

Agenda item:

Report to: Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Subject: Caring for the Future

Date of Panel: 29 November 2012

Report by: Robert Watt, Head of Adult Social Care

Background

The government's vision for a reformed care and support system for adults is set out in the White Paper 'Caring for the Future'. The aim is to promote independence and give people real control over their lives, whilst at the same time trying to address the issue of how care and support is funded.

The bill sets out a number of reasons as to why changes are necessary and what it sees as priorities to improve the current system.

A major factor in any reform is how best we can manage pressures arising from our growing and ageing population. It is estimated that the number of people, who cannot rely on support offered by their family and will require care over the next 20 years, will rise by 600,000. Traditional ways of providing services will not be able to manage demand of this proportion and the costs associated with providing care over a similar time period could lead to all local government funding being used for care services.

As well as the cost to local authorities, the cost to the individual is also under the spotlight. Whilst recommendations arising from the Dilnot Commission are yet to be agreed and implemented, Norman Lamb MP, Minister of State at the Department of Health has stated that proposals, such as capping the individual's contribution to care costs, must be introduced.

Summary of Care and Support proposals

The following principles underpin the government's approach to designing a reformed care and support system that promotes the wellbeing of those who use services and carers.

- **Health, wellbeing, independence and rights** of individuals must be at the heart of care and support; timely and effective interventions help to ensure a good quality of life for longer.
- People must be treated with **dignity and respect**, and be safe from abuse and neglect; everybody must work to make this happen.

- The goal of personalisation is achieved when a person has real **choice and control** over the care and support they need to achieve their goals, to live a fulfilling life, and to be connected with society.
- **Skills, resources and networks** in every community need to be harnessed and strengthened to support people to live well, and to contribute to their communities where they can and wish to.
- **Carers must be recognised** for their contribution to society as vital partners in care, and be supported to reach their full potential and lead the lives they want.
- A caring, skilled and **valued workforce** delivers quality care and support in partnership with individuals, families and communities.

Alongside these principles are priority areas for reforming how social care is provided. They include:

- The introduction of a national minimum eligibility threshold. Once implemented, local authorities will be free to set their eligibility threshold at a more generous level, but will not be able to tighten beyond the new national minimum threshold. These changes will mean that people's entitlements to care and support will be much clearer and fairer, reducing the variations in access that currently exist between local authorities.
- A national minimum eligibility threshold for support for carers and a right to an assessment, just as for people who use services.
- As part of a shift to a more preventive approach to care and support, the Government will include a duty on local authorities to commission and provide services that promote prevention and aid recovery. In addition to re-ablement, this would include development of services with the voluntary sector that reduce social isolation and persistent loneliness, particularly in later life, which can have a huge impact on people's health and wellbeing.
- The safeguarding of adults at risk will be placed on a statutory footing by mandating the establishment of safeguarding boards in every area, convened by councils and with compulsory membership from the NHS and the police. Councils would be placed under a duty to make enquiries where they reasonably suspect that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of abuse or neglect. Councils will also be consulted on giving them the power to gain access to a person at risk where they would otherwise not be able to carry out a safeguarding enquiry. Safeguarding boards would also be under a duty to carry out "safeguarding adult reviews" where an adult in need dies following abuse or neglect.
- Streamlining of the assessment process, making it easier to understand, and encouraging more users and carers to self-assess.
- A duty for councils to provide good information systems so that people are able to make informed choices about meeting care needs and the options open to them for support.

- Whilst targets for Personal Budgets and Direct Payments have been reduced, there is still an expectation that we will be working to a time when those requiring funding to meet care needs have a personal budget, as the means by which care needs will be met.

Other areas include:

- Care assessments could be contracted out to provide clients with choice over who carries them out. Caring for the Future includes powers for councils to delegate assessment and care management - and other functions - to a third party, though with relevant statutory duties staying with the council.
- Every council to appoint principal social workers
- A duty on councils to develop and maintain a diverse range of providers in their areas.
- The development of "quality profiles" for all regulated care providers, including information on compliance with essential standards, performance against quality standards developed by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence and families' views, drawn from "high-quality" consumer ratings sites.
- Consultation on whether there should be greater financial oversight of larger providers to ensure continuity of care in the event of their collapse.
- As previously announced, minimum training standards and a code of conduct will be developed for adult social care workers by September 2012.

Responses from the Local Government Association (LGA) and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)

Whilst there is general agreement that such reforms are needed the response can be summarised as follows:

- The White Paper does not address realities of local government funding and the real costs of care leading to possible failure of reforms. Social care funding in real terms has been falling for sometime.
- The focus on prevention is welcome but it needs investment which is not forthcoming. Development of prevention initiatives cannot be carried out in isolation and must involve all stakeholders and the wider community
- Whilst we now have the Dilnot Report, we also had a similar commission 13 years ago with no changes resulting.

Recent developments and reforms with in Portsmouth in line with Caring for the Future:

- The development of specialist housing for older people.

This priority in the White Paper has been something that Portsmouth Adult Social Care has been focussed on for some time. Our Joint Accommodation Strategy has seen the development of Extra Care Housing and new residential care services for people with Dementia.

- Integrated Commissioning Unit (ICU)

This has helped to bring together the commissioning intentions of both Health and the City Council and now works in conjunction with the new Clinical Commissioning Group.

- Integrated services

In line with government intentions to see greater integration of services between health and social care, we now have integrated services for Rehabilitation, Mental Health and Substance Misuse, Continuing Health Care and an agreement to integrate Learning Disability services. In addition we are working with partners in Solent Health Care and with local GP's on a community pilot that will bring together each service to improve responses to individual client health and social care needs.

- The introduction of 'named workers' that will give clients quicker response times for reassessment.
- Development of on-line information services (Social Care Info Portsmouth).
- An increase in the number of people now using Direct Payments

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Signed by: