practice. The Adult Social Care Senior Management Team '**Insight and Experience Programme**' is providing Global Majority colleagues meaningful engagement with strategic leadership, and the directorate will continue to learn from and adapt the programme as participants progress through it.

System-level insight has improved significantly, with Adult Social Care Data and **Carers Services** collaborating for the first time on person-level data to better understand carer profiles, intersecting demographics and service needs. Early evidence of impact is beginning to show in Camden's results in the Survey of Adult Carers in England.

Neighbourhood workshops delivered with **Contact Camden** and **Housing** have generated valuable learning to inform future preventative approaches and front-door models, with arrangements developing to share this learning more widely across the council.

There has been positive progress in improving how in-house Provider Services are organised and managed. New approaches to **rota planning** and working patterns have helped make better use of staff time and reduced agency cover, and work to address staffing issues has led to more stable teams. Early learning from **technology pilots** also suggests benefits for both resident independence and staff effectiveness.

3.2 Adult Social Care Operations

3.2.1 Challenges

Demand, Complexity and Financial Pressures

Adult Social Care continues to experience rising demand across Camden - during 2025/26, 6,087 people requested support from Adult Social Care services. Alongside this increase in referrals, the complexity of need has also continued to grow. More residents are presenting with complex social situations, including neglect, hoarding, risks of abuse or harm, cuckooing, carer strain, and deteriorating mental health.

Against a challenging local and national context of rising demand and increasing costs, the Adult Social Care (ASC) service is forecasting an overspend of **£9.311 million** in 2025/26. Since 2023/24:

- Spending on Homecare and Reablement has increased by 48%
- Spending on Supported Living and Extra Care has increased by 34%

Workforce pressures also continue to impact service delivery. Staff turnover and the need to fill vacancies quickly through agency staffing remain significant challenges. The service continues to prioritise permanent recruitment and workforce retention to reduce reliance on agency workers and maintain continuity of care.

Safeguarding and Mental Health

Partnership working and person-centred safeguarding practice have remained strong throughout the quarter, helping most adults at risk to achieve positive outcomes.

Key areas of focus during Quarter 4 included:

- Strengthening provider oversight
- Reviewing safeguarding pathways through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Improving Community Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) processes
- Embedding learning from safeguarding reviews and audits into frontline practice

New guidance has also been developed by the Principal Social Worker to support practice relating to welfare visits and prison release, both identified as areas of increasing risk following a very tragic death in January 2025 for which a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) will be published within the next quarter along with three others SAR's which are under way. In line with statutory requirements, safeguarding adults reviews continue to be published identifying where there is multi-agency learning following serious incidents. Action plans are agreed through the Safeguarding Adults Board to reduce future risks and strengthen organisational accountability.

Mental Health Act Changes

Recent amendments to the Mental Health Act are creating additional pressures for Adult Social Care, particularly within community mental health provision.

Social care practitioners are increasingly managing higher levels of complexity and risk due to changes in inpatient bed usage and the reduced use of police stations as places of safety. At the same time, local hospitals are experiencing growing demand for accommodation for individuals detained under Section 136.

This has placed additional pressure on Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs), particularly due to increased demand across the two local hospital pathways:

- University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust

Adult Social Care continues to work proactively with the police and wider system partners to minimise delays and support timely Mental Health Act assessments. Strong partnership relationships remain in place across agencies to support residents effectively within the resources available.

3.2.2 *Opportunities*

Despite ongoing pressures, Adult Social Care continues to make progress in developing more integrated and preventative ways of working across Camden's five neighbourhoods.

Building on the success of the East Neighbourhood Integrated Care Team, the service is strengthening relationships across the voluntary and community sector, alongside NHS primary and secondary care partners and the local integrator model across the five neighbourhoods.

This collaborative approach aims to:

- Improve joined-up support for people
- Strengthen collective responses to need
- Make the health and care system easier for people to navigate

The service is also exploring new approaches to supporting residents at the point of first contact with Adult Social Care. This includes increasing timely interventions through Occupational Therapists and support workers to help people maintain independence and strengthen community connections.

In addition, managers with Adult Social Care have been working closely with social workers based in acute hospitals across Camden to better understand residents' experiences of hospital discharge and the care pathways currently available.

A key priority is to improve discharge arrangements so that more people are supported to return home safely following a hospital admission wherever possible.

Key Priorities Moving Forward

The service will continue to focus on:

- Managing increasing demand and financial pressures
- Supporting workforce recruitment and retention
- Strengthening safeguarding practice and partnership working
- Expanding neighbourhood-based integrated care
- Improving hospital discharge pathways
- Promoting independence through early intervention and community support

3.3 Health and Wellbeing

Drugs and Alcohol

3.3.1 *Challenges*

The most significant challenge in 2025-26 and will likely continue into 2026-27 is:

Changes in drug supply; notably adulterants appearing in not just opiate supply but also other drug types such as ketamine and illicit benzodiazepines. High strength drug supply is also a cause for concern, this is specifically related to MDMA.

The changes in adulteration and strength of supply may impact those who use drugs “recreationally” and therefore these individuals may not ever come into contact with drug services, commissioners are exploring ways in which drug information messages can reach a broader range of residents (other than those in contact with treatment services).

3.3.2 *Opportunities*

In 2025, Camden’s Health and Wellbeing Board made “reducing drug related death and harm” a short-term priority. To support this priority commissioners have funded a number of harm reduction interventions/projects:

- A drug checking service provided by the charity The Loop. The service started in March 2026, and provides a free and anonymous drug checking facility, where users of the service are able to receive tailored harm reduction advice based on the results of the analysis of the substance they have surrendered for testing.
- Production of a library of harm reduction materials which will target specific cohorts e.g. young people, women, LGBTQI community. The materials can be used to share harm reduction messages via social media and other communication channels.

- Training programme for Camden’s night-time economy venues; the training will include information of changing drug trends, and how venues can safely manage a drug-harm incident if one occurs on their premises.
- Scoping the current offer for prevention to ensure that Camden is taking a population health approach to drug use.
- Having a greater focus on the rising risk for local populations due to the changing nature of drug use, including understanding the impact of potential increased ketamine use in young people.

3.3.3 *Learning*

In November 2025, Camden’s Drug and Alcohol Partnership Group met for the first time. The group will oversee the delivery of a number of action plans, and recommendations from local strategies/evaluations including:

- Learning from the cluster of non-fatal overdoses in 2025, recommendations from Camden’s Alcohol Strategy, the prevention scoping and learning from Camden’s “Reducing Drug Related Death and Harm” event (held in November 2025).

4. Finance Comments of the Director of Finance

- 4.1 The Director of Finance has been consulted on this report and has no additional comments.

5. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 5.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

6. Environmental Implications

- 6.1 There are no proposals with environmental implications made in this report.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A: Corporate Data Dashboard 2025-26 – HASC Scrutiny

REPORT ENDS