

ADULT SOCIAL CARE BUDGET RATIONALE

Delaying and reducing the need for care and support

The challenges arising from the change in demographics have been subject to much debate in recent years, particularly in relation to social care and health services. As life expectancy improves, with continued success from life prolonging health interventions, there has been a significant impact on the number of people that require social care support. The Care Act 2014 established new statutory requirements on Councils, essentially the new Duty to promote individual Wellbeing, and the Duty to prevent the need for care and support, which, if developed and used appropriately, can assist councils to manage the current and future increased demand for care and support.

The way that this will be done in Darlington is described in this overview document. This sets the scene for budget proposals over the next four years, providing a rationale for the changes proposed, with a vision for how the whole care and support system can work to not only prevent the need for formal support, but importantly will maximise an individual's potential by improving their independence and what they are able to do for themselves. Individuals will be encouraged and supported to take control of their lives, through access to a range of health and care information, in a timely, cost effective and outcomes focused way.

The reduction in reliance on residential care settings is paramount to a sustainable future care model, which can be realised through a stronger emphasis on prevention and wellbeing, and care in an individual's own home.

Developing a robust Preventative approach

People in Darlington will be supported to stay healthy, well and safe from harm through accessible universal and targeted prevention and early help support. This will enable independence and will divert those at risk of becoming vulnerable due to health and care needs away from dependence on formal care systems.

This will be through:

- Enabling individuals to access high quality information and advice, at the first point of contact, which allows them to know what support networks are available in local communities, and/or know how to access more specialist support and advice relating to specific conditions, such as Alzheimer's, Stroke etc
- An online self-screening tool, which allows an individual to check if they may be eligible for care and support services. Where they are screened as not meeting the criteria for support, they will be given information and advice, as above, either via the website and/or by contacting the council
- Access to the voluntary sector, community groups, volunteering, befriending schemes and other locality based network
- Use of assistive technology, which is built around the Home Alarm Service, and includes mobile response
- Maximising the economic growth in the town, by enabling people to access employment opportunities and apprenticeships

Individuals will be able to access information and advice to help them manage their care needs. They will know what support networks are available to them locally, what

they are entitled to, and who to contact when they need help.

Targeted Reablement Support

Earlier diagnosis, intervention and access to effective reablement support is known to reduce an individual's reliance on long term services, and in many cases, this can result in no ongoing support needs.

Services will be available for individuals at risk of such deterioration, to maximise their independence and to minimise decline, thus reducing dependency on formal care services. Through this targeted social care and health support, individuals will be diverted away from the formal care system, and thus reduce the risk of further dependency on long term support.

Where an individual is thought to be at risk of developing a long term care need, they will receive a period of reablement and/or intermediate care assessment and support, which will generally last no longer than 6 weeks (standard intermediate care timescales).

During this period of reablement assessment will be ongoing and integral to the service, to monitor progress, and prepare the individual to transition back to full independent living. This then allows an individual to be assessed for their potential capacity to be independent when they are at their optimum point, using an asset based approach as opposed to a deficit based approach. This is particularly important following a period in hospital, as it gives an individual time to regain the skills that were potentially lost either due to the illness, or to prolonged hospitalisation.

For those fully enabled back to their best/previous level of independence, and have no further ongoing care needs, they will be discharged from the reablement service.

Where an individual is felt to have ongoing care needs, a Care Act assessment will be completed to fully determine the level of need. This will be done at the point whereby that individual is deemed to be close to the optimum level of independence. This will ensure that their needs are assessed and identified in a way that continues to build on their achievements, and doesn't result in them becoming more dependent on the care they receive.

Specialist Services

If an individual has ongoing care needs services will be provided following a full Care Act Assessment using National Eligibility Criteria to ascertain the level of need. Individuals will have choice and control, though Personal Budgets, and will be encouraged and supported to utilise direct payments.

An individual's needs will be met by diverse service provision being available, with a market of high quality service providers, ensuring that people have a positive experience of care and support.

Needs will be identified through the Care Act assessment, with the cost of meeting these being identified through the Personal Budget. Direct Payments will be encouraged as the preferred mechanism for meeting needs and achieving outcomes.

Carers will be supported in their caring roles and helped to maintain their quality of life, through carer assessments, information, advice and services were eligible.

Safeguarding people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and protecting from avoidable harm

Risk is no longer an excuse to limit people's freedom; however, there are sensible safeguards against the risk of abuse or neglect. This work is overseen by the statutory Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board, which is multi agency and includes representatives from statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

Where there are concerns regarding an individual's safety and wellbeing, whether emotional, physical, neglect or financial, mechanisms will be in place to screen the level of risk, and to take appropriate action. Safeguarding investigations will be completed with the individual at the centre of it, in a transparent way that takes account of their wishes, and ability to make decisions. Where an individual is unable to make those decisions, an advocate will be available if required.