Inspiring Change

Plenary 5

Wednesday 1415

Brian Donnelly

Raising the Standards for the Provision of Community Equipment

Biography
Brian Donnelly is director of Community Equipment Solutions Ltd. He is also founder and chair of the UK Community Equipment Standards Adoption Group. He previously worked as the National Development Officer for community equipment provision within the Welsh Assembly Government.
Brian is well known for his authoritative and sobering paper calling on the need for national minimum standards for equipment provision in England and Wales. He is also leading on the development of similar standards for community equipment provision in England.

Abstract
Following on from his original paper calling on the need for Standards, Brian was asked by the Welsh Assembly Government to write National Standards. UK ministers preferred not to mandate National Standards, stating that it was ‘local responsibility’.
In view of the compelling case made for introducing Standards there was an overwhelming interest from many organisations across the UK. As a result of this a UK stakeholder group was set up. This group is made up of professional and regulatory bodies, associations, and third sector organisations e.g. RCN, COT, CSP, NBE, HSE, MHRA, NAEP, BHTA, DLF, and Assist UK.
Brian has now personally written quality standards for all equipment provision in England as well. The quality standards reflect current changes in English health and social care policy; they also cover the retail method of provision.
The Standards, to be issued as a Code of Practice in England, cover commissioning and provision of services, together with clinical aspects as well as peripheral issues related to equipment provision. They cover all areas where public sector equipment is provided e.g. equipment stores, continuing healthcare, special schools and care homes.
The Code of Practice will for the first time provide a common language and understanding for everyone operating within the community equipment space, including the service user. Once the Code is published, services and organisations in England will be able to register as working to the Code. Organisations can also opt for external assessment, allowing them to gain accreditation status. For the first time there will also be accredited trainers operating throughout the country to provide training on all aspects of commissioning and provision of equipment, as well as related clinical responsibilities. Hard copies of the Code will be published as a reference guide.
Details of the benefits of the Code of Practice and how it will work will be given at the National Back Exchange Conference.