

Access to Social Care

Introduction

Adult Social Care services help people exercise independence, choice and control and enjoy a positive quality of life.

What were the priorities for 2015/16?

The priorities for 2015/16 were to continue modernising in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and these key indicators -

- Social Care-related quality of life
- Clients Receiving a Social Care Review
- Social Care Clients receiving Self Directed Support
- Carers receiving needs assessment or review
- Delayed transfers of care (for social care reasons) from hospitals.

We restated the vision we are aiming for:

“A Borough where people of all ages, particularly the most vulnerable are able to lead happy, independent lives and fulfil their potential.”

We also said we wanted to move forward in 4 strategic areas -

1. Effective implementation of the Care Act 2014. This has been completed with the exception of postponement (by the government) of care accounts and the care cap.
2. Planning and delivery of integrated health and social care services with NHS Bedfordshire. The Better Care Fund Plan for 2015/16 was implemented and a new plan has now been approved for 2016/17.
3. Recruitment and retention of a skilled workforce. Improvements have been made to recruitment practices with some success but this remains an area of challenge for the whole care sector.
4. Upgrade adults social care IT system. The business case to approve significant expenditure on a new IT system is now progressing through the necessary stages.

Progress has been made against all of these priorities and a comprehensive report of achievements in 2015/16 can be found in the Local Account. This JSNA chapter is essentially an abridged version of the Local Account.

Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework

The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework is published by the Department of Health (<http://ascof.hscic.gov.uk/outcome>) and specifies outcomes in four domains that we must achieve.

- Enhancing quality of life for people with care and support needs.

- Delaying and reducing the need for care and support.
- Ensuring that people have a positive experience of care and support
- Safeguarding people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and protecting from avoidable harm.

Access to Social Care

This is available through three main routes.

Firstly, the Council commissions services from a number of local community organisations. Some of these are available on an open access basis (for example Healthwatch Signposting). Others are targeted towards specific groups and there is open access if you are in that group (for example services for people with sensory impairments and services for people with autism).

Secondly, people who appear to be in need of support are entitled to an assessment. The Council is obliged to meet eligible needs under national eligibility criteria. People who's assessment does not meet the national eligibility criteria must be offered information and advice to maintain their wellbeing and stay independent. The goal is to prevent, reduce or delay any future need to enter the care system.

Thirdly, increasing numbers of people are purchasing their own social care services without any involvement of the Council. These people are known as self-funders. Self funders are entitled to an assessment of their needs by the Council if they want one. The Council has a duty to support self-funders with, for example the provision of information and advice about services they might need and how to obtain them.

What do we know?

Information and Advice

Information is giving the facts of a situation. Advice is giving guidance on what to do in light of the facts.

Information and advice can:

- Help people live independently for longer by increasing take-up of universal services
- Reduce unnecessary contact with social services
- Increase access to lower level support preventing or delaying the need for higher cost intensive services
- Promote the use of low cost adaptations reducing accidents in the home
- Release care professionals so they can focus on critical or complex needs rather than on providing simple information and advice.

The Care Act puts a duty on local authorities to provide information and advice so that the public can:

- Access services that help prevent their care needs from becoming more serious
- Access good information to help them make informed choices about their care and support

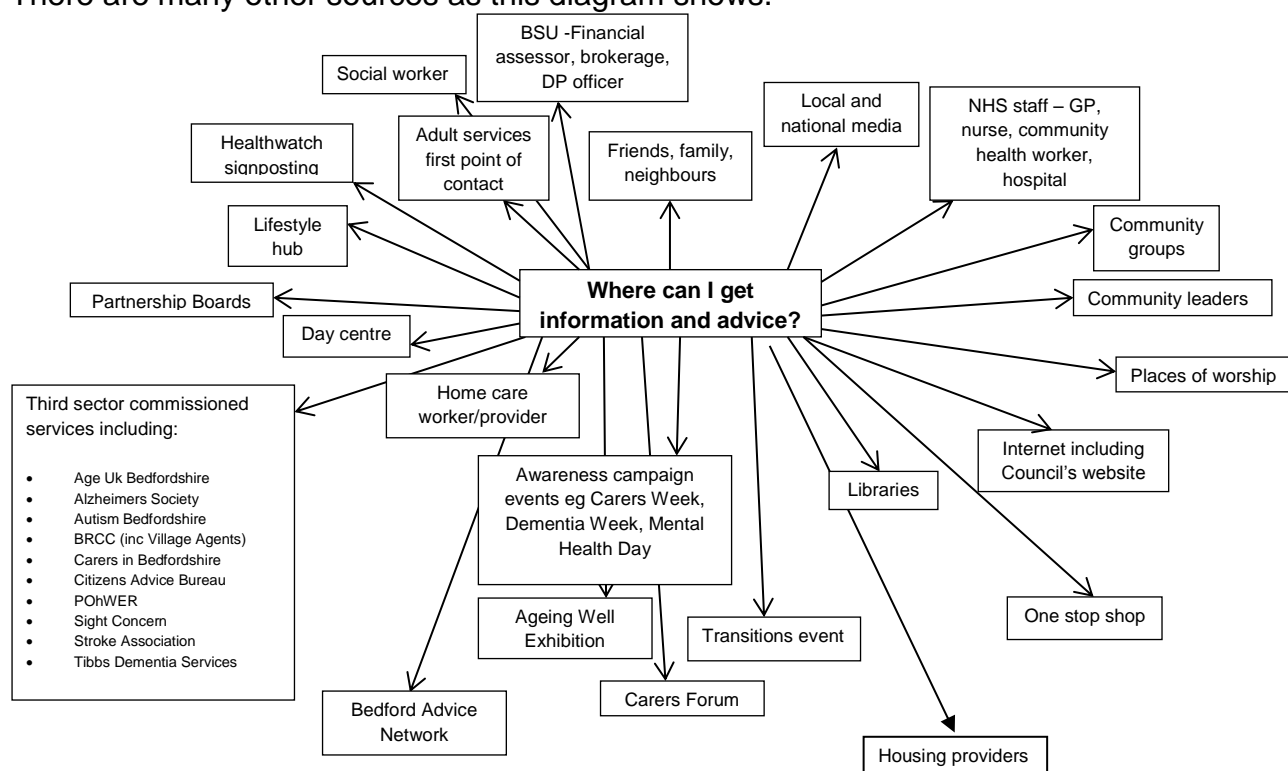
- Have a range of good care providers to choose from
- Know how to access independent financial advice
- Know how to raise concerns over the safety or wellbeing of someone with care needs

Where to get it

There are many sources of information and advice available in Bedford Borough. Local community organisations play a key role. Some of this is commissioned by the Council and some is funded from other sources. Key local providers of information and advice are:

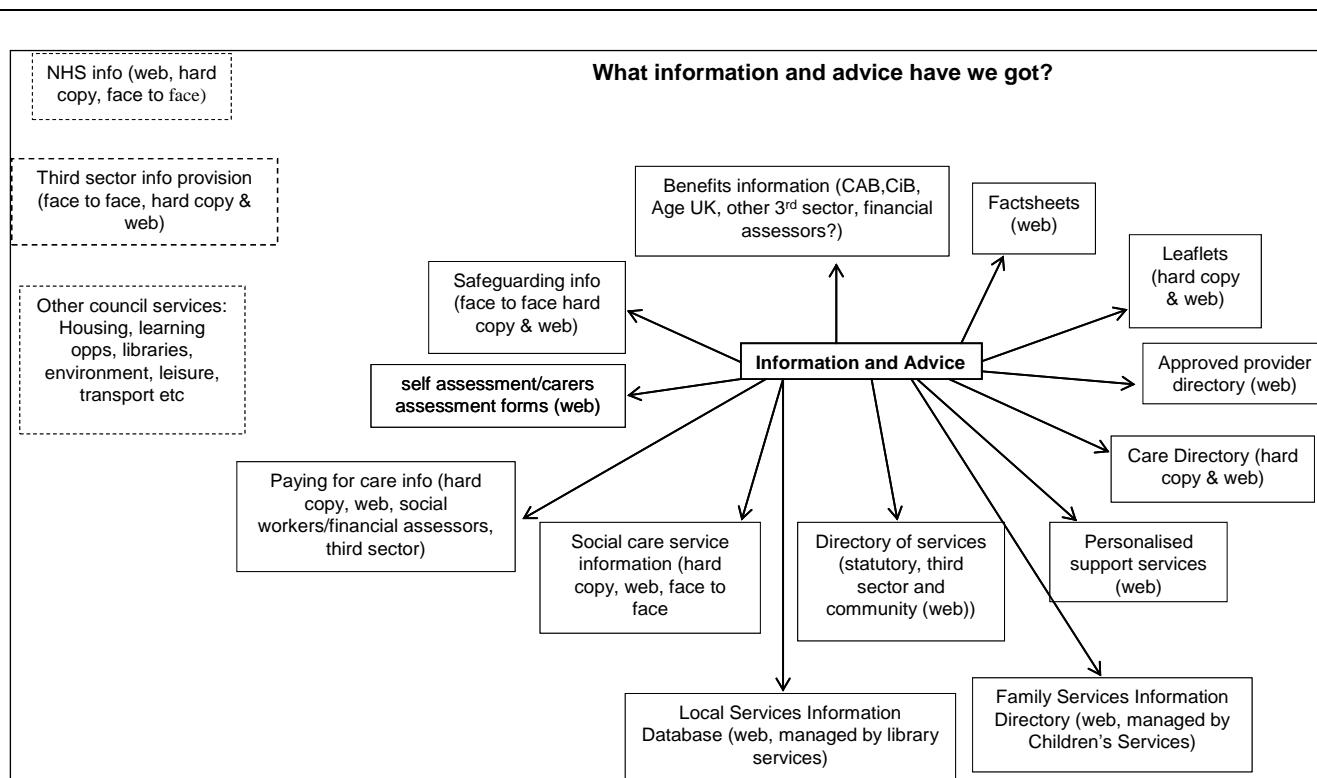
- Age UK Bedfordshire, Tel: 01234 360510
- Alzheimer's Society, Tel: 01234 327380
- Carers in Bedfordshire, Tel: 0300 111 1919
- Citizens Advice Bureau - Bedford and District, www.bedfordcab.org.uk
- Healthwatch Bedford Borough Signposting Service, Tel: 01234 866477
- MIND BLMK, Tel: 0300 330 0648
- Just Ask - Village Agents, Tel: 0800 039 1234 (Freephone)
- POHWER Advocacy Services, Tel: 0300 456 2362 (Information & Advice Centre)

There are many other sources as this diagram shows.



What sort of Information and Advice is available?

A great deal is available from all these different sources. The diagram on the next page summarises what is out there:



The Council Website

Not everybody is comfortable using the web (hence the real people and telephone numbers above) but it is a fact that increasing numbers of people turn to the web as their first source of information and advice about all sorts of things – why should social care be different?

Links from the health and social care pages of the Council website are regularly updated to reflect the information that people are looking for. There are four main headings relating to adult services:

- Adults and older people
- Help to stay at home
- Carers
- Disability and health

Each page has links to relevant information and advice such as all the service leaflets, directory of services, approved providers directory with costs of care and of course the Care Act page.

There are also links to independent websites with non-Council sources of information and advice for people who feel more comfortable with that. Why not have a look at 'Find me good care' and 'Independent Age' you might be surprised.

Helping adults and older people to live independently

The most common way of doing this is by arranging a care worker to visit and help the person with things like getting up and going to bed, keeping clean and tidy, eating and drinking properly and managing their household bills. The Council helps about 3000 adults in this way.

Re-ablement

The Reablement Team is a group of Support Workers and Co-ordinators specially trained to help people to regain independent living skills and encourage independence. They visit people in their own home for up to 6 weeks to promote rapid recovery following an episode of illness or other change in circumstances.

Community Equipment

The Community Equipment Service is jointly commissioned between Health and Social Care across Bedfordshire and Luton. The service provides a range of equipment to promote safety and independence at home, prevent admission and facilitate discharges from hospital.

Extra Care Housing

Extra Care Housing is housing with on-site care available as required. It has a different philosophy to residential care and helps people to be independent for longer.

Bedford Borough currently has five extra care housing schemes:

1. Gordon Colling House has 55 extra care units.
2. Sir William Harpur has 38 units.
3. Tavistock Court has 32 units
4. Dame Alice Court provides 39 units.
5. St Bedes provides 104 units.

A unit is a one or two bedroom flat.

Helping adults and older people to live independently

This means providing services that help people stay living in their own home and not have to move into a care home. The most common way of doing this is by arranging a care worker to visit and help the person with things like getting up and going to bed, keeping clean and tidy, eating and drinking properly and managing household bills.

Reablement

Our Reablement Team is specially trained to help people to regain independent living skills and encourage independence. They visit people in their own home for up to 6 weeks to promote rapid recovery following an episode of illness or other change in circumstances. We provide this service in partnership with the NHS. In 2014/15 486 referrals progressed to a reablement assessment, of these 277 were referred from the hospital.

Telecare

Telecare is the name for equipment that provides various 'alert' systems to promote safety and independence for people living within their own homes. People can use it to call for help or it can be set to call automatically when required. Examples include equipment to detect falls, excessive heat / smoke, seizures and 'silent' panic alarms.

Carers' Breaks (respite)

Sometime a carer and their cared-for need a break from each other. This called a short break or respite care. It can be for a few hours or several days depending on individual circumstances.

What is this telling us?

Improving Services through Consultation

Consultations take place when new strategies and plans for services are being designed. This includes partners such as service users and carers, local service providers, voluntary organisations and the NHS.

Recommendations

Modernising Adult Services remains a priority for the Council with these key indicators.

- Social Care-related quality of life
- Clients Receiving a Social Care Review
- Social Care Clients receiving Self Directed Support
- Carers receiving needs assessment or review
- Delayed transfers of care (for social care reasons) from hospitals

Integration with Health services is a government requirement by 2020. Planning for this should develop in 2017. The DOH who will need to review and approve integration plans.