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| **Case Study****Situation: Somerset Council were formally notified by a Care Provider of their strategic decision to put their business into liquidation in August 2022, giving notice for all residents living at a Nursing Home in Somerset.****The Nursing Home was in the Sedgemoor area of Somerset and was rated ‘Good’ by the Care Quality Commission at the time of the notification but was on our radar in light of an associated multi-agency whole service safeguarding investigation coordinated by the Council in relation to another ‘arm’ of their provider business.****We were advised that they felt it was no longer viable for them to sustain their homes financially and also that they were unable to cover the payroll of staff.****Response: As a Local Authority, we always acknowledge** the impact and concern this news will have on affected residents, relatives and staff. We immediately reassured affected stakeholders of our statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to ensure the care and support needs of all service users can continue to be met in the event of an immediate business failure by a regulated care provider in Somerset and took some immediate steps to support staffing in the short term to mitigate identified risks around effective care delivery. This included paying staff wage’s in respect of a brief period before the administration order which were unpaid at the time the administrators were appointed.The Council chose to do this because while employees would have had the right to recover those unpaid wages, it was unlikely that this would happen quickly and a policy decision was made to ensure that the goodwill of staff (who the council was relying on to provide care) was maintained and that there was no loss of staff as a result of non-payment of wages as this would have prejudiced the Council’s ability to continue to meet the residents’ care and support needs during the period before their re-housing. We went on to offer support and assistance to affected care staff to secure alternative employment and accommodation given the losses they too suffered from the situation.In partnership with our colleagues in NHS Somerset, we implemented our well-established business closure process. This involved working with the Care Quality Commission and other stakeholders, including the locality social work team, elected Councillors and the provider themselves, as part of this work. This included arranging comms (including a prompt, face-to-face meeting with residents and relatives for all people directly affected) to outline next steps and options, as well as the undertaking of social care reviews of the needs of all affected people within the Home.**Outcome:** The challenging home closure was completed within a month thanks to effective delivery of our duties and implementation of our process, with all residents successfully moved to new, suitable accommodation.**Feedback from an affected family: “Sian and team have provided an incredible service to all residents at X Care Home. We were placed in a difficult position with the care home going into administration. Sian and the team faced all residents, family and staff to reassure them that a robust process was in place and that the home would not close until all residents were found a placement. Sian and her team showed empathy and caring and made sure that all questions were answered , her caring also extended to staff. They went out of their way to lessen the shock. Mum and I were very grateful for the support and wish to thank the Local Authority for picking up the running of the home and making sure that it carried on as normal, whilst prioritising placements in local homes. Sian and team have worked long hours to make sure that all residents were assessed and placed in other good/outstanding homes. Thank you for your professionalism, your empathy and your unstinting hard work to make sure that all we’re cared for. We can’t thank you enough”****Feedback from an affected family: “**We would again wish to compliment the staff at Somerset Concil and X Nursing Home for their dedication to their residents during that difficult period and, particularly, the manager who helped us with my mother in law’s move once we had found a home for her in X. We do hope that she and all the staff were able to find alternative employment.Thank you again for taking the time to respond to our questions at such length and giving us the confidence that Seniors in Somerset are being well looked after - we appreciate that and we have been impressed by staff and management at all levels in the Council” |