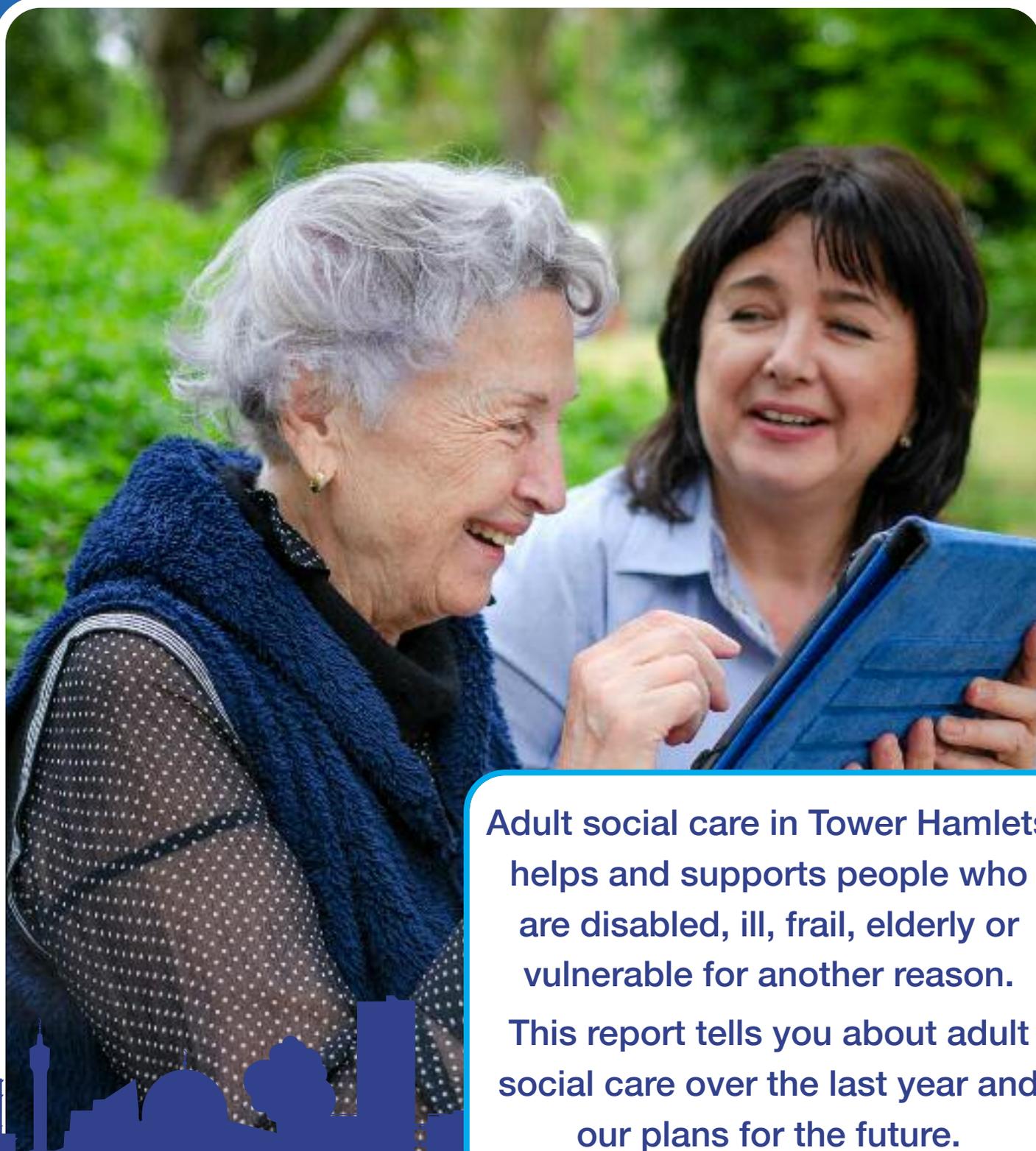


Adult Social Care: How are we doing?

The “Local Account”
Adult Social Care
in Tower Hamlets

2019



Adult social care in Tower Hamlets helps and supports people who are disabled, ill, frail, elderly or vulnerable for another reason. This report tells you about adult social care over the last year and our plans for the future.

AUTUMN 2019

Adult Social Care Services
live life your way



Foreword from the Mayor and Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing



Welcome to the ninth local account of adult social care in Tower Hamlets. This magazine tells you about our achievements over the last year, our challenges, and our priorities for the future. These are based on what the people who use care and support services have told us, and what we know about people's experiences.

Adult social care supports people who need support and their loved ones in a number of ways. As well as more 'traditional' forms of support like home care or day centres, we help people through things like technology or direct payments so that people can have more choice and control over their lives.



Our main achievements over the last year include closer working with the NHS, improving how we support friends and family who care for their loved ones, supporting people with a learning disability to be independent and healthy and starting work to be a dementia-friendly borough.

The main challenge ahead continues to be how to deal with the rising demand for adult social care against a backdrop of reducing resources. Running through this Local Account is a continued emphasis on prevention, innovation, promoting independence, empowerment and partnership working with health services. This is must continue to be our focus if we are to be sustainable for the future.

I hope that the ninth edition of our Local Account continues the conversation about the quality and performance of adult social care in Tower Hamlets, and what we need to focus on in future.

John Biggs, Mayor of Tower Hamlets
Councillor Amina Ali, Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing

Foreword from Healthwatch Tower Hamlets



Tower Hamlets is a very diverse area not only in the ethnicity of its population but also in the age and sexuality of its residents. Although the number of elderly people is low in comparison to other boroughs, a significant number of people do not have loved ones to turn to when our lives become difficult. So the support and services we look to from our local authority are even more valued and needed when we are at our most vulnerable, alone or frightened.

You can see from this report the good work being carried out and who to turn to when you or a good neighbour or friend need it. It's good to see progress on dementia and learning difficulties and more support for carers. A closer working relationship with the NHS has driven a push for more seamless services joining up health and social care in a way that makes sense to local people.

I would like to see more user involvement and active participation of residents in the design and management of services and hope we can all work harder to achieve this next year.

Overall I feel we have a very good service and probably one of the best in London, I hope they continue to strive for the goal of the best in the country.

David Burbidge, Chair, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets

Case Study

Mr B cares for his daughter, who has a mental health issue, has problems with alcohol and experiences high levels of anxiety and panic attacks. Mr B contacted the Rethink Mental Illness Carers Service feeling stressed and worried that caring was putting his marriage under strain. Mr B started to meet with staff weekly to talk things through a get some emotional support for himself. Mr B also linked up with a service to support family members of those with drug or alcohol problems. As a result, Mr B is starting to feel better able to cope and manage his caring tasks, worries and commitments and feels he is regaining control over this life.

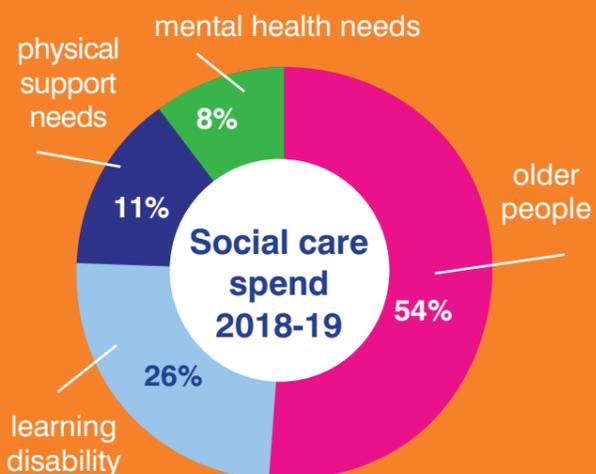
Rethink Mental Illness Tower Hamlets Carers Service

Adult social care in Tower Hamlets 2018-19: How are we doing?

People

The Tower Hamlets population is 318,000. We have the fastest growing population in the country

4719 people received long and short-term care services from the council in 2018-19



Health



78.1 years – life expectancy for a man versus 79.6 years national average



82.5 years – life expectancy for a woman versus 83.2 years national average



Adults report the highest levels of depression and anxiety in London and the 4th highest levels of long term mental health problems

Care and support

We spent £129 million in 2018-19. Our budget is £122 million for 2019-20.

Service/budget/people who received this

	Care homes	650 people	£30m
	Homecare	1,780 people	£29m
	Direct payments	530 people	£10m
	Day care	490 people	£5m

The remainder was spent on staffing costs, and a wide variety of preventative support options to keep people as independent and well as possible.

What you have told us

67% of adult social care users are extremely or very satisfied with their care and support – 8 percentage points higher than last year. A further 24% are quite satisfied

Social care helps me...

- Have a better quality of life: 94%
- Have control over daily life: 88%
- Feel safe: 88%
- Be as independent as possible: 71%

...these are all as good as or better than last year



A summary of our achievements

- Better support to friends and family who care for their loved ones
- Supporting people with a learning disability to be independent and healthy
- Becoming a dementia friendly borough
- More choice and control for people in sheltered housing
- Helping more people to live as independently as possible
- Closer working with the NHS
- Supporting people to return home from hospital
- Providing good quality care and support



A summary of our challenges

- Rising demand and restricted resource
- Changing how we work
- Introducing a means-tested charge for community support
- Information and advice



A summary of our future priorities

We will:

- Run activities and programmes that encourage residents to have healthy lifestyles
- Provide evidence-based early intervention and prevention programmes, helping residents to be as healthy as possible for as long as possible.
- Change how we provide information to residents on health and care, making it easier for people to get advice and help at an early stage.
- Integrate health and care so that residents get a better, more joined-up experience of both systems.
- Make better use of technology and equipment in health and care, recognising its potential to improve how people manage their health conditions and care needs.
- Staff in adult social care will do more to empower people, focusing on the strengths and abilities of social care users as well as the things they need help with.
- Offer choice and personalised support to social care users, including the promotion of direct payments so that people have more control over the care they receive.



Message from Katie O'Driscoll, Principal Social Worker in Adult Social Care

“ In Tower Hamlets, we are committed to help adults with care and support needs and carers achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their life. This is why we start with what is most important to the adult and their carer, and focus on their goals from there; putting people at the centre and acknowledging that people are best placed to judge their own wellbeing. We want to support people to develop resilience and maximise individual strengths, including their support networks and resources provided by other partners and voluntary organisations in our local community. We are incredibly proud of our borough and the community resources on offer that can support people, and do our best to connect adults and carers with these fantastic opportunities.



We strive to support people to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible, so recognise the importance of focusing on the prevention and delay of people's needs as a critical part of promoting wellbeing. This includes providing good information and advice, promoting healthy lifestyles, and helping people to feel less isolated or lonely. We also seek to provide early intervention by working in partnership with our health colleagues, providing necessary adaptations, equipment and assistive technology. To delay needs, we look to support people in regaining skills, such as Reablement.

We have a host of skills and expertise in the borough, from our social workers, occupational therapists, independence planners, first response officers, long term support officers, resilience officers and best interest assessors. These officers undertake assessments, reviews, support planning, safeguarding enquires, and a range of other work to support adults and carers. We support people in the local community and hospital including those who may have a physical or sensory impairment, learning disabilities, mental illness and adults whose independence is at risk due to age or frailty”

Our achievements - Helping people to be as healthy and independent as possible

Better support to friends and family who care for their loved ones

Last year we committed to identifying and supporting more people who care for a friend and family member with a health problem or addiction (known as “carers”). Good progress has been made over the last year:

- 120 free spaces on countryside retreats or day trips were arranged to give carers a break in 2018-19.
- More carers experiencing difficulty received a direct payment to spend on taking a break. 184 carers were receiving a direct payment as of March 2019.
- The Carer Centre is now reaching out to more carers by going to places like GP practices and the Royal London Hospital.
- The Carer Academy launched in April 2019, coordinating a range of training programmes to help carers.

The Carer Working Group is made up of staff and carers, who regularly come together to plan and design support for carers in the borough. It is linked in with other carer coproduction forums including the Carer Forum at the Carer Centre. Attendees feel that the group is making a real difference, and it is empowering to be part of it. Health checks to carers are now being offered more proactively, and a card with emergency contact details is being designed. Going forward, the group wants more carers from a range of backgrounds to join; and for carers of all ages to get consistent recognition and an offer of support.

“ [Carer health checks] *make you think about your own health* ”
Carer

“ [The Carer Academy] *is about regaining your identity... The free courses allow carers to widen their social circle and prepare for life after caring and provide life skills and improve employability. It also gives carers a mental break and potential income.* ”

Carer



Supporting people with a learning disability to be independent and healthy

Last year, we told you that the proportion of adults with a learning disability who have an annual check-up with their GP had gone up to 74%. This year, the figure has increased again to 82%. It's good news because people with a learning disability often have much poorer health, and yearly GP check-ups are a way of picking up problems before they get serious. The number of people with a learning disability who agreed a Health Action Plan – setting out how to improve their health – also increased from 38% at March 2017 to 96% in March 2019.

We also opened Lester Court. This is a new 24-hour learning disability supported living scheme for people with high levels of disability, complex needs or challenging behaviour. This is part of our commitment to supporting people with a learning disability to live as locally and as independently as possible.

The number of people a learning disability who need support from social care who are in employment has also increased from 5.3% in 2017 to 8.5% two years' later, and we are committed to increasing this figure further.

Working in partnership with people with a learning disability is at the heart of the approach we take in adult social care. We fund services that are led by people with a learning disability and are aimed at empowering others, and our Quality Checker Service enables people with a learning disability assess services in the borough.



Becoming a 'dementia friendly borough'

Dementia has been diagnosed in around 5% of people aged 65 or over in Tower Hamlets¹, and living with dementia can present a range of challenges for people and their loved ones. We want Tower Hamlets to be a 'dementia friendly borough' where it is as safe and inclusive as possible for residents with dementia and their loved ones. We have started work this year:

- Around 100 people attended a dementia conference in September 2018. Attendees made pledges and agreed a wish list of actions.
- We have agreed that the new Town Hall will be a dementia friendly environment.
- We are looking into the possibility of adding dementia friendly signage in parks and open spaces.
- We have launched training for all Council staff on how to best support people with dementia.

Russia Lane is a dementia day service providing care and support for those with moderate to severe dementia during the day. Staff provide flexible and personalised support people with dementia to be more healthy, safe, active and connected with their communities. Russia Lane has a music room, a sensory room, access to an allotment and a massage therapist. There is also a real focus on supporting people to interact with the local communities: children and young people visit and undertake work experience at the centre, service users are supported to visit local shops and activities, and recently a musician and music students supported service users to compose and perform their own songs.

“[the person I care for] takes part in cognitive and physical activities and going to the centre gives him important social contact. He takes part in quizzes, skittles, music, and singing, colouring and even talks about fighter planes with his key worker”

“Before [the person I care for] started at Russia Lane, she wasn't smiling, but now she has a big smile on her face.”



¹ Dementia prevalence, as a proportion of 65 year olds in Tower Hamlets, is the second highest in London at 5.25% and is significantly higher than the London prevalence of 4.49% (Sept 2017).

More choice and control for people in sheltered housing

The Tenant Activity Pot (TAP) is a fund for residents in sheltered housing to spend on activities, giving people more choice and control over their lives.

The project began in September 2018, and six months' later, almost 1700 people had attended 135 activities— equating to almost three-quarters of everyone living in sheltered housing. Activities have ranged from gardening, celebrating Black History month and St George's day, karaoke, trips out to local sights, visits from primary school children and even visits from animals normally resident at Stepney City Farm!

The programme is part of our commitment to both empowering people and to tackling loneliness and isolation in older people. Indeed, 89.5% of people in sheltered housing feel they are a part of a community; 88.5% feel that they have increased contact with their neighbours compared to the previous three months and 97% said taking part made them feel happier.



“I've got something to look forward to”

“It makes you pick yourself up and go”

“It brought back memories and made me feel happy”

Sheltered housing tenants

Helping people to live as independently as possible

We continue to invest in services that support people to live independently in their own home. These services range from Reablement (short term support to get back on your feet after a period of ill health) to technology and equipment at home that enables people to safely stay at home. As a result of this focus on independence, rates of admission into care tend to be lower than England averages². The proportion of people with a learning disability who receive support and live in their own home or with family has increased by 7 percentage points over the last year and now stands at 76%.



² Care home admissions for 18-64 year olds per 100,000 of the population is 7.7 in Tower Hamlets in 2018-9 compared with 7.3 the year before. The figure for people aged 65 or over is 456 and 493 respectively

Our achievements – Providing good quality, joined-up support

Closer working with the NHS

Through THT a partnership of local organisations including the Council and NHS we have continued work on these together. Social care and the NHS share many common goals, and we have continued to work on these in partnership with one another. Some of our achievements over the last year are as follows:

- We have pooled a proportion of our budgets³ and spent this on a wide-ranging programme of work to support people at home and in hospital
- The four new adult social care teams- operating in the north west, north east, south east and south west of the borough – have built better relationships with NHS staff who cover the same 'patch'. Local 'Health and Wellbeing Committees' also meet in each of these four areas, bringing together local professionals to plan and deliver health and care.
- We have rolled out social prescribing, helping more people to find out about and take part in activities in their local neighbourhoods

“Sometimes people feel they see new professionals all the time, and have to explain their story again”

– feedback from service user group, spring 2019

Helping people experiencing mental health crisis

A new mental health crisis phone line was launched in October 2018 to support people living and working in Tower Hamlets.

The mental health crisis line is available 24 hours a day, giving callers support and advice from mental health professionals at the East London NHS Foundation Trust. It has been designed as the 'first port of call' for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis, providing fast, effective support that will save people the time and effort of travelling to A&E and what can be a long wait to be seen.

The Tower Hamlets Crisis Line number is: 0207 771 5807.

³ The pooled budgets are the Better Care Fund and Improved Better Care Fund

Supporting people to return home from hospital

No-one wants to stay in hospital for longer than they need to, and avoiding unnecessary hospital delays continues to be a priority for patients, social care and the NHS. Some of the work we have done over the last year on this issue includes:

- Opening six 'step-down' units as a potential stepping stone between leaving hospital and being ready to go home.
- Developing an 'Admission Avoidance and Discharge to Assess Service' to support older patients to leave hospital quicker.
- Piloting an 'integrated triage' for people being discharged from hospital with a rehab need, whereby the council's Reablement service and NHS rehabilitation services assess people together and at the same time, putting our resources to the best possible use.

As a result of this work, last year, the number of people who have to stay in hospital longer than necessary is comparatively low.



Case Study

"For many years, I was the sole carer for my mother as well as holding down a job – eventually I needed to take early retirement to carry on caring. At times, it was very lonely and exhausting, but I had great support from staff and carers at Carers Centre Tower Hamlets, who became my friends. After my mother passed away, I decided that I wanted to support other carers. I found out about a volunteering role through the Carers Centre's new Carers Academy that I am now getting ready for. My role will be to support the staff at the Carers Centre, talking to carers and seeing how best the Carers Centre can help. This means possibly just listening, but also arranging for a Carers Support Advocate to ring them back to address specific issues. I just love being at the Carers Centre and am so pleased that even though I am a former carer, I am able to give something back."

Carer - Carers Centre Tower Hamlets

⁴ Delayed transfer of care attributable to social care per 100,000 of the population: 1.0 for Tower Hamlets 2018-19 for Tower Hamlets, similar to 0.9 in 2017-18

Providing good quality support

We were pleased that in February 2019, 91% of social care users told us that they were satisfied with their care and support services (67% were extremely or very satisfied) – a significant increase on the year before.

You have told us that social care can have a great impact on people's lives. 94% of service users in Tower Hamlets say social care helps them have a better quality of life. 88% say it helps them have control over daily life. 88% say support helps them feel safe. 71% say support helps them to be as independent as possible. These results are all similar or better than the results last year.

91%
satisfied with
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94%
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say support helps
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71%
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independent as
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Our Quality Monitoring team contact people who receive home care to check on people's experience of services. Over 2018-19, the team spoke to almost 1,300 people. 96.5% reported overall satisfaction with their personal care.

However, we know that we do not always get it right: For example, between July 2018 and March 2019 a total of 63 issues were raised with home care agencies as a result of the work of the Quality Monitoring Team. We make sure corrective action is taken and lessons learned, but recognise that this is not always a quick process.

The Care Quality Commission (the CQC) inspects care homes and home care agencies. At the end of 2018-19, 1 home care agency we fund and One Care Home was rated outstanding by the CQC, 5 home care agencies and one care home were rated good, 4 home care agencies and 3 care homes were rated as requiring improvement and none were rated as inadequate, "The Council's Reablement Service was rated good by the CQC in 2019.

OUR CHALLENGES

Rising demand and restricted resource

Resources for social care continue to be an issue across the country, as the amount of money we have to spend as a council is going down whilst the demand for adult social care continues to go up.

This leaves the council and residents with some increasingly difficult decisions to make as to how we save money. Our main challenge continues to be how to maintain the quality of care and support in an environment of increasingly restricted resources.

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets asked almost 350 residents in May 2019 how they would prioritise spending for the NHS and social care. Results showed a trend of people prioritising services as they perceive as being relevant to them personally.



Changing how we work

In an environment of restricted resources, we have to do things in a different way. Support is increasingly based on helping people to help themselves, encouraging people to be as independent as possible through things like technology or direct payments. That way, we can continue to meet the demand for social care. However, making these changes is not always easy and often takes time. Change can be a challenge for our staff and for people who are used to a more traditional offer of social care.



Introducing a means-tested charge for community services

Last year, we described how the tough decision to introduce a means-test for home care, day care and other 'community-based' services at the end of 2017 was a challenge, particularly for people who previously received support for free.

We have carried out in-depth assessments to understand the impact of charging. Our assessment shows no indication that fewer people are coming forward for help, and no overall negative impact on people's wellbeing. However, the importance of clear communication on charging was highlighted by service users and carers. We didn't get this right when charging was first introduced, but have worked to improve this over the last year and will continue to prioritise it going forward.

As of October 2018, 43% of people in community-based services were being charged an amount of money towards the cost of care (1154 people). The average weekly payment was £54.

Information and advice

A key message arising from adult social care users and carers is that information on social care can be difficult to find and understand. People do not always know what support is out there and who can get it. Addressing this issue is complicated because health and social care is complicated, and because the services and activities are many and changing. However, we are committed with NHS colleagues to improving this, and have plans over the coming year to develop a new offer of information and advice in partnership with service users and carers.

For the last two years, around a quarter of adult social care users report that information and advice related to social care is difficult to find⁵. At a meeting with adult social care users in Spring 2019, some people felt they were not fully aware of the services that were available to them, which makes it difficult for people to get help at an early stage.

⁵ 2017-18: 26.5%, 2018-19: 25.8%. Results from the Tower Hamlets Service User Survey.

Last year's priorities

Last year's priorities	What we did
Continue to work closely with the NHS	We have progressed work on this by planning, funding, providing and monitoring services together (see page 22 for more information)
Improve waiting times for assessments and services	Waiting times had improved last year and continue to do so. However, there is still further room for improvement and we will continue to focus on minimising waiting times.
Continue to tackle loneliness	The Loneliness Taskforce met in February and April 2019 and have committed to developing a programme of activity to address this
Produce new information on charging in adult social care	Letters about charging have been changed, an easy read guide to charging has been produced and a series of 'surgeries' have been run to help people who want information and guidance on charging
Help more carers with a direct payment and launch the Carer Academy	184 carers were receiving a direct payment as of March 2019 – higher than the year before. The Carer Academy launched in April.
Encourage more people to take a direct payment	525 people were receiving a direct as of March 2019, which is 18% of all service users and similar to the year before. Whilst this is positive, there is room for improvement and we will continue to focus on it
Encourage more people to use assistive technology	2,907 people were supported through assistive technology as of March 2019, which is a 7.5% increase on the year before.
Develop plans for more sheltered housing	We are working with a small number of specialist social housing providers to develop plans for more sheltered housing, and it remains a priority for the future

Case Study

Mr N is 75 years old, and was referred to Age UK after explaining that he felt lonely and inactive as a result of spending a lot of time indoors at home. Mr N was interested in taking part in physical activities outside to stay healthy, and socialising more. After talking to Age UK, Mr N joined a weekly 'social walking group' and signed up to attend some trips organised by Age UK. Mr N said:

“It is very nice to be outdoors and have some physical exercise while meeting new people, I really enjoying this activity and having new friends...the trips are [also] fantastic; it is a wonderful way to do something different and with company”

LinkAge Plus, Age UK



Case Study

Ms J is 71, and goes to coffee afternoons run by Age UK. At one of these sessions, Ms J asked staff for support in learning how to use the internet to communicate more with relatives. Staff referred Ms J to a four-week course. Ms J learned how to email her son and grandson, find information on the internet and make video calls – as well as making new friends on the course. As a result, Ms J feels more confident using IT and is communicating more with her family. Ms J said:

“I never thought I will be able to learn all this new technology skills... [the course] helped me to feel good and proud of myself as I am now able to use this tablet, I feel very confident with my new IT skills and technology”

LinkAge Plus, Age UK



Our future priorities

Our main priorities are to build on our achievements and address our challenges. So, over the coming year we want to work in partnership with you to:

- Run activities and programmes that encourage residents to have healthy lifestyles.
- Provide evidence-based early intervention and prevention programmes, helping residents to be as healthy as possible for as long as possible.
- Change how we provide information to residents on health and care, making it easier for people to get advice and help at an early stage.
- Integrate health and care so that residents get a better, more joined-up experience of both systems.
- Make better use of technology and equipment in health and care, recognising its potential to improve how people manage their health conditions and care needs.
- Staff in adult social care will do more to empower people, focusing on the strengths and abilities of social care users as well as the things they need help with.
- Offer choice and personalised support to social care users, including the promotion of direct payments so that people have more control over the care they receive.

Direct payments in social care:

- Direct payments in adult social care give people more choice and control over the support they receive. Over 500 people in Tower Hamlets organise their support this way. Direct payments are easy to set up and manage, and advice on how to do this is available at every stage. If you are interested in direct payments, please speak to a Social Worker or other social care professional at your next review or assessment.

Alternatively you can contact People Plus for more information on the benefits of a direct payment.

T:0330 123 2815

Email: ilstowerhamlets@peopleplus.co.uk

In addition, over the coming year we want to:

- Do more to support autistic adults, and help make Tower Hamlets a more inclusive place for people with autism.
- Start offering people with a learning disability the opportunity to stay with a 'shared lives carer' in their local community.
- Continue with plans to develop more nursing care and supported housing options for older people, people with mental health issues and people with a learning disability in the borough. We will also continue to work with the providers of existing care homes and other housing options to ensure that they understand what we need for the future and are helping us to achieve that by, for example, increasing the number of nursing care beds they provide.

Tackling adult abuse and neglect is a key priority for adult social care. It is not included in this Local Account because it is described in detail in our yearly Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report. The most recent report can be found on the Tower Hamlets website.

Working with you to improve social care:

- We are committed to working in partnership with people who use social care and carers, and there are a number of ways to get involved.
- Realising Change is a group of people with lived experience of social care who are passionate about personalisation and changing things for the better. The group are working on a range of projects in Tower Hamlets, from tackling loneliness to improving and celebrating social work practice.
- Whatever your interests, there are a range of ways for you to get involved in adult social care. As well as Realising Change, there are groups that include the Older People's Reference Group (run by Age UK), the Carer Forum (run by the Carer Centre Tower Hamlets) and Local Voices (run by Real). Over the next year, one of our priorities will be to deliver a more joined-up approach to information and advice across health, social care and social welfare services to support people to remain independent and healthy for longer. Please look out for opportunities to get involved in this.

More information and useful contacts

This magazine gives you information on what has been happening in adult social care over the last year. We are keen to hear what you think, so please get in touch using the contact details below

For more information on the issues raised in this report, you may find the following list of publications helpful. These can be found on our website, or you can phone 020 7364 5005 and ask for a copy to be posted out to you.

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Ageing Well Strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- Learning Disability Strategy
- Carer Action Plan and Dignity Charter
- Safeguarding Adults Board Strategy and Annual Report for 2018-19



Useful contacts

- Adult social care general enquiries – Real
☎ 020 7001 2170 📧 hello@real.org.uk
- Urgent social care enquiries (including safeguarding)
– Council adult social care team
☎ 020 7354 5005 📧 adult.care@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Mental Health Crisis Line – East London NHS Foundation Trust
☎ 020 7771 5807
- Carer help and information – Tower Hamlets Carers Centre
☎ 020 7790 1765 📧 enquiries@ccth.org.uk
- Social care complaints – Council complaints team
☎ 0800 145 5343 📧 complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Health and care feedback – Healthwatch Tower Hamlets
☎ 0800 145 5343 📧 info@healthwatch@towerhamlets.co.uk