



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

Review of Information  
and Advice for Self-  
Funders in the Royal  
Borough of Kensington  
and Chelsea

*October 2010*

## **Chairman's Foreword**

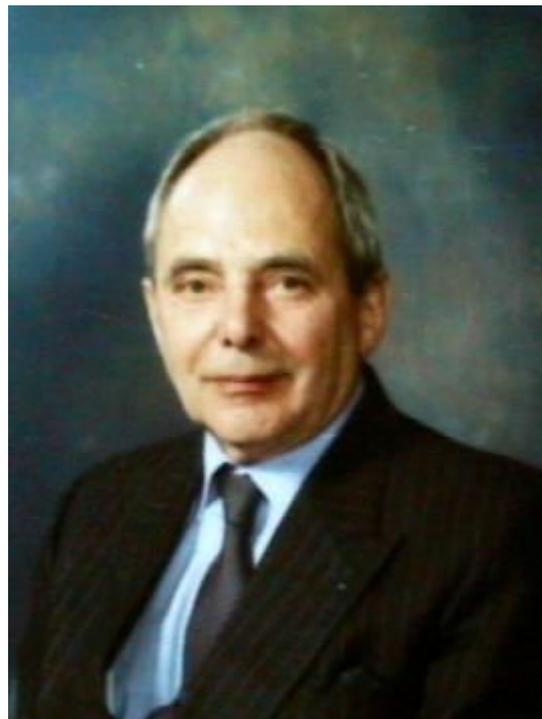
Prior to this review, the Council had very little information about the information and advice needs of self-funders in the Borough.

As part of the transformation and personalisation of Adult Social Care, a move to give greater freedom of choice, the Sub-Group was asked to provide some facts to help with the Council's efforts in this area. Although limited in scale, the research commissioned by this Sub-Group has brought new insights into this group of people and has added value to work already taking place in the Council.

Self-funders currently do not see the Council as a source of information and advice, but from the evidence presented to this Sub-Group it is clear that we do provide this information. We believe we have come up with recommendations to publicise and increase the advice and information, that are both sensible and achievable.

My thanks to my fellow Councillors on the Sub-Group, and to our supporting officers and others who have contributed.

**Councillor Tony Holt**  
October 2010



*Councillor Tony Holt,  
Sub-Group Chairman*

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## **THE REVIEW REPORT**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In November 2009, Scrutiny Committee established a Sub-Group to review access to information and advice for local self-funders: residents who are currently funding their own care arrangements or would be in a position to do so if and when the need arose.
- 1.2 The Sub-Group, consisting of Councillors Holt (Chairman), Williams, Hoier and Caruana, met for the first time in March 2010 and on four subsequent occasions over the next six months.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The provision of good quality, easily-accessible information and advice on health and social care services is an important element of the Council's People First (or personalisation) programme, now in its third year. Our new information and advice "offer" to local residents consists of a custom-built "People First" website, providing comprehensive information on health and social care services locally, backed up by a "first stop shop" for information, advice and access to social care assessments, run jointly by Adult Social Care (ASC) and the Here to Help team. In addition, a number of local voluntary agencies with an established role in providing information and advice will operate alongside the Council service, offering face to face and telephone contact and contributing specialist information to the People First website. A list of these agencies is attached at Appendix B.
- 2.2 By making it easier for people to get the right help at the right time, it is expected that the new information and advice offer will play an important role in enabling local residents to stay independent for longer. In this way it is intended to contribute to the overarching aims of promoting local health and wellbeing while reducing costs to the public purse.
- 2.3 While self-funders are not reliant on the Council for help, they have the same need as other residents for information and advice in order to make timely and informed decisions about their care provision. The task of the Sub-Group was to establish what additional measures, if any, would be required to ensure that self-funders are effectively catered for in this regard. To arrive at this understanding, Members agreed to explore the questions set out in Appendix C.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 The main method of investigation was a limited research project, carried out with the help of Kensington and Chelsea Local Involvement Network (LINK). This involved identifying a small group of older self-funders who were willing to be interviewed about their experiences and perceptions of seeking information and advice. The interviews were conducted by a team of "community researchers" trained by the LINK to carry out this type of research on a "peer to peer" basis.
- 3.2 Information was also obtained from a number of other sources:
- Members of the Sub-Group each sought to make contact with up to five people of their own acquaintance who could comment on the information and advice needs of self-funders, whether from personal experience of arranging their own care or from knowledge of the local community.
  - Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea (ACKC) was asked to give its views on how self-funders currently access information on care services and what, if anything, the Council could do to better meet their needs.
  - NHS Kensington and Chelsea was also asked for its views on the above questions.
  - A literature review of national research.

### **4. FINDINGS**

#### LINK research

- 4.1 Interviews were carried out with a total of nine people. Interviewees were aged from 69 to 85 and all were living alone, with the exception of one person who shared her home with a family member. Eight people were receiving regular help from a cleaner and/or care assistant. One had considered how she would get help in the future but did not yet have any services in place.
- 4.2 None of the people currently receiving services had been helped by the Council to find their carer or cleaner. Instead they had mainly been given information and advice by friends or by local voluntary organisations such as Age Concern. One person had simply contacted a care agency whose telephone number she had found.
- 4.3 Although no-one had ever approached Adult Social Care for any reason, three interviewees had experience of being contacted by a

social worker, following a visit to A&E or an in-patient stay, and in two cases, homecare had then been arranged for them. Both people had complaints about the care provided and had cancelled their services after only a short time. They had then made their own arrangements without help from the Council. The third person who had been visited by a social worker had declined a service from the start. She was surprised to have been offered help as she thought this would only be available for "people in council flats".

- 4.4 In terms of future information and advice needs, most people said they would always prefer to talk to someone face to face if possible. Two said they would go to their friends while five mentioned their GP, the Citizens Advice Bureau or other local voluntary organisations including Age Concern. One interviewee said she preferred to access information through the internet and felt this would give her what she needed.
- 4.5 Although all nine interviewees said they would in principle be willing to contact the Council for information and advice, no-one saw this as the first place they would go. Only one interviewee said she would like the Council to make more information available on how to get help, if and when she needed it. Most people did not perceive the Council as a potential source of assistance. Interestingly, in three cases this was despite having been contacted by social workers in the past, indicating a lack of awareness of Council services (and of Adult Social Care in particular), which is perhaps quite common.

#### Information gathered by Sub-Group Members

- 4.6 Members spoke to a number of older residents as well as to several GPs and two vicars. Self-funders were found to be typically self-reliant persons who valued their privacy and independence. GP's were identified as perhaps the most important 'gateway' to care services although local voluntary organisations were also seen as having a vital role to play. Libraries and hospitals were also mentioned. Members also agreed that the Council's newspaper "Royal Borough" can have a role in informing self-funders how the Council may be able to help them with advice and information. The same is true of newsletters from the voluntary sector.

#### Feedback from ACKC

- 4.7 ACKC commented that their information and advice service receive more enquiries about care than any other subject. ACKC's research on where their members go for general information showed that people use a variety of sources including libraries, local papers and friends. Where care issues are concerned, the view was that many

people would turn to their GP, particularly in a difficult situation. Age Concern also stressed the need to differentiate between more affluent self-funders and those who were “on the edge” and struggling to cover costs. Particular efforts are needed to make information and advice accessible to the latter group as they may be entitled to help from the Council which could prevent a crisis being reached.

#### Feedback from NHS Kensington and Chelsea

- 4.8 NHS K&C commented on a need that it had identified through its own investigations for better access to information on social care services to be accessible through GP practices, as the GP is often the first to know when support needs arise. Few GPs currently have access to all the information they need to advise their patients and this is creating problems.

#### Literature review of national research

- 4.9 The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation commissioned a report reviewing the literature on self-funders.<sup>1</sup> This confirmed the view that generally there is limited information available for self-funders, there are poor websites and information is often written for the professional rather than a lay audience.

### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 Based on the research conducted, self-funders do not generally perceive the Council as an obvious source of assistance of any kind. They are therefore unlikely to make use of the “first stop shop” for information and advice, described in paragraph 2.1 or even to access the People First website, unless additional steps are taken to bring these resources to their attention.
- 5.2 The literature review confirms that the steps we have already taken to develop the new People First website and the style and language used goes some way to addressing the short-comings of information available to self-funders. Part of what needs to be done is about promoting the website as widely and effectively as possible to staff and the public launch of the site in September 2010 was designed to address this through a programme of roadshows and an awareness-raising campaign. However, there would be particular benefits in targeting healthcare workers who come into contact with people of all ages and backgrounds.

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<sup>1</sup> A Parallel Universe? People who fund their own care and support: A Review of the Literature (2009), Bob Hudson and Melanie Henwood for ADASS, SCIE and Joseph Rowntree Foundation,

- 5.3 GPs clearly have a particular role to play because of the position of trust they hold for many people and a specific proposal has been developed for incorporating GP practices into the new information and advice offer.
- 5.4 Work with local voluntary organisations is also likely to be effective as a way of reaching self-funders. Some targeted communication is recommended with a particular view to reaching those whose financial position is less secure.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 In addition to existing plans for the public launch of the People First website, we should undertake a promotional campaign, targeted at GPs and others in primary care including district nurses. The immediate aim would be to get staff making regular use of the site to access information on service users' behalf, with the longer term goal of increasing awareness of this resource amongst the general public.
- 6.2 To produce and distribute a specific leaflet aimed at self-funders, focusing on where to go for information and advice on care provision and highlighting the Council as a potential source of help if they become unable to meet their care costs. ACKC and other key voluntary agencies to be consulted as to the key messages, specific content and distribution channels. Information will be included in the "Royal Borough".
- 6.3 To undertake a short term pilot project, jointly with NHS Kensington and Chelsea to trial a new signposting role based in a GP practice. This would initially involve one full-time member of staff, employed by ACKC, possibly supplemented by a small number of volunteers, and seconded to a selected practice to advise patients on local services and facilities. Funding for this pilot is only available in 2010/11 from the government grant given for personalisation.

## **APPENDIX A: SUB-GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS**

### **Members**

The membership of the Sub-Group comprised:

Councillor Tony Holt (Chairman);  
Councillor Carol Caruana;  
Councillor Bridget Hoier;  
Councillor Charles Williams

### **Officer support**

The main officers supporting the Sub-Group were:

Rachel Wigley, Head of Personalisation;  
Toni Camp, Personalisation Programme Manager;  
Sophie Jameson, Personalisation Officer

Gareth Ebenezer - Governance Services was the Sub-Group's Administrator

### **Other involvement or contributions**

Other Council Departments

Kensington and Chelsea Local Involvement Network (LINK) who carried out the limited research project.

Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea (ACKC) and its Chief Officer, Cynthia Dize

NHS Kensington and Chelsea

Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds

### **Sub-Group meeting dates**

The Sub-Group met from March 2010 onwards.

## **APPENDIX B: INFORMATION AND ADVICE AGENCIES IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA**

Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea (ADKC)  
Age Concern including Sixty Plus  
Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Project  
Bangladesh Association Queens Park  
Citizens Advice Bureau (Kensington and Chelsea)  
Hodan Somali Community  
Kalayaan (Justice for migrant domestic workers)  
Midaye, Somali Development Network  
Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum  
MIND  
Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre  
North Kensington Law Centre  
Nucleus Advice Centre  
Victim Support K&C  
Volunteer Centre K&C  
Worlds End Neighbourhood Advice Centre

## **APPENDIX C: QUESTIONS ADDRESSED BY THE SUB-GROUP**

- a) From where self-funders currently get information and advice on social care;
- b) The format and content of the information available to them;
- c) The accessibility and accuracy of the information and advice that is available;
- d) The usefulness of this information and advice from the point of view of users;
- e) To what extent such information and advice takes into account the particular needs of different groups of self-funders;
- f) The extent to which the Council serves as a source of such information and advice;
- g) What self-funders would ideally like the Council to provide by way of information and advice; and
- h) How this ideal matches up to the plans that the Council has to enhance its "information and advice offer" to residents.