

ODELIA GROUP · PUBLICATION NO. 003

Local Authority Intelligence

Medway Council

From Capacity to Resilience

Evidence-led analysis of the adult social care provider market,
commissioning priorities and strategic direction.

PUBLICATION NO.

003

RESEARCH DATE

July 2026

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Independent Adult Social Care Market Intelligence
& Provider Development Research

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication forms part of the Odelia Local Authority Intelligence Series.

The series provides evidence-led analysis of adult social care provider markets across England, translating publicly available information into practical intelligence for providers, commissioners, housing organisations, NHS partners and sector leaders.

Each publication draws upon publicly available sources, including Market Position Statements, adult social care strategies, commissioning plans, procurement information, CQC assessments and other relevant publications.

The purpose of the series is to improve understanding of local provider markets and support informed discussion across the sector.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Authority	Medway Council (Chatham)
Publication	003
Series	Provider Market Insight Series
Research date	July 2026

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Independent research and market intelligence into Adult Social Care commissioning and provider markets

CITATION

Odelia Group Ltd (2026), Local Authority Intelligence, Medway Council, Publication 003.

THE SERIES

Further editions of the Local Authority Intelligence series are published at www.odeliagroup.co.uk.

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PURPOSE

This note reflects publicly available information from Medway Council's Adult Social Care Strategy, commissioning documents and CQC Local Authority Assessment. Its purpose is to better understand the challenges facing Medway's adult social care market and consider how provider readiness can support future market development.

AT A GLANCE

Primary market theme	From Capacity to Resilience
Key commissioning priorities	Homecare; Prevention; Hospital Discharge; Workforce; Provider Sustainability.
Best read for	Homecare Providers; Supported Living Providers; Complex Care Providers; Commissioners; Market Development Leads.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE TELLS US

Medway is experiencing growing demand for adult social care alongside significant financial pressures and increasing complexity of need.

Adult Social Care continues to represent one of the council's largest areas of expenditure, with overspends driven by rising demand, inflationary pressures and increasing numbers of people requiring specialist support.

Alongside these pressures, Medway has identified several strategic priorities including improving prevention, supporting independence, strengthening provider quality and developing a more sustainable care market.

Recent evidence highlights a number of recurring challenges:

- Growing demand for supported living services
- Increasing complexity of mental health and learning disability provision
- Hospital discharge pressures
- Shortages of specialist residential and nursing provision
- Rising supported living costs
- Variation in provider quality
- Brokerage pressures when sourcing complex packages
- Need for stronger market sustainability

The recent CQC Local Authority Assessment also identified areas requiring improvement, including consistency of assessments, reviews, safeguarding practice and access to appropriate services for some people.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PROVIDERS

These findings suggest that future commissioning decisions are likely to place increasing emphasis on provider capability rather than provider availability alone.

Commissioners are likely to value providers who can demonstrate:

- Operational resilience
- Strong governance arrangements
- Evidence of quality improvement
- Ability to support complex care packages
- Flexible and responsive service delivery
- Partnership working across health and social care
- Capacity to support timely hospital discharge
- Readiness to evidence capability before opportunities arise

Provider visibility is becoming increasingly important.

Having capacity is no longer enough if commissioners cannot easily understand where that capability exists or how quickly it can be mobilised.

WHAT COMMISSIONERS MAY BE THINKING

Medway's published strategies suggest that commissioning priorities are evolving beyond simply increasing provider numbers.

The focus appears to be on creating a provider market that can:

- Deliver consistently high-quality care
- Support prevention and independence
- Reduce reliance on expensive specialist placements
- Respond quickly to changing demand
- Improve hospital flow
- Strengthen supported living provision
- Develop sustainable community-based services

This reflects an increasing emphasis on market shaping alongside traditional commissioning activity.

REFLECTION

One theme appears consistently throughout Medway's published evidence.

The challenge is not solely whether providers exist.

It is whether commissioners have sufficient confidence in provider capability, quality and readiness when responding to increasingly complex demand.

For providers, this reinforces the importance of demonstrating commissioning readiness through clear evidence of governance, operational capability, workforce resilience and service quality.

As local authority markets continue to evolve, providers who can clearly evidence these strengths may be better positioned to contribute to future market development.

EMERGING MARKET THEME

Across Medway's published strategies and CQC findings, a recurring theme is the growing importance of provider confidence rather than simply provider capacity. As demand becomes more complex, commissioners increasingly need providers who can evidence governance, resilience and readiness, enabling more informed commissioning and brokerage decisions.

KEY MARKET INSIGHT

Medway's challenge is not provider numbers. It is confidence in provider capability.

COMMISSIONER'S LENS

Medway's challenge is not simply securing enough providers. It is developing a provider market that commissioners can trust to respond consistently to increasingly complex needs while supporting hospital discharge, strengthening supported living, promoting independence and delivering sustainable community-based care. Providers that can clearly evidence governance, specialist capability, operational resilience and measurable outcomes are likely to align most closely with these priorities.

PROVIDER ACTION GUIDE

Based on Medway's Current Priorities

Supported Living

COUNCIL CHALLENGES

- Rapid growth in demand for supported living.
- Significant increase in supported living costs.
- Need for more local accommodation and reduced out-of-area placements.
- Supporting people to live independently for longer.
- Increasing complexity of learning disability, autism and mental health support.

PROVIDERS SHOULD CONSIDER

- Demonstrating measurable independence outcomes.
- Building expertise in autism, learning disabilities and mental health.
- Developing partnerships with housing providers and registered social landlords.
- Recording successful move-on and tenancy sustainment outcomes.
- Producing evidence of positive community integration and reduced reliance on higher-cost services.

Homecare & Hospital Discharge

COUNCIL CHALLENGES

- Maintaining hospital flow.
- Sourcing care packages quickly.
- Brokerage pressure when arranging urgent support.
- Workforce shortages affecting continuity of care.

PROVIDERS SHOULD CONSIDER

- Demonstrating rapid mobilisation times for new packages.
- Measuring continuity of care and low missed-visit rates.
- Showing experience of supporting hospital discharge and reablement.
- Maintaining flexible staffing capacity for urgent referrals.
- Recording outcomes that help people remain safely at home.

PROVIDER ACTION GUIDE

Based on Medway's Current Priorities

Complex Care

COUNCIL CHALLENGES

- Growing demand for specialist placements.
- Increasing complexity of physical disabilities, mental health and multiple long-term conditions.
- Limited local specialist provision.

PROVIDERS SHOULD CONSIDER

- Investing in specialist workforce training.
- Developing robust clinical governance and risk management processes.
- Producing anonymised case studies demonstrating successful complex care.
- Evidencing multidisciplinary working with health professionals.
- Demonstrating positive outcomes for people with high levels of need.

Prevention & Community Support

COUNCIL CHALLENGES

- Reducing long-term demand for statutory services.
- Supporting people earlier.
- Strengthening community resilience.
- Promoting independence and wellbeing.

PROVIDERS SHOULD CONSIDER

- Developing preventative and low-level support services.
- Building partnerships with community and voluntary organisations.
- Measuring wellbeing and independence outcomes.
- Demonstrating how services delay or prevent escalation into formal care.
- Supporting social inclusion and community participation.

PROVIDER READINESS SCORECARD

How prepared is your organisation for Medway's future commissioning priorities?

Question	Yes	No
Can we mobilise urgent care packages within agreed timescales?	☐	☐
Can we evidence positive outcomes for people using our services?	☐	☐
Do we have specialist expertise in learning disabilities, autism or mental health?	☐	☐
Can we demonstrate experience supporting hospital discharge?	☐	☐
Do we regularly monitor independence, wellbeing and community outcomes?	☐	☐
Can we evidence strong governance and continuous quality improvement?	☐	☐
Do we have workforce plans that demonstrate resilience and continuity?	☐	☐
Could a commissioner easily understand our capability from our website and supporting information?	☐	☐
Do we have anonymised case studies that demonstrate successful delivery of complex care?	☐	☐
Are we able to clearly explain what makes our organisation different from other providers?	☐	☐

READINESS REFLECTION

The more "Yes" answers you can confidently give, the stronger your organisation is likely to be positioned for future engagement with commissioners.

This checklist is not an assessment of service quality or regulatory compliance. It is intended to encourage reflection on commissioning readiness and how providers present their capability in an increasingly competitive and evidence-driven adult social care market.

QUESTIONS WORTH EXPLORING

- How can commissioners gain greater visibility of provider capability before commissioning opportunities arise?
- What evidence best demonstrates provider readiness for increasingly complex care?
- How can provider development strengthen supported living and specialist community provision?
- What role could market intelligence play in improving brokerage decisions?
- How can local authorities encourage sustainable growth while maintaining quality?

SOURCES

- Medway Adult Social Care Strategy 2026–2030
- CQC Local Authority Assessment – Medway Council
- Medway Commissioning Intentions and Market Shaping publications
- Medway Adult Social Care Committee papers
- Medway Supported Living Commissioning documents
- Public Provider Forum information

DISCLAIMER

This insight note is based on publicly available information and reflects the author's interpretation of published evidence. It is intended to support discussion and should not be regarded as representing the views of Medway Council or any other organisation.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

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