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Chapter Highlights

Chapter 3: Managing Home Care Support Contracts

Overall Conclusion:

- DHW has not completed all recommendations from our November 2008 home care audit covering many aspects of home care management
- DHW and NSHA have weaknesses in their policies and procedures for ensuring services are received, and payments are made, in accordance with contract terms
- Funding is allocated to providers in a systematic and supported manner

Follow-up on 2008 Recs

Conclusion:

- 8 recommendations from OAG 2008 audit not fully completed
- Recs were agreed to by government; commitments made

Examples:

- A lack of home care staff could limit meeting future demand
- No quality assurance process for client assessment decisions
- Not knowing if hours reported by providers are accurate and complete

Recommendations:

- DHW and NSHA - establish processes to complete all commitments made in response to OAG recommendations

Contract Management

Conclusion:

- Weaknesses in monitoring performance of, and payments to, service providers

Examples:

- No verification of service hours, performance indicators and statistical reporting
- No comprehensive monitoring of home support providers
- No integrated complaint monitoring
- Performance indicators for all providers starting April 1, 2017
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated

Recommendations:

- DHW and NSHA - verify accuracy of provider reporting including service hours
- DHW - verify provider-reported user fees
- DHW and NSHA - monitor provider compliance with contract terms
- DHW and NSHA - develop integrated record of complaints and outcome
- DHW and NSHA - using indicators, monitor and evaluate providers
- DHW - monitor whether NSHA is meeting responsibilities

Funding Home Support

Conclusion:

- Documented and defined approach to calculating funding

Examples:

- Funding accurately calculated
- Providers understand funding approach; concerned rates do not allow much for education and travel
- Health authority concerned with approach to funding

Recommendations:

None

5 Questions Nova Scotians may want to ask:

1. Who is responsible to make sure Auditor General recommendations are completed when the OAG is no longer following up? Why weren't the November 2008 recommendations completed?
2. Does not tendering for home support services ensure appropriate value-for-money for Nova Scotians?
3. Why are the department and the health authority relying on information submitted by service providers without verifying that the information is complete and accurate?
4. Are the department and the health authority planning to develop performance indicators for home nursing?
5. How do the department and the health authority know Nova Scotians are getting the home support they are supposed to receive?