

Date: 5 March 2021
Enquiries to: Phil Quickenden
Email: Philip.Quickenden@suffolk.gov.uk



Key Partners of Suffolk Social Care

Dear Colleague,

RE: Changes to ACS Referral Portal and Customer First waiting times

You will remember that Sue Cook wrote to you at the beginning of January to advise of some of the challenges being faced in the Customer First contact centre and seeking your support with increasing the number of referrals made to ACS via our online portal.

During January and early February, we carried out consultation events with partners and based on the feedback we will be making a number of changes to the online portal in the week commencing **8th March**.

We heard a clear message from partners that the portal referral form was not specific enough resulting in follow up contact from ACS or referrals being rejected and having to submit with more information. To address this, we have expanded the question set within the portal form, giving clear guidance on what information is required and providing better prompts within the referral itself. Where possible we have done this by adding check boxes to keep the process as swift as possible. The new portal is more comprehensive so will take slightly longer to complete; however, this will significantly reduce the need for follow up contact and more importantly, remove any delay in getting an urgent service for a customer.

Our portals will remain our most efficient front door for professionals seeking to refer into ACS services and we seek your continued support in championing this as the primary route for contact with your staff. Our staff will help support people in transitioning to the portals in the weeks ahead by suggesting to those who call us that they use the portal where appropriate for future referrals. Information on how to use the social care portal, along with instructional videos can be accessed at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/how-social-care-can-help/suffolk-adult-care-portal/>

In the past weeks we have been able to significantly reduce the waiting times people have experienced through successful recruitment and redeployment of staff and also by beginning to move more professional calls onto our online portal platform.

We plan further improvements to the portal system, with our future roadmap including the development of a two-way portal which will allow professionals to find feedback on the progress of their referral, again something we recognise is important to improving the online referral experience.

Please note, the changes being made will only affect the ACS Portal – all CYP portal remain unchanged.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support during these challenging times.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Chimbani', with a stylized, cursive script.

Georgia Chimbani
Director
Adult and Community Services