

Committee/Meeting: Cabinet	Date: 7 th April 2010	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 140/090
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive		Title: End of Life Care – responses to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Working Group	
Originating officer(s) Afazul Hoque, Scrutiny Policy Manager		Wards Affected: All	

Lead Member	Deputy Leader and Lead Member Adult Health & Well Being
Community Plan Theme	A Healthy Community
Strategic Priority	Improve access to and experience of local health services

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report submits the report and action plan in response to the Health Scrutiny Panel Working Group on End of Life Care.

2. **DECISIONS REQUIRED**

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Consider the report of the Health Scrutiny Panel Working Group on End of Life Care as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Agree the response to the recommendations from the Health Scrutiny Panel Working Group on End of Life Care attached at Appendix 2.

3. **REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 3.1 It is consistent with the Constitution and the statutory framework for Cabinet to provide a response.
- 3.2 In responding to the recommendations this report outlines how the issues raised will be taken forward by the Council and NHS Tower Hamlets.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 In responding to the recommendations full consideration has been given on how the recommendations can be incorporated to existing and future work streams. Any alternative response to the recommendations will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of their recommendation tracking report every six months.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Health Scrutiny Panel established the End of life Care review in October 2008 and undertook its work over six months. Chaired by Councillor Stephanie Eaton, Scrutiny Lead for Healthy Communities, the key aim of the review was to look at how social care provision of end of life services meets the needs of local people and examine the co-ordination of health and social care at end of life and identify solutions to the barriers faced by local people in accessing end of life care. To complete their investigation the Working Group considered the following:
1. Scrutinised and contributed to the Tower Hamlets Delivering Choice Programme
 2. Investigated the barriers to choice and equity of access to social care provision of end of life care services amongst equalities groups.
 3. Assessed the effectiveness of co-ordination of health and social care in end of life care services.
 4. Investigated the needs of carers of people at end of life.
 5. Examined the role of the voluntary and community sector in end of life care provision.
 6. Identified improvements to the commissioning process as a lever to improving end of life care provision.
 7. Considered ways to improve the availability of information on services for patients, carers and professionals.
- 5.2 The review included a visit to the Royal London Hospital Chaplaincy to which members of the Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum were also invited. The visit highlighted the faith related needs around end of life care and in particular the immediate period following death. The working group also visited the Older Peoples Reference Group to discuss the review objectives and emerging findings, the subject was very emotive and Members felt that the difficulties of the discussion within the group in many ways reflect the wider challenges around making talking about death and dying more acceptable in order to improve end of life care and the need for professionals to be highly skilled in managing these discussions.
- 5.3 The working group heard from Lyn Middleton, Chief Executive of the Carers Centre Tower Hamlets on the Care-Plus Tower Hamlets project and the services the Centre provides to carers more generally. John Roog (Service Head Older People and Homelessness) presented on the points in a person's end of life care where social care interacts with

health services. These informed Members on the conflicting issues surrounding end of life care.

- 5.4 This review specifically chose not to consider end of life care provision for children and young people due to the sensitivity of this issue. However, as part of the monitoring of this report it would be useful for the Health Scrutiny Panel to undertake a small piece of work to identify issues for young carers of people who may be at the end of their life.
- 5.5 Producing a report and agreeing an action plan is only part of the role of Overview and Scrutiny. An essential task is to monitor the progress in implementing the recommendations. This allows Overview and Scrutiny to demonstrate the value of its work in improving services and consider whether the anticipated benefits are realised. To achieve this, the Committee will consider six monthly updates on the recommendations.

7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 7.1 This report describes the action plan in response to the Health Scrutiny Panel Working Group on End of Life Care.
- 7.2 There are no specific financial implications emanating from this report however, the report recommends the continuation of the Care-Plus project for a minimum of another two years which is commissioned by both NHS Tower Hamlets and the Council. If the Council agrees further action in response to this recommendation and other recommendations in the report then officers will be obliged to seek the appropriate financial approval before further financial commitments are made.

8. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 8.1 The Council is required by section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions. It is consistent with the Constitution and the statutory framework for Cabinet to provide a response.
- 8.2 The report contains recommendations which are capable of being carried out within the Council's statutory functions. The Council's functions permit the provision of a range of adult social care, including: (a) residential accommodation needed by reason of age, illness or disability (National Assistance Act 1948 (NAA), s.21); (b) a social work service and advice and support at home for disabled people (NAA, s.29); (c) non-residential services including practical assistance,

recreation, travel, meals etc for disabled people (Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, s.2); (d) promoting the welfare of old people through the provision of meals, recreation, travel, wardens etc (Health Services and Public Health Act 1968, s.45); and (e) prevention, care and after-care services (National Health Service Act 2006, Schedule 20). If Cabinet supported the recommendations, it would be for officers to ensure that any action is carried out lawfully.

9. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The Scrutiny Working has made a number of recommendations to improve services for specific equalities groups in the borough. These are outlined in recommendations 2 and 8. It is also proposing to increase discussion in the community around end of life care issues.

10. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 10.1 There are no direct implications.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct risk management implications.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no direct implications.

13. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 13.1 The recommendations of this review can have a positive impact on the long-term budget of health and social care through reduced hospital stay and unplanned hospital admissions and deaths in hospitals.

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Report of Health Scrutiny Panel Working Group on End of Life Care

Appendix 2 – Action Plan

**Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)
List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**

**Brief description of
“background papers”**

**Name and telephone number of
holder
and address where open to
inspection.**

None

N/A