

Adult Social Care: How are we doing?

The “Local Account”
of Adult Social Care
in Tower Hamlets

2018



Adult social care in Tower Hamlets helps and supports people who are disabled, ill, frail, elderly or vulnerable for another reason. This report tells you about adult social care over the last year and our plans for the future.

Adult Social Care Services
live life your way

Foreword from the Director of Adult Social Care



Welcome to the seventh edition of our “Local Account” magazine for adult social care. In this edition we tell you about what we have done in the last year, what you have said about the services and advice we provide, and our plans for the future. Our focus over the last year has been on helping people to be as well and as independent as possible, and giving people the support they need to remain living in their local communities if required. We

have set out our plans for the future and you will see that despite the ongoing challenges we face, there is a lot of great work going on.

As our population grows and ages, so too does the demand for social care. We know that if we are not thinking and working differently, then the demand for care services will soon overtake the money available to deliver them. These are serious challenges and we want to work in partnership with you – whether as a user of social care, a carer or resident of Tower Hamlets – to overcome these. We have put an emphasis on ‘co-production’ and we want this to play a key role in how we work in the future. Co-production is about developing more equal partnerships between people who use services, carers and professionals. In the past year we have co-produced a number of new strategies which you can read more about in this magazine. These strategies have been developed with the adult social care service users who use them and the professionals involved in delivering them. In future we would like to go even further, making co-decisions on the allocations of resources, co-delivery of services such as including the role of volunteers in providing services, and co-evaluations of the service.

We will continue to work to prevent poor health in our communities, to reduce the impact of disabilities and long term health conditions and to delay the need for social care by keeping people well and independent. We will also continue to give care and support to people who need it, and make sure that support is of the highest possible standard.

Please do feel free to contact us about anything that you read here in the Local Account or if you would like to be involved in future conversations about adult social care.

Denise Radley, *Corporate Director, Health, Adult & Community Services*

healthwatch

Tower Hamlets

Where and who we live with very much defines who we are and our life choices.

In Tower Hamlets we live in a unique area, full of life and vibrancy, but for certain sections of our community, life is not always the way we would wish it to be. We have a duty of care to the older and the less able or fortunate. In fact we have a duty to all our neighbours to ensure that we are getting the best outcomes that our efforts will allow.

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets collects local people's views of social and health care services. We make sure they are heard by managers and decision makers to change things for the better. However most people don't know how to make things better, because nobody has worked with them to develop their skills to understand what better services might look like. One of the most important messages of this report is **EMPOWERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY**. We must start to ask ourselves, what do we want from these services that we pay for and use? There are some very innovative and challenging ideas in this report about future ambitions for first class services. We are part of making that happen.

All it takes is for you to tell us, in anyway way you like, what you think of the adult services provided by the council and we will ensure that the message is received. We will tell you when it has been heard, and of course when it has not, and the impact it has had. Tower Hamlets Adult social care are really interested in developing services together. Your engagement and involvement is the key to better services so please use these pathways to help ensure good care services for all.

David Burbidge, *Chair, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets*

Adult Social Care in Tower Hamlets

Adult Social Care is part of the Health, Adults and Community Services Directorate at Tower Hamlets Council.

What Statutory Responsibilities do we have?

LBTH Adult Social Care has a statutory responsibility for:

- assessing your needs
- planning your support
- arranging your services, where appropriate
- Providing community care services for adults living in Kent who qualify for social care support.

What is our purpose?

Our principal purpose is to work with people who need care and support and who may need any of the services we arrange or provide. We do this by working with people to understand their personal needs, helping them to build on their strengths and abilities wherever possible. We always aim to promote people's independence and wellbeing, helping them to achieve outcomes that are important to them.

Who do we support?

LBTH Adult Social Care supports:

- older people
- adults with physical disabilities
- adults with sensory disabilities including dual sensory impairment and autism
- adults with learning disabilities and disabled children
- adults with mental health issues
- moving from children's services to adult services
- adults who give voluntary care to family members or friends.

What is our aim?

Our aim is to make sure Tower Hamlets population of older people, people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities and people with mental health issues live healthy, fulfilled, independent lives and that people feel socially and economically included in the community.

We're also aiming to drive, promote and support transformational change through commissioning high quality, cost effective, outcome based social care services to ensure that the right level of support is provided at the right time, right place and at the right cost for vulnerable adults, their families and carers in Tower Hamlets.

Services funded by Adult Social Care include:



- Information and advice



- Activities such as lunch clubs and LinkAge Plus Centres



- Equipment to help with day-to-day tasks



- Short term support for people coming out of hospital



- Home care



- Services to give carers a break



- Residential and nursing care



- Sheltered or supported accommodation



- Help to find work

Adult Social Care in Numbers

In 2016-17, we received **3611¹** requests for new support. This marks a 10% increase from the 3273 requests we received in 2015/16

1204



people who contacted us did not meet the criteria for long term support, and were instead helped to find the type of support they needed, for example employment and benefits support. This compares to **874** in 2015/16



1173²

people were directed to other helpful activities in their local area after contacting us, compared to **1315³** in 2015/16

5617



people received one-off support (e.g. OT and Assistive Technology equipment) compared to **5265** in 2015/16

2941



people started to receive an ongoing service in 2016/17, compared to **3384** in 2015/16

1773

carers received support in 2016/17, compared to **841** in 2015/16. This included direct payments, respite care, and information, advice and other universal services such as benefits support



¹ Short and Long Term Support

² This includes 428 people accessing Meals services, 734 accessing day services, 5 people accessing therapeutic services, and 6 people accessing transport services in 2016/17

³ This includes 518 people accessing Meals services, 787 accessing day services, 4 people accessing therapeutic services, and 6 people accessing transport services in 2015/16

3719

Adults in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets received support from adult social care services in 2016/17



1520

people received home care support to help them stay living at home

60%

of adult social care users in Tower Hamlets were aged over 65

40%

of adult social care users in Tower Hamlets are aged between 18-64



765

people received short term Reablement services to help them regain their independence after a period of ill health, compared to 687 in 2015/16. 114 people aged 65 years or over received short-term Reablement services to regain their independence 2016/17. 78% remained independent after 90 days

778

778 people lived in a care home during 2016-2017. This is 21% of the people using our services



24%

of service users received community based social care services through a Direct Payment, an increase from 21% in 2015-16



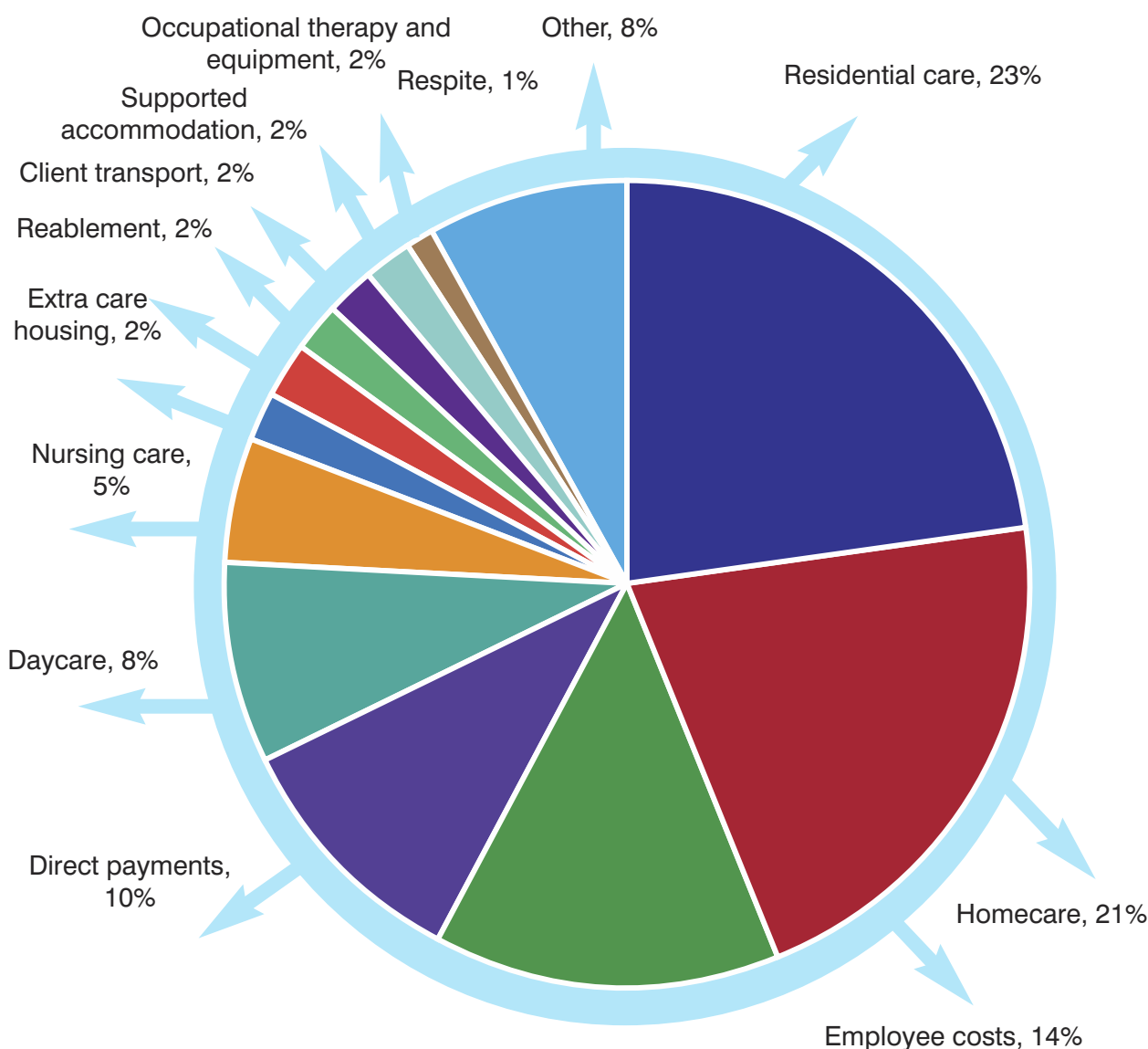
1773

people who look after their friends and family got support in their own right in 2016/17

- 154 carers received Direct Payments to buy their own support
- 289 carers benefitted from respite
- 1287 carers in the borough received information and advice

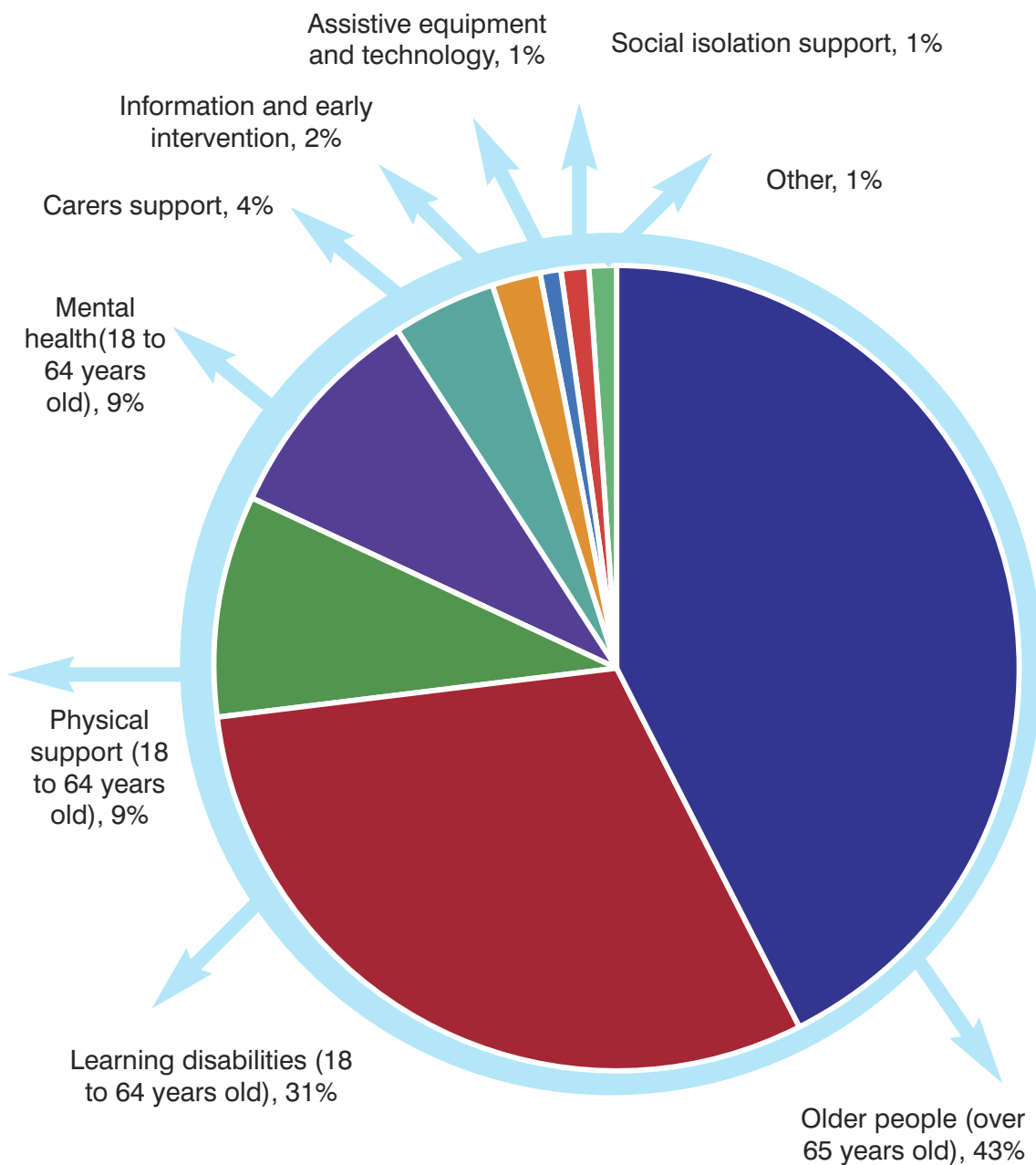
What we spent last year

- The gross expenditure for adult social care was £116 million in 2016/17. This accounts for approximately one third of the council's general expenditure.
- In 2016/17 adult social care received some additional money through the Better Care Fund and the Adult Social Care Council Tax Precept, however this funding is still not sufficient to meet the future needs of our residents, which presents a risk to our ability to provide quality services to those who need them. The government is launching another major review of adult social care funding in 2018/19.
- The chart below demonstrates what services were commissioned and provided in 2016/17. The main areas of expenditure were residential care, homecare, social work staffing and direct payments.



What we spent last year

- The graph below demonstrates what proportion of expenditure related to each service area. The main service areas of expenditure were for older people, people with learning disabilities, physical support and mental health.



Working more closely with the NHS

Over the last year we have worked more closely with the NHS. By doing this, we are able to provide a better service to people, and more effectively meet the needs of our ageing population.

Tower Hamlets council and our NHS partners want to have a single system of health and social care services in the borough by 2020. This means we will plan for the future together, pay for services together, and manage services together. We want to work towards common goals, such as relieving pressure on the hospital system and supporting people in the community wherever possible. Our main aim is for people to get excellent, well-coordinated care, provided in the most appropriate setting. We want people to feel empowered and listened to, and supported to achieve their goals.

Tower Hamlets Together

Tower Hamlets Together is a group made up of the council and local NHS services. It is this group that has driven the work to join up health and social care over the last year.

Tower Hamlets Together was awarded 'Vanguard' status by NHS England. This means the programme receives support from NHS England and extra funding to develop new models of care that

Facts and Figures

- For every 100,000 of the population, 6.9 people experienced a delayed transfer of care from hospital due to adult social care. This is better than the England average of 14.9.
- We have focused part of our Better Care Fund spending on reducing the number of people who experience a delay being discharged from the hospital. For example, we funded Age UK to provide a 'Take Home and Settle' service at the Royal London Hospital. Staff offer practical and emotional support and assistance to enable older people to leave hospital and return home. The scheme operates 7 days a week, and is available to patients aged 50+ who are registered with a GP within the borough, prioritising those who live alone, are socially isolated, or at risk of going back to hospital.

other parts of the country can then learn from. Tower Hamlets Together also runs Community Health Services in the borough (such as District Nursing).

The Better Care Fund

We have a budget known as the 'Better Care Fund' (BCF) that we share with the NHS to enable us to work better together. In 2017/18 the budget was £45 million, compared with £21.4 million the year before. As a result of this, social workers are now available in hospitals at weekends; enabling people who need support from social care to leave hospital and return home without any delays. Our Community Equipment Service is also now open weekends, so people can get equipment (e.g. equipment to help with bathing or getting dressed) without having to wait. Over the past year we have also used the BCF to pay for a range of programmes and services designed to help keep Tower Hamlets residents healthy and independent for as long as possible, including:

- Dementia Cafes to provide advice and peer support to people affected by dementia;
- Training for staff in care homes to prevent unnecessary falls and injuries;
- Short-term Reablement Services to help people regain the skills necessary for daily living following ill-health or disability;
- Adapting the homes of people with disabilities to enable them to continue living there;
- Training in the use of assistive technology.



The Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board is a place where senior health and social care professionals come together to try and improve the health and wellbeing of local residents. The board has a key role in helping health and social care services work more closely together.

Over the last year, the Health and Wellbeing Board has launched a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The strategy sets out what their priorities are over the coming years to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Tower Hamlets. 'These 5 priority areas are⁴:

Communities driving change	This means empowering people to take action on health issues in their local area
Creating a healthier place	This means making housing and where we live a healthier place to be
Employment and health	This means helping more people into work in a healthy environment
Children's weight and nutrition	This means tackling childhood obesity and tooth decay
Developing an integrated system	This means health and social care working closely together

Our approach:

- We will develop a "single point of access" for people with health and social care needs, as we know the current system can be confusing
- We will have more health and social care services that are located in the same building
- Health and social care services will put more of their money together into a joint pot, and use this to fund and run services

⁴ The full Health and Wellbeing Strategy: Towards a Healthier Tower Hamlets (2017-20) can be read by following this link: http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Public-Health/Health_Wellbeing_Strategy.pdf

The way we work

Adult social care staff carry out assessments to establish if and how people and their carers might need to be supported, guided by a law introduced in 2014 called the 'Care Act'. People who meet a threshold set by the government are legally eligible for support from us.

The Care Act brought in changes that we have continued to build on over the last year. Our vision is for people to have an assessment that is based around their individual needs and focusses on their strengths as well as the things they need help with. This means our social workers work in partnership with each person and those around them to enable the individual to make decisions about their daily lifestyle, and how to manage their health and wellbeing.

Some adult social care service users have told us that there can be inconsistencies in how staff conduct assessments, and that it can sometimes feel like a fight to get support. In a recent survey 56% of service users told us that their social care assessments help them to think about what they can do for themselves and 47% said it helps them to think about how friends and family can help. This is an improvement from previous years however we know there is more work to be done to improve these scores.

In response to this feedback we have put a renewed emphasis on staff training to ensure that:

- There is greater consistency in assessment practice;
- Each person is treated as an individual;
- People are supported to take action to manage their health and wellbeing early, in order to prevent any issues getting worse in future;
- People are supported to help themselves as much as possible, with the help of their friends, families and communities.



In addition, we have recently introduced 'self-assessments', meaning that people can assess their own needs from the comfort of their own home. We will use the information provided via the 'self-assessment' to work out whether we are able to offer you services.

Moving from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care Services

We have heard from Tower Hamlets residents that it can be difficult when a child receiving support from children's social care becomes an adult and transitions to adult social care. This year, we have tried to improve how we manage this transition. We have introduced a new 'Transition Panel' where staff and others come together to plan for potentially difficult or complicated cases. We have trained our staff across Children and Adult Services to better manage this issue.

Adult Social Care Improvement Board

In February 2017 we set up an Adult Social Care Improvement Board, to improve the quality of our work and drive-up performance standards. For example, some people told us that they were waiting too long for an assessment or to access services like Reablement (a short-term programme of support designed to help people get back on their feet after a period of ill health). We have addressed this issue through the board over the last year and changed policies and procedures to ensure that unnecessary delays are avoided. For example, where possible, the longest a person will have to wait to be assessed by the Reablement Service is seven days.

Our approach:

- We will further develop how assessments are carried out in adult social care, and align our services with local health services
- We will further develop the support available to carers
- We will review more people's care and support packages to make sure they are getting the support they need
- We will further improve our support to those moving to adult social care from children's social care

Doing more to prevent ill health

Facts and Figures

- 4% of older people received short-term support to get back on their feet after a stay in hospital, above the England average.
- 78% of older people who were discharged from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation were still living at home after 91 days. This is slightly below the England average of 82%.
- 95% of people who received short-term support went on to receive less or no ongoing support – this is greater than the England average of 77%.
- Men in Tower Hamlets have the lowest healthy life expectancy⁵ in the country at 54 years, compared to 63 nationally.
- Women are expected to have 57 years of good health compared with 64.

Working in partnership with the NHS, we are committed to helping people to stay as well as possible, for as long as possible. Over the last year, this has continued to be one of our main goals.

Improving information and advice

Getting the right advice at an early stage can help people stay well. Over the last year, we have revamped our website and we have directed more people to Local Link and the Carers Centre for any questions they have about social care (their contact details are on the back page of this magazine). We are pleased that people who use adult social care continue to report that they are finding it easier to find information and advice. However, in a recent survey only 55% of service users told us they were happy with the quality of the information and advice they receive from the council, down from 60% the previous year.

Adult social care users have told us that our information is still not always easy to understand. We also know that many social care users do not use the internet, meaning we can't rely on this as a way of getting information out to people. So we know we have more work to do. We are developing a new Information and Advice Strategy to set out the direction for how adult social care will make available and influence the provision of information and advice for people with and without support needs, their families and professionals.

⁵ Healthy life expectancy is the number of years a person can expect to live in good health.

Linking people up to activities in their communities

Both the council and the NHS have been trying to link people up more with activities in their communities, knowing that this can improve their health and that people often don't know about what is available in their local area. We launched our online 'Community Catalogue' this year, which along with the online Idea Store directory, sets out a lot of different services and activities that people can access.

In addition, a growing number of GP surgeries in Tower Hamlets started offering 'social prescribing' in 2017. Social Prescribing is when a person visiting a GP's surgery is prescribed activities run by voluntary and community groups, such as sports, gardening or cookery.

“[Staff] were always friendly, helpful, and enabled me to get better. They were a great source of support through a difficult period.”

Reablement

“The Reablement team help you get back on your feet, they're not there to do it for you... slowly but surely each day you're supported do a little bit more for yourself... they're there to help me to do it for myself.”

Reablement helps people regain their independence after a period of ill health. The waiting list for

Reablement can be long, so this year we have worked hard to address this.

As a result there has been a significant reduction in waiting times for people trying to access this service, but our aim is that in 2018 the longest a person will have to wait to be assessed in the Reablement Service is seven days.

Discharging people from hospital

In 2016 we trialled a new way of discharging older people from hospital if they needed social care. This means a person is discharged home as soon as they are healthy and it is safe for them to do so, and then an assessment of their care and support needs is carried out at home. The benefit of this is that people do not have to wait on a hospital ward before they are allowed to go home.



Through this pilot it was found that the average length of stay in hospital went down and that there was a dramatic fall in the number of patients ending up needing long-term care. For example, during the trial, just 1% of patients who were discharged under the new approach ended up moving into a care home, compared with an estimated 50% of patients who were discharged under the old method. As a result of this success, 'discharge to assess' has now been adopted as standard practice in the borough.

Combatting loneliness and social isolation

In a recent survey, 28% of adult social care users in Tower Hamlets said they did not have enough social contact⁶, up from 26% the previous year. The council is committed to prioritising action to address loneliness and social isolation amongst the borough's residents. A new approach is being developed in partnership with a range of different organisations that will inform our priorities going forward.

Mr B is 35 and partially sighted and volunteers 6 hours a week with a befriending service. Before he joined, he was very shy and quiet. He visits vulnerable people in their homes and advises them on any support they may benefit from. He is able to support people at home to use a tablet and provides advice on ways to save on their energy bills. His confidence has grown since joining the befriending service.

Our approach:

- We will continue to help people to stay as well as possible, for as long as possible. This is one of the main aims of health and social care services.

⁶ 2016-17 Adult Social Care Service User Survey.

Helping people to be as independent as possible

Helping people to be independent continues to be one of our main aims as it has real benefits for people. We were pleased that in a recent survey, 70% of adult social care users said that care and support helps them be as independent as possible, however this has decreased from 78% in the previous year. We know we can do better. Some of the things we have been working on include:

Using technology

More people are using technology to help them stay safe and be independent, for example personal alarms or sensors that react if someone falls at home. We have been offering a bigger range of technology to more people, and want to continue to do this in the year ahead. In 2016/17 we provided training to 178 social care and health staff to enable them to better understand how these new technologies works.

Facts and Figures

- In 2016/17 we installed 672 pieces of technology into people's homes, approximately an increase of 8% from the previous year
- We provided training to 178 social care and health staff on using new technologies

Smart Care

For many years, it has been standard practice for people who need to be hoisted or cared for in bed at home to have two carers or care workers. However, advances in technology, equipment, and manual handling techniques mean that in many cases, a single carer can provide care safely on their own. adult social care users who have one carer rather than two

Facts and Figures

- 69% of adults with a learning disability live independently (i.e. not a care home), The England average is 76%
- 7% of adults with a learning disability are in work, an increase of two percentage points from the previous year. The England average is 6%
- 24% of adult social care users received a direct payment. This is below the England average of 28%.
- 71% of adult social care users say they have control over their daily lives. This is an increase of two percentage points from the previous year. This is below the England average of 78%.



often say they have a better relationship with their carer, and that they feel they have more dignity and privacy. For many people, it also means better comfort and positioning when sitting in their chair or wheelchair, and less danger of damage to their skin. In the last year, we have looked at almost 100 cases where an adult social care user is getting support from two carers and in a third of cases the number of carers has been reduced to one. We will continue this work going forward.

New Adult Learning Disability Strategy⁷



National estimates indicate that more than 2% of the adult population have a learning disability, which equates to almost 5,000 people in Tower Hamlets. We are determined to do everything we can to make sure that all people with a learning disability in the borough live well and enjoy a full life, with as much independence as possible. Despite the existing good work we know that there are still many things that we can do better. This is why we launched a new 'Adult Learning Disability Strategy' in 2017, setting out the

improvements we want to make to our services in the next three years. We have also started a new project that looks at how we will support people with a learning disability, who are willing and able to move from care homes outside the borough, back into the community.

⁷ The new Adult Learning Disability Strategy can be read here https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Consultation/TH_ALD_Strategy.pdf

Ageing Well Strategy⁸



We launched a new 'Ageing Well Strategy' in 2017, which is the first strategy to set out our priorities for improving the experience of people aged 50 or over in Tower Hamlets. This strategy was co-produced with the Tower Hamlets Older People's Reference Group, who are committed to remaining in the driving seat as they work to develop the action plans for this strategy.

New Carers Strategy⁹

There are over 19,000 people in Tower Hamlets who provide some form of unpaid care for a friend or family member. Carers have told us that they often do not recognise themselves as such, which means many do not access the care and support they need. Carers have also told us that they want to feel valued and recognised as an expert and equal partner in the care of their loved ones, that they struggle to be a carer and work at the same time, that they need a break from their caring role, and that they often neglect their own health and wellbeing because they are so busy looking after their loved ones.

We recognise that carers are at the heart of the borough's families and communities and we want them to be able to continue to care for family members and friends whilst being able to lead a life outside of caring. In April 2017 we launched a new three year 'Carers Strategy'. This was

Carers Dignity Charter

We have launched a new charter of standards for carers. The charter highlights how carers will be supported to continue to look after family members and friends whilst being able to lead a better quality of life outside of their caring role. The charter can be read here:

<https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Adult-care-services/CarersDignityCharter.pdf>

⁸ The new Ageing Well Strategy can be read here:

http://assets.oprg.org.uk/pdf/Ageing%20Well%20Final%20TH2017_v4.pdf

⁹ The full strategy can be read here:

<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=100142>

co-produced with professionals in health and social care, voluntary and community groups, local carer services, and local carers themselves. Over the next three years, we want:

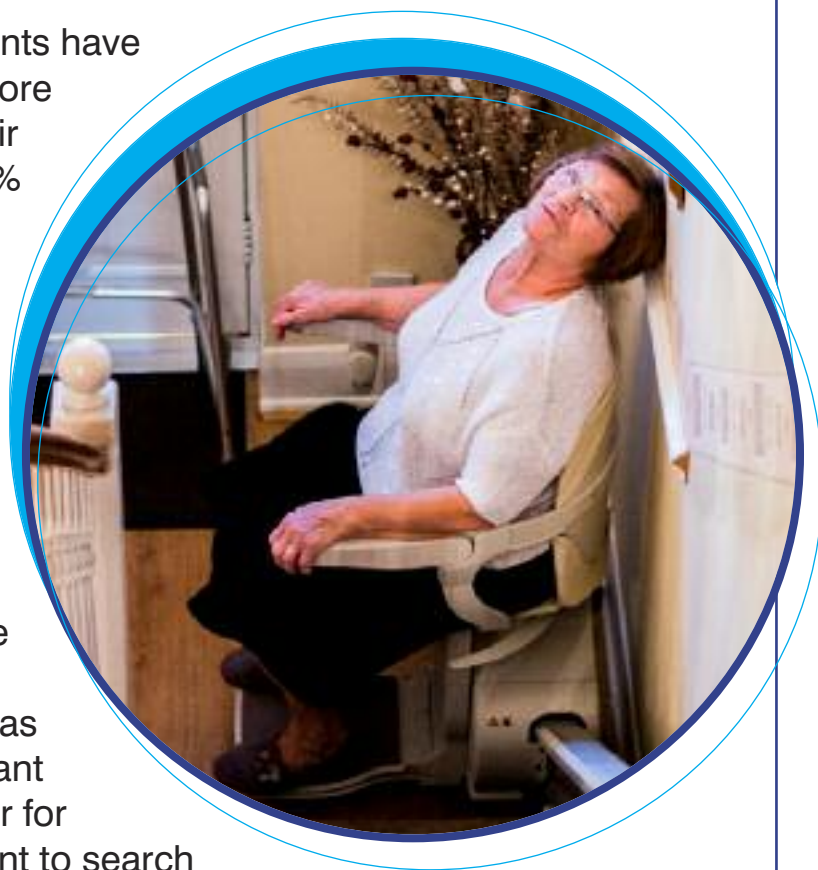
- To make sure carers are recognised as a carer;
- To make sure that carers are supported in their carer role;
- To make sure that carers feel valued and respected in their role as a carer;
- To make sure that young carers are supported as they transition from children's Services to adult services.

Miss D cares for her 65 year old sister who suffers from multiple health issues. Due to her health conditions, Miss D could not leave the house to study or work as her sister needed constant help. She was informed about a Carers Project by a friend and met with staff for advice. Miss D was signposted to the programmes that suited her needs. She has since enrolled on training to enhance her skills as a carer. She has also successfully completed a whole range of different training organised by the organisation for carers and attended the support group sessions. She has gained a lot of ideas, skills and knowledge since contacting the organisation.

Helping people have more control over their care and support

A personal budget is the amount of money that we allocate to our adult social care service users to make sure that their assessed needs are appropriately met. 82% of adult social care service users received community based social care services through this type of self-directed support in 2016/17, an increase from 74% in 2015/16. Direct Payments are a funding choice in personal budgets. You can choose to have a Direct Payment instead of letting the council arrange services for you. Direct Payments give you lots of control over your care and support. You can decide how your needs are met and buy the support that suits you best. The number of people who decided to take their personal budget as a Direct Payment from the council to purchase their own care and support increased from 21% in 2015/16 to 24% in 2016/17.

We know that Direct Payments have the power to give people more choice and control over their care. In a recent survey, 91% of people with a Direct Payment said they were satisfied¹⁰ with their care and support – slightly higher than the average result of 90%. We want to continue to encourage more people to take up the offer of Direct Payments, and so we will provide more information about how to access them. The council has launched a Personal Assistant (PA) Finder to make it easier for people with a Direct Payment to search and find a PA online. You can search our database of PAs by visiting our website.



Our approach:

- We will help more people with a learning disability or mental health issue to find work
- We will support more people with a learning disability who live in care homes outside Tower Hamlets to move back in to the borough if they are willing and able
- We will provide better information to people about Direct Payments
- We will offer a bigger range of technology to people to help them stay safe and well

¹⁰ Extremely, very or quite satisfied

Using our resources in the best possible way

Resources for adult social care are an issue across the country, as the budget we have to spend as a council is under major pressure due to cuts to government funding and increased demand for services. Inevitably this leaves both the council – in partnership with residents – with some tough decisions to make as to how we save money.

We have tried and will continue to try to save money in adult social care by:

- Helping people to be as well and independent as possible so that the demand for social care is not as high as it would be otherwise;
- Working closely with the NHS so that our resources are put to the best possible use.

Review of Adult Social Care Frontline Care Services

We have carried out a wide ranging review of our frontline adult social care teams to better align these with local health services. Our aim is to fully integrate social care and health services by March 2019. We want to secure the best possible outcomes and maximum value for residents. The proposed changes aim to put the person at the heart of health and social care to create an integrated system that is person centred and empowers people to actively maintain their health and wellbeing within the community. We will be able to draw on the different strengths of our health partners and our own adult social care services to allow people take more control over their lives through greater independence.

Facts and Figures

- Since the cuts started in 2010, the council has saved £138 million. We need to save another £58 million by 2020.
- The number of managers has gone down by 33% and the number of staff by 25% over the last five years.
- Spending on adult social care comprises 1/3 of the council's budget, but it is under huge pressure and funding is still not sufficient to meet the future needs of our residents. We need the government to agree a long term solution to this cost pressure.

Charging for Adult Social Care Services:

In a climate of restricted resources, we have updated the charging policy for adult social care. All but one other local authority in England charges people for home care and other social care services in the community using a means test and in 2016 we made the tough decision to do the same.

The adult social care charging policy has ensured that Tower Hamlets council has a more generous policy than other councils, meaning that people on very low incomes will not need

to pay anything towards the cost of care. This is in line with the

Mayor's priority to tackle poverty, and provide

protection for those on low incomes. To further support vulnerable and disabled adults, their carers and families, we do not charge carers for services that they access.



Our new charging policy was introduced in October 2017. If you are receiving care funded by the council, a member of staff will contact you to explain what the charges mean to you, and will

explain what (if anything) you will be asked to pay towards the cost of care. As part of the process, the Financial Assessments Team will also carry out a benefits check to ensure that service users are in receipt of all of the Department of Work and Pension benefits available to them.

We will conduct an evaluation of the charging policy in 2018 to review the impact it is having.



Protecting and improving the quality of care and support

Most social care users tell us they receive care that has a real and positive impact on their lives. Equally, we know that poor quality care can have devastating consequences. We are always looking to protect and improve the quality of Adult Social Care. Here are some of the issues we have looked at over the last year:

Co-produced Strategies

A key part of our vision for the future of health and social care services is that people should be empowered to exercise more control over their health and wellbeing, their care packages to remain independent wherever possible. In the last year, we have developed a number of strategies that set out our plans for the next three to five years for carers, older people, people with autism and people with a learning disability. These strategies were all co-produced, meaning they have been developed jointly with adult social care service users, carers and others (for example voluntary organisations).

Facts and Figures

- 94% of adult social care users say care and support improves their quality of life
- 88% of adult social care users say that their social care allows them to have more control over their daily life
- We received 77 complaints about adult social care last year. 40% of these were about service delays or failures.
- In 2016/17, 6 of our 26 commissioned providers were rated as 'requiring improvement' by the CQC, 18 were rated as 'good', and 2 were rated as 'outstanding'.

Home care

Whilst most people have a great experience of care workers, some people have reported problems in this area. People want consistent care workers who are flexible and are not rushed or late to appointments. We are committed to people getting a good quality service, so we are investing more money in home care and have recently signed up to Unison's Ethical Care Charter. This means that care workers can expect a decent wage and get the training and support they need to do a good job. We also regularly check on people's experience of home care so that we can address any problems that arise. We are pleased that in a recent survey, 90% of people getting home care said they were satisfied with the service they received¹¹.



Our approach:

- We will work on waiting times so that there are no unnecessary delays to getting care and support
- We will continue to monitor people's experience of home care and other services, taking action where needed

¹¹ 2016-17 Adult Social Care Service User Survey. 90% of respondents in receipt of home care were extremely, very or quite satisfied with their care and support services.

Protecting vulnerable adults from abuse

We are committed to keeping adults in Tower Hamlets safe from harm, abuse and neglect. We are pleased that Adult Social Care users have told us we are on the right track: 88% said in a recent survey that the care and support we provide helps them to feel safe, which is two percentage points higher than the previous year and higher than both London and England averages¹². Working with other local services and organisations, some of our key achievements through Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Board over the last year include:

- We have carried out 'Safeguarding Audits' which have helped us to assess the quality of our practice and identify any improvements, trends or learning needs for the future.
- Staff working in our local NHS hospitals have undertaken a number of initiatives. These include flagging all patients known to the local learning disability team; using Hospital Passports and developing easy read materials for patients.
- The Community Safety Partnership has been improving links between council services and with local partners like the Police to ensure vulnerable people are protected from extremism and terrorism. Ongoing work includes tackling hate crime, safeguarding vulnerable victims of repeated Anti-Social Behaviour offences, tackling all forms of violence against women and girls, and targeting perpetrators and support for victims of domestic abuse.
- The London Fire Brigade has a number of local initiatives (such as their 'Christmas Dinners' event) which enables them to reach out further to those who are vulnerable in the community. This provides additional opportunities for their voices to be heard and to effectively tackle the impact of social isolation.

¹² 2016-17 Tower Hamlets Adult Social Care Service User Survey

Facts and Figures

- In 2016/17, 720 safeguarding concerns were recorded in Tower Hamlets. The number of concerns has increased compared to the previous year when 467 concerns were made in Tower Hamlets. There is an increased awareness of safeguarding and this has contributed to more concerns being raised by social workers.
- 38% of investigations were about neglect, making this the largest single type of abuse - similar to the wider national picture in England.

Safeguarding Adults Review

We have a legal duty to carry out an investigation in cases where an adult in vulnerable circumstances has died or experienced significant harm or neglect. In Tower Hamlets we are currently investigating four cases of this type. On conclusion of these investigations, an action plan will be drawn up to ensure the recommendations of the findings are implemented.

Mrs Q is a 75 year old white British woman who lived alone at the time of the review. She lived in a first floor level access flat reached via a lift. Mrs Q has a relative who lives outside London and has had some contact with her. Mrs Q has an advocate who is based in the community. Having a number of health problems and hospital admissions, Mrs Q found it difficult to accept help. Events led to her being discharged from hospital without any support and Mrs Q was left alone for several days.

Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Board commissioned a safeguarding adults review to investigate the events leading to Mrs Q being left without personal care services for several days. It was evident that if there was better communication between agencies, Mrs Q would not have been left in this situation. As a result, the working practices and operational procedures of key staff and agencies involved in Mrs Q's care were reviewed with a requirement to improve communication.

Adult social care contact details:

- General questions relating to adult social care: contact Local Link on **020 7001 2175** or visit www.local-link.org.uk
- • If someone needs help from social care urgently: contact the council on **020 7364 5005** or email us on adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- If you have a safeguarding concern call safeguarding adults hotline on **020 7364 6085**. To report abuse to the police please contact the Tower Hamlets Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on 020 3276 3501 or email towerhamletsMASH@met.police.uk
- • If you care for someone else and need support: contact the Carer Centre on **020 7790 1765** or visit www.carerscentretowerhamlets.org.uk
- • If you have a complaint about a social care council service: contact the council on **0800 374 176** or email us on complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Want to learn more about what activities are in your local area?

For details of social care services, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/communitycatalogue

For details of other local activities, visit www.ideastoreonlinedirectory.org.uk

This magazine has been produced in partnership with people who use adult social care services. We would like to thank the following groups for their help in putting this together: Healthwatch Tower Hamlets, the Older People's Reference Group, the Carer Forum at the Carer Centre and Local Voices. We would also like to thank the organisations we work with who contributed to this magazine.

We welcome any comments or suggestions on this magazine. Please email us on ppci@towerhamlets.gov.uk with any feedback, or to request any further information on the issues raised.

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