

SUMMARY PAPER

The Adult Social Care Green Paper – Independence Well-being and Choice

Date: 21 March 2005



The Department of Health launched the Green Paper on Adult Social Care – Independence, Well being and Choice on 21 March 2005.

The Green Paper is a consultation paper on proposals for the future of Social Care for Adults in England. It sets out a number of proposals for achieving standards which support choice and promote independence for those adults who require Social Care. It is part of the Government's vision for the delivery of health and social care service and sits alongside the NHS Improvement Plan and Choosing Health – the Public Health White Paper. The Paper emphasises the central and strategic role of local government in partnership with others e.g. the government and the voluntary and private sectors to provide services, which are based on the users wants and needs. The Green Paper also recognises the social and demographic changes that are taking place which mean that existing arrangements will not meet the demands for social care in the future.

The Green Paper sets out the following seven outcomes that will test whether the vision is being delivered and against which experience of individuals can be measured:

- Improved health,
- Improved quality of life,
- Making a positive contribution;
- Exercise of choice and control
- Freedom from discrimination and harassment,
- Economic wellbeing
- Personal dignity

The key proposals in the Green Paper include:

a) *Improved assessments, direct payments and individual budgets*

This will include measures to increase choice by putting people at the centre of the assessment process, The extension of direct payments will be encouraged – particularly where take up is currently low or excluded through, if necessary, the use of agents. Individual budgets for adults with disabilities to be introduced (possibly by 2012) through exploration of various models and pilots. Users will be able to choose cash payments or services – it may include other budgets e.g. equipment and the budgets will be held by the local authority on behalf of the user or by their carer.

b) *The role of the Wider Community*

This will include the role of carers, how they might be supported through involvement in the assessment process and training. Extending the range of choice to users and carers and linking social care to the wider community and the well-being agenda. Greater focus will be placed on preventative services.

c) *Funding and Fair Access to Care*

No additional funding is envisaged. It is expected that overall the proposals will be cost-neutral and that the changes will be met from existing funds. It is recognised however that time is needed to manage the transition to individual budgets and greater choice so the vision is long term 10-15 years.

- d) *The Strategic and Leadership Role of Local Government*
The important leadership role played by local government is highlighted and there is to be a Director of Adult Social Services with seven key roles particularly around strategic needs assessment and managing the the social care
- e) *Strategic Commissioning*
The Paper highlights the need for a strategic commissioning framework with partners, to ensure the right balance between prevention, meeting low-level needs and providing intensive care. It also explores mechanisms for strengthening collaborative and partnership working.
- e) *Service Improvement and Delivery*
The Government is bringing together a number of service improvement teams to create a Care Services Improvement Partnership. A number of innovative models are identified to stimulate debate and funds may be available to increase use of telecare.
- f) *Regulation and Performance Assessment*
The importance of regulation and performance assessment as levers for challenge and change are highlighted. Are looking in particular at possible well-being targets to underpin policy in supporting people to maintain independence and will work with CSCI to develop a performance indicators.
- g) *Building Capacity - the Workforce*
The Government wants to support initiatives in improving leadership and modernising the workforce and will consider ways to improve local workforce planning. This green paper has many implications for the workforce. There are newly defined roles of care navigators, care brokers, care managers etc which have hitherto been performed by social workers and careful planning will be required to bring these into place.
- h) *Community Capacity Building – Working with the voluntary and community sector*
The Green paper sets out proposals for strengthening local engagement and building local capacity through the development of local compacts with the voluntary and community sectors and participation with the LSP.

It is intended that implementation of the proposals in the Green Paper will:

- Increase consumer participation in and ownership of, care
- Increase consumer satisfaction
- Increase health and well being for the service user as interventions are made before the point of crisis
- Require no increase in funding

The government are asking for comments from Local Authorities on the Green Paper and specifically around:

- The financial implications of individual budgets
- Resource implications of having 'care navigator' or 'care broker' roles and whether these could be independent
- Resource implications of taking on training for informal carers