

TRUST BOARD / SLT COVER SHEET

	<i>The cover sheet purpose is to provide the Trust Board/Committee with a clear summary of the paper being presented, how it impacts on the people we serve, key matters for attention and the ask of the Trust Board/Committee</i> <i>The Accountable Director must satisfy themselves that the cover sheet is accurate and fully reflects the paper. The expectation is that the Accountable Director has read and agreed the content of both the cover sheet and paper.</i>	
Meeting and Date of meeting	TRUST BOARD - Thursday 28 May 2026	
Title of paper	Modernising Home Care Review (formerly known as Domiciliary Care)	
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	Position	Director of Adult Community Services
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This paper sits within the Trust Board role of:	Accountability	
This paper is presented for:	Information <i>(Notes on completion at end of document)</i>	
Links to Trust Strategic Priorities 	☒	Collaborative Working
	☐	Learning Organisation
	☒	Safety, Quality & Experience
	☒	Community First
	☒	Whole-Life Approach

1. Reason for Presentation of Paper / Report

This paper aims to provide Trust Board members with an overview of the Modernising Home Care review, which the Trust is undertaking, in respect of the Home Care service offered by the Trust to the Southern Trust population, inclusive of our plans to make changes.

2. Detailed summary of paper contents:

This paper will provide an overview of the background to the context the service is currently operating within. It will also provide an insight into the breadth of the review, right from the point of the initial assessment that may lead to a Trust supported package of care, through to the monitoring and review arrangements.

As part of explaining the background to the review, detail is included in respect of some of the drivers for change.

Background

The Southern Trust is experiencing significant demographic pressures with the number of older people rising at a faster rate than any other Trust area in Northern Ireland. Like other areas, we are facing challenges with increasing demand for services alongside rising costs and workforce pressures, particularly in rural communities.

Despite the pressures, Trust Home Care and our Independent Sector partners, currently support more than 4,550 people every day, delivering around 60,000 hours of care each week. Together we work to protect the safety and dignity of service users, while helping people to remain as independent as possible in their own homes for as long as possible.

Approximately 40% of home care is provided directly by the Trust, with 60% delivered by the Independent Sector. This balance has evolved; it has not been planned. Between April 2025 and March 2026, the Trust Home Care Service provided more than 2.2 Million visits.

However, with around 750 people waiting on home care packages each day and a shortfall of approximately 6,150 hours, the current services are unfortunately unable to meet the full level of need, due to workforce shortages across both the Trust and Independent Sectors.

As a result, some local people are going without home care services, that they have been identified as needing to remain safely and independently at home, placing additional strain on individuals, their families and unpaid carers. Others who otherwise could enjoy the independence of living in their own homes, remain in hospitals longer than required or in care homes unnecessarily, reducing their mobility and independence while adding pressure across the wider health and social care system.

3. Areas of improvement/achievement:

Using Data to increase capacity.

Early evidence from the Trust's new digital system, Care Line Live, suggests there may be opportunities to make better use of existing resources and increase our capacity to support more people.

In some cases, service users become more independent over time and staff spend less time with them than was originally identified as being required at assessment. This means that some of the time allocated is not being used and could potentially be redirected to help others.

How the Trust will respond

- *Allocated* hours may be reduced where Care Line Live data indicates they are no longer required.
- The *actual* hours people are currently receiving will not be changed on the basis of Care Line Live data alone and
- The Trust will not reduce anyone's care below the actual level they are currently receiving, without first reassessing their needs.

Extending the use of this system across the Independent Sector in the future, would improve oversight and may help us to find more spare capacity. However, this would require regional agreement.

Any increase in home care capacity would deliver tangible benefits for local people, by helping to relieve pressure on hospitals and both residential and nursing home care, as well as ensuring that public money is spent effectively to help as many people as possible.

If more Independent Sector capacity becomes available, we expect to take it up.

4. Areas of concern/risk/challenge:

Addressing the challenges

Work is already underway to modernise and strengthen home care services to better support people in their own homes and reduce pressure on hospitals and care homes.

The Trust has commenced a comprehensive review - Modernising Home Care - aiming to identify ways to increase capacity and make better use of available resources.

The review considers every stage of the home care pathway, including:

- Initial assessment.
- Rehabilitation services.
- Organising and commissioning care and
- Ongoing monitoring and review of care packages.

The programme aims to transform and sustain home care through innovative service developments that will support our older population, now and into the future.

We are committed to ensuring everyone receives safe, fair and consistent support, based on their assessed needs.

We will continue to work closely with the Independent Sector Providers to explore new service models that better align capacity and demand, maximise efficiency and address differing challenges across urban and rural areas.

By streamlining services, we will enable more people to receive personalised support to remain in the comfort of their own home, whilst easing pressure on hospitals and care homes.

This approach will make our system more sustainable and responsive to an ageing population - offering dignity, independence and security to those who need it most.

5. Impact on Statutory Duties: Provide details on the impact of the following and how.

<i>Financial Impact</i>	<i>Safety and Quality Impact</i>
Yes, there are Financial Impacts	Yes, there are Quality, Safety or Experience Impacts

6. Risk Assessment (Risk level and state if a risk assessment be completed)

This project has not been deemed as requiring a risk assessment at this time, as it is aiming to deliver home care to an increased number of service users and therefore, reducing risk to those awaiting a service.

7. Other Business Intelligence/data (If appropriate)

N/A

8. Impact: Provide details on the impact of the following and how. If this is N/A you should explain why this is an appropriate response.

Corporate Risk Register	N/A at this time.
Board Assurance Framework	N/A at this time.
Equality and Human Rights	N/A.

Trust Board Role Fulfilment

Strategy	<i>Papers in this category should address forward-looking priorities, long-term objectives, or service transformation. These are typically focused on shaping the future of the organisation and will often involve decisions on direction, investment, or innovation.</i>
Culture	<i>These papers aim to influence or reflect the values, behaviours, and staff or patient experiences within HSC. They may relate to leadership development, equality, diversity and inclusion, staff engagement, or initiatives intended to reinforce our organisational ethos.</i>
Accountability	<i>Papers falling into this area relate to governance, assurance, performance monitoring, compliance, and risk. They provide evidence that responsibilities are being fulfilled, standards are being met, and corrective actions are being taken where necessary.</i>

Reasons for Paper Presentation

Approval	<i>Used when an item requires a formal agreement or endorsement by the meeting / committee members. Examples are approving minutes, budgets, proposals or policies.</i>
Assurance	<i>Used when an item can be measured against a certain criteria / standard. Examples are a project is on course with delivery or financial targets are being met.</i>
Information	<i>Used when an item is presented for the purpose of updating or informing the attendees without requiring a decision or action, such as reports, updates, or announcements.</i>
Discussion	<i>Used when an item is listed primarily for open discussion, brainstorming or gathering input from the members without requiring an immediate decision.</i>

