

## Housing, Health and Adult Social Care Department

# Information for all

## People First –

## Universal information and advice strategy

### 1. Introduction

We live in a world where there is an ever growing amount of information and advice available on any subject you can imagine. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's strategy for universal information and advice for Adult Social Care is based on understanding and answering the questions people have, whilst making use of existing resources.

The need to provide universal information and advice is a requirement for Adult Social Care Services. LAC(DH) (2009) states that by 2011 all councils are expected to have:

“Universal, joined-up information and advice available for all individuals and carers, including those who self assess and fund, which enables people to access information from all strategic partners

The following principles underline the strategy:

- **Making it easy** for anyone in the borough to find out about available services and facilities.
- **Treating people as experts on their own conditions** and not thinking that the Council knows best.
- **Looking at the bigger picture** – finding out what people want out of life and how they can get it, not just focusing on their difficulties.

The four key components of the Putting People First initiative are reflected in the information and advice that is and will be provided:

- **Universal services:** ensuring that anyone who requires care and support can find a range of services that could help them in their community.
- **Preventative services:** helping people to maintain their health and well being for longer by providing information about preventative services, how they may help people and how to access them.

- **Choice and control:** giving people the information and advice that gives them the confidence and knowledge to take as much control as they want over decisions which affect their care.
- **Building social capital:** recognising that individuals can receive care and support from their friends, families, neighbours and community groups.

The Information and Advice strategy is designed to contribute to the three key goals of the People First programme:

- **Reducing costs**
- **Improving the quality of life for our residents**
- **Improving customer satisfaction**

## 2. Identifying and meeting the needs for Information and Advice

### Who is the audience?

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has a diverse and varied population. It was important that any set of needs analyses is representative of the greater population and of smaller groups, especially focussing on people who are at risk and consequently the most vulnerable in society.

The strategy recognises that all of the following groups have specific needs and requirements for access to good information and advice (further details are shown in **Appendix A**):

- Residents of Kensington and Chelsea and their families. This includes people living anywhere in the world who wish to have access to the information required to provide support to relatives living in the Royal Borough
- Older people, people living with a disability, people living with mental health issues, people with a history of substance misuse, carers, young carers, people with sensory impairments and other vulnerable adults.
- Specific cultural or language and communication needs of a range of ethnic groups, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender communities, people with sensory impairments and people without capacity.
- Needs of people who are not eligible for council funded services and people who do not wish to approach social services, for whatever reason.
- Social Care and health professionals who need to understand the full range of options and services to best meet the circumstances and needs of individuals they are working with.

## 3. The strategy and means of delivery

The Royal Borough will deliver information and advice through the following ways:

- by the **People First website**
- by telephone using **Social Services Line**
- through face to face services provided by the **Customer Services Centre**
- using **leaflets and other printed material**
- through **specialist advice services commissioned in the voluntary sector**

## 4. The People First Website

The key resource that underpins the strategy is the **People First website**, part of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's website designed to provide answers to people's questions.



The journey through the website has been designed in the following way to support the principles of the People First strategy in Kensington and Chelsea:

1. Providing simple navigation with words supported by specially commissioned illustrations
2. Giving straightforward explanations to subjects
3. Explaining what is available in the wider community and providing informed signposting to:
  - Services – from Home Care provision to chiropodists to museums
  - Specialist advice
  - Income maximisation
  - Advocacy and representation
4. Finally the services and help that the council provides is described with clear information about how to access services.

Further information on the adopted approach is found in **Appendix B**

The strategy is supported by using complementary resources that have been developed in the borough, and where appropriate, commissioning specialist information advice services.

The People First website has important links to the [Advice Now Hub KC](#) and the Wayfinder Gateway to Services for Older People Kensington and Chelsea.

- **Advice Now** is a member of the Voluntary Advice Agencies Forum Kensington and Chelsea and has created a lottery funded website that joins up the advice services in the Borough.
- **The Wayfinder Gateway to services** provides a comprehensive directory of local voluntary services and organisations. This site funded by NHS

Kensington and Chelsea uses the same user-friendly principles as the People First website.

## Who will use the website?

**Local Residents** - Amongst local residents, we know that internet use varies widely from one group to another and that many people (particularly those aged 65 plus) will need to access information and advice in more traditional ways. For this reason, we are providing a dedicated phone line and other delivery mechanisms, as detailed below.

**Council staff** - The objective is for all staff in an advisory or information giving role, including the contact centre and libraries, to become regular users of the site. Once achieved, this change alone will play a major part in the delivery of improved information and advice.

**Health, voluntary sector and providers of social care services** – The site provides a key resource for all social care professional working in the Royal Borough.

## What sort of information?

Kensington and Chelsea have built on the pioneering work carried out by Stockport with their My Care My Choice website and developed it to fit in with the Borough's People First programme.

A series of in-depth interviews, by an ethnographer, with service users and carers combined with workshops of voluntary sector, health and Adult Social Care professionals have provided the insights to develop the first phase of a universal offering for the residents of Kensington and Chelsea.

This has led to an understanding that the comprehensive range of information required to answer people's questions are often not met by traditional demarcations. The People First site connects information that links health and social care into other areas including benefits, housing, leisure, education and other information and advice.

The aim of the website is to meet the following objectives:

- The key objective is to make adult social care part of the main council offering to all residents, not just the minority of people who are service users.
- Helping people describe and understand their conditions.
- Provide the materials that help people define and achieve personal goals.
- To make "care" more integrated within the community rather than existing as a "different world".

- Demystify subjects, provide summaries and links to what is available in the wider community and only then to outline what the Council can offer.
- Be clear about the likely cost of services and the potential contribution people will be required to make towards those services.
- Allow private sector and voluntary organisations to promote their services on the site. Where relevant star ratings (E.g. CQC) will be displayed alongside a disclaimer from the council.

## **5. Social Services Line**

Dedicated contact centre staff have been recruited and trained to listen to people, deliver information and when required take referrals. Contact centre staff work alongside the Advice, Information and Assessment team. The contact centre will operate a “no wrong door” approach in trying to help and assist people.

There are four main courses of action that the contact centre will take:

- Provide information, using the website, without recording information about the person.
- Create a new referral.
- Use the website to signpost people to a third party.
- Transfer people with an open case to the relevant community or hospital team.

## **6. Customer Service Centre**

Customer Contact Service staff will provide face to face information at Kensington Town Hall and there are future plans to offer this service at Westway and Chelsea Old Town Hall. Library staff will also be trained and made aware of the range of information available on the People First website.

## **7. Voluntary Sector: Specialist Information and Advice**

The Royal Borough reviewed information and advice services in 2010 that are delivered by the voluntary sector. Most grant values were between £10,000 and £60,000. All providers were specialist around client groups, for example older people or people with disabilities, to people with specific long term health conditions like HIV. Key themes that emerged from the review about the voluntary sector included;

- People valued face-to face contact, or someone to discuss the issue/s with.
- Outreach and reaching isolated people.
- The voluntary sector often spend time “unpicking” a complex set of issues.
- Some people approach information and advice from their peer group or people with similar conditions.

- Income maximization, is key, is specialist and has clear outcomes. This seems an issue that all agencies have some dealings with although the main contract is held by Citizens Advice.
- Housing issues are prevalent in the information and advice system
- Specialist information and advice is needed for certain communities, with support into mainstream services.
- A small number of people require representation, advocacy and longer term work.

## 8. Seeking and acting on feedback

Partner organisations have been involved from the start by running a series of workshops. This is being formalised by creating a **People First community** which will provide ideas and feedback from different audiences.

The People First community will include:

- Kensington & Chelsea Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- Residents of the Royal Borough
- NHS representation
- Voluntary sector
- Kensington and Chelsea Community Engagement Team
- Council workers from across the council (e.g Libraries)

The intention is for the community to operate both on-line and face-to-face. It is important to encourage as much local input as possible. In the future this could include the ability to add 'Trip Advisor' style feedback on services and facilities.

A series of interviews with residents and social care professionals has provided valuable feedback. **Appendix C** contains profiles from the six ethnographic interviews that were conducted.

One of the profiles is of a GP practicing in Kensington and Chelsea. She was very positive about the new People First web design for helping her patients' access information, but suggested that for her own use and benefit she needed a greater depth of information. This would help her add value rather than just telling them things they could read for themselves.

This requirement is being met by a "Policy documents and leaflets" section which will be referenced throughout the website.

## 9. Managing the information

The People First website manager will have the responsibility for ensuring that information is accurate, relevant and informative.

A major part of the website manager's responsibility is to develop a new culture within the council and with health and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partners that sees the People First website as their main resource for information.

Once a culture has been developed where people rely on the People First website it will be critical to keep it up to date and being refreshed with new material. The more people grow to trust the People First website the more people will become involved in its upkeep (formally and informally) and the more useful it will become as a resource - with of goal of becoming managed but self-generating.

The staff working on Social Services Line will work closely with the website manager to manage information. Social Services Line staff will be using the website as their tool to deliver information and signpost people to advice services.

## **10. Enhancing awareness and knowledge**

The initial awareness campaign for the Advice and Information Strategy is based on:

- Major article in "The Royal Borough"
- Leaflets, posters and business cards
- A part of all staff induction training, initially for all Housing, Health and Adult Social Care staff
- Participating in relevant events e.g. The Health Fair
- Using opportunities as they arrive and pre-existing avenues e.g. ask the scooter hire service to distribute leaflets and display posters
- Working with partners to develop a coherent plan to promote the full range of information and advice services across the Royal Borough

The main way to promote awareness and knowledge will be through word of mouth. This will only happen if the execution of this strategy meets and exceeds people's expectations.

A major cultural shift is required for staff to gain confidence in the website and rely on it as their key resource rather than relying on the knowledge in people's heads. This strategy depends on the website providing useful and interesting information to a huge range of different audiences as well as being kept up to date.

## **11. Review of advocacy services**

Advocacy, which is supporting people to say what they want, take action, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain services they need or are entitled to is commissioned from the voluntary sector as a distinct service. A number of approaches are currently adopted;

- **People with learning disabilities**

- Advocacy groups for people with learning disabilities, support and influence the development of future services
- Professional advocacy which is one to one work
- **Older People**
  - Spot purchased one to one advocacy for older people and a smaller number of people with dementia
- **People with disabilities**
  - One to one advocacy

## 12. Commissioning intentions

### a. Commissioners will continue to commission a range of information and advice services that are:

- **Preventative** - first point of contact for people needing social or health care basic information and sign posting
- **Specialist** – focused on a particular health condition or client group including:
  - Long term health conditions
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Mental health
  - Substance misuse
  - Carers
- **Income Maximisation**
- **Housing advice**
- **Brokerage:**
  - Supporting local people who have a Personal Budget to be able to access social care markets and spend their budget efficiently.
  - It is now recognised that to be effective brokers need to have extensive knowledge of the range of services available in the borough. Brokerage will be procured as a type of Information and Advice service.
- **Advocacy:** the intention is to continue to commission a specialist learning disability advocacy service and tender for a joint older people and disability service.

### b. Various entry points, venues and support to access information and advice

- Both providers of information and advice services and local people via various consultations have indicated that information and advice should be available at various venues and in various formats. This included social, health care and non-statutory settings like libraries, community centres etc. A number of people may also need supported access to information and advice, this could be one to one support to investigate what is available on the web or to look at an issue in more detail.



### c. Reaching isolated people

- From statistics about the local population, we know not everyone is gaining access to the right information about the wealth of services available in the Royal Borough. A key element of the new information and advice offer is an outreach and inreach approach into the community, using a much wider range of venues from post offices to commercial outlets. A pilot is running in 2010/11 where advice workers are using laptops and mobile broadband to get out into the community teaching people to access the PEOPLE FIRST web pages, who would not normally be able to access these.

d. **Appendix D** is the commissioning action plan and timetable.

## 13.Future developments

New areas of content that reflect the priorities of the Business Group will be created as required.

Working with the council web team to:

- To develop on-line tools to enable users of the website to add comments or opinions on services featured on the website, for instance like Trip Advisor.
- For the website to make automatic suggestions about other content that may be of interest to the user based on previous browsing history.
- Using site statistics to identify popular areas and feed this back into the Business Group to facilitate improving the website and commissioning of services

The intention is to use the principles adopted for the website in a set of tools to support the end to end personalisation process.

This includes:

- self-assessment tools and indicative personal budgets
- calculators to indicate required contributions
- marketplace to find and purchase services
- support planning tools

The objective of providing these tools is to:

- provide as much upfront information to people about the options available to them to understand their needs and how they could be met
- reduce the amount of time taken to carry out assessments by council staff
- present complex processes in a clear, transparent and simple way

- help identify quick wins to meet straightforward needs (e.g. certain small items of equipment)
- encourage people to manage their own care by understanding previous barriers such as complex bureaucratic processes and working to minimise their impact.