



## What we would like to see in the market

- Partners to support digital inclusion initiatives and support to help people with online resources
- Signposting and navigation services available through local networks
- Increased awareness of resources available to support people to manage their own needs
- Improved quality of information and advice through use of consistent and quality assured information sources; this could also include the use of a local Information Network to develop some local standards for online and printed information
- Trialling of spot purchasing models of brokerage (as an alternative to block contracts), with the benefit of increasing choice and value for money
- Promotion of individual choice of support planner, through the development of a directory of services such as volunteer support planners and group support planning
- Support planning champions in the community, so that people accessing local activities become more aware of support planning and can choose a support planner they already know and trust
- Development of fit for purpose support planning for older people, to address the poor impact of personalisation
- Links to national specialist advice services including NHS111 (24/7 non-emergency medical assistance), First Stop (housing and care advice for older people), My Ageing Parent (advice on elderly care ranging from health, finance and legal matters), Find Me Good Care (search engine and ratings for care and support services across England), NHS Choices (the online 'front door' to the NHS. It is the country's biggest health website).

## The facts

Information, advice, advocacy and brokerage describe a broad range of activities and support. This starts with providing information in an open and accessible way, for example on an easy to use website and giving direction to help individuals to make decisions about the best support option(s) for them. It also covers more specialist support and encouragement to enable people's voices be heard and a whole range of planning and organising of services to help an individual to take control of their support.

Information, advice advocacy and brokerage are essential for all adults and their carers, including:

- People who arrange and fund their own care services, and those whose funds may deplete in the future
- Those with lower level social care and health needs who would benefit from a preventative service
- Families and carers who need to find out about options for relatives and themselves.

People need easy access to good quality information and advice to help them to consider their options and make informed decisions about how best to meet their needs. This is essential if they are to make timely choices and continue living independently for longer.

Currently the main directory of social care services is Social Care Connect, an online service ([www.barnet.gov.uk/socialcareconnect](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/socialcareconnect)) which receives on average 2,000 visitors a month. The main telephone contact point for social care support is Social Care Direct, the council's adult social care helpline (020 8359 5000) which receives 1,000 contacts a month. 70% of these contacts are signposted to other organisations. Barnet Centre for Independent Living (BCIL) acts as a hub for and gateway to Information, Advice, Advocacy and Brokerage service provision. It offers disabled people in Barnet an independent, user-led and person centred service (see [www.barnetcil.org.uk](http://www.barnetcil.org.uk)).

## **The plan**

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In Barnet we want to ensure that people have control of their own care and support, and can make informed decisions about the options available to them. Instead of purchasing or providing care and support, our role will increasingly be to identify the needs of the local population and take a leadership role in the local area.

In Barnet our plans include:

- Enabling access to information, advice, advocacy and brokerage for all
- Providing information and advice for people funding their own support
- Giving people control of their own support, through Personal Budgets and by joining up funding streams for different types of support (through the Right to Control Programme)
- Having local independent suppliers of support: ensuring that a responsive range of care and support options is available.

### **Self-directed support**

Self-directed support is the name given to a way of redesigning the social care system so that the people who get services can take much greater control over them. Provision of information

and advice, advocacy to support people to speak up, and support planning are all key to giving people control.

### Support for self-funders

Barnet Council has an arrangement with My Care, My Home to sign post self-funders to accurate, information and advice about their care options and reliable and accredited financial information and advice required to plan how to meet the costs of long-term care. With expert financial advice, more residents in Barnet could have the finances and arrangements in place that would allow them to receive the care they want in their chosen setting rather than being dependent upon Adults and Communities for options and support.

### Independent suppliers

Due to the increasingly wide range of care and support suppliers including the local authority and organisations in the private and voluntary sector, the source and credibility of information is an increasingly important issue.

BCIL has a contract with the council to provide information, advice, advocacy and peer support brokerage services until September 2014. BCIL will lead on the delivery of preventative services for the disabled community, older people and carers. This includes signposting and support for individuals regardless of whether they are eligible for social care support from the council. They will close the gap for those less willing to engage with statutory services, and provide the link with statutory and safeguarding services where required.

We wish to develop independent support planning skills in the local workforce, particularly for older adults. We wish to develop an offer for older adults that encourage them to self-direct their support. We can learn from the experience of the council's Ageing Well and Day Opportunities projects:

- Older adults value local and neighbourhood services
- Trusted and known community organisers are most likely to engage people. This is an important way of reaching people with specific linguistic/ cultural needs/ other needs including dementia
- Social capital and volunteering is strong amongst the newly retired and this represents a potential resource for older people helping others to plan their support

Our Information, Advice, Advocacy and Brokerage Strategy fits with our approach to prevention and highlights:

- **Developing the consistency of community information and advice** - improving the quality of information across the borough, including the development of trusted access points to improve the accessibility of information, and improving trust in and the approachability of community information agents. We aim to work on these areas by bringing together an Information Network of local information and advice providers

- **Digital inclusion**- as more information and processes go online, we need to ensure more people are supported to access this information for themselves or with help, through training and through the availability of equipment in the community. The shift to online information should in the future free up resources for advocacy and support brokerage activities
- **Self directed support** - good quality information and advice are key in enabling self directed support
- **Planning for later life** - financial and lifestyle planning for all, with a focus on lifetime planning for people with a disability

In addition to this strategy we are also working to establish a new building to accommodate the Centre for Independent Living for the user-led organisation responsible for the design and delivery of future social care services and to help deliver 'social value'.

## **The workforce**

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The [Integrated Social Care Workforce Plan 2012-15](#) calls for people with information and advice roles to work together and ensure that signposting includes signposting to creative options and encourages community development. Many people with more complex support needs rely on others to research information for them; so it is important that key workers and support workers are able to access key information sources on behalf of clients, and that information and advice workers develop support planning skills. As more information and online services become available, it is important that information and advice workers are digitally literate and are able to empower or teach others how to do key tasks online.

## **Useful links for more information**

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- [Adult.commissioning@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:Adult.commissioning@barnet.gov.uk) for queries relating to the provision or future plans.
- Barnet's [Social Care Connect](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/SocialCareConnect) <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/SocialCareConnect> online directory to market your services online to people who fund their own care or to search for available local providers
- [Barnet Centre for Independent Living](http://www.barnetcil.org.uk) <http://www.barnetcil.org.uk> to get information, advice, advocacy, brokerage and support or if you are a provider to inform independent support planners about your services
- My Care My Home Tel: 0800 731 8470 <http://www.mycaremyhome.co.uk>