

Report to: East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board
Date: 23 July 2013
By: Becky Shaw, Chief Executive, East Sussex County Council
Title of report: Disabled Children's Charter
Purpose of report: To respond to a request to the Board to sign the Disabled Children's Charter

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is recommended to:

- 1. Agree not sign this, or any other Charter or similar document that asks the Board to commit to any specific areas or groups; and**
 - 2. Note the commitments the Board has made to supporting disabled children, young people, their parents and carers.**
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1. Background

1.1. The Every Disabled Child Matters Campaign launched a Disabled Children's Charter for Health and Wellbeing Boards in April 2013 to encourage Boards to commit to improving the quality of life and outcomes of disabled children, young people and their families, including children and young people with special educational needs and health conditions. Boards that signed the Charter would also agree to provide evidence of how they have met its commitments one year after signing. The Charter is at Appendix 1.

1.2. Seven East Sussex residents have written to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board in support of the Charter and asking the Board to sign it.

2. Analysis of Board commitments

2.1. An analysis of Charter commitments against the Board's current plans and activities indicate that the Board already meets the commitments:

- a. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment contains detailed and accurate information on disabled children and young people living in East Sussex, and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy provides public information on how the Board plans to meet their needs;
- b. The Board ran a far reaching public consultation on its Strategy and has embedded the participation of disabled children and young people and their parents and carers in the Board's work via the Assembly which includes and is open to commissioners and providers and forums that are led by, involve or represent disabled children, young people, their parents and carers;
- c. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy, based on local evidence of need, identified a priority to support those with special educational needs, disabilities and long term conditions to have a better quality of life and longer life expectancy. Its action plan includes a strategic outcome to "improve measurable outcomes for children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)" and the Board will measure progress through a target to increase the number of children and young people with SEND who have a personal budget attached to their Education, Health and Care Plan;
- d. The Strategy, which takes a whole life approach from conception to death, includes other priorities that should also have a positive impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of disabled children and young people and their parents and carers. The Strategy also states that the Board will promote earlier

intervention, greater integration and joined up working across, health, care and wider services including education; and

- e. The Board has already recognised the role and contribution of other boards and partnerships in East Sussex, including the Children and Young People's Trust, and its latest governance review puts forward proposals that will help to strengthen arrangements with them. These partnerships, including those with public and service user involvement, are also invited to the Board's Assembly and can therefore be involved in and contribute to the Board's work.

2.2. Evidencing the Board's commitments, actions and progress with regard to disabled children and young people will be through Health and Wellbeing Strategy action plan performance reports and the Board's annual report.

2.3. The Strategy, action plan performance and the underlying evidence base will be reviewed each year to ensure the Board continues to focus on the most pressing health and wellbeing needs in East Sussex and adds value to the vast amount of partnership work already underway to address people's health and wellbeing needs.

3. Conclusions

3.1. Whilst the Board fully supports the spirit of the Charter, it is committed to improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities across the entire population of East Sussex, focusing on a small number of big issues where it can make a real difference.

3.2. It is therefore not considered appropriate for the Board to sign this, or any Charter or similar document that asks the Board to commit to any specific geographical areas or population groups.

3.3. The Board's main duty is to produce a Health and Wellbeing Strategy based on an assessment of the needs of the local population as well as to promote greater integration of health and care so that people of all ages get the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

3.4. The Board's most recent assessment of local needs has led to a priority to support those with special educational needs and disabilities in its Health and Wellbeing Strategy, with related strategic outcomes and targets to 2016. This inclusion indicates the leading role the Board intends to play in improving not only the health and wellbeing of disabled children, young people and their families but also their experience of health and care services.

3.5. The Board can therefore reassure those who have contacted it regarding the Charter, and anyone else with similar concerns, that the Board is fully committed to meeting the health and wellbeing needs of disabled children, young people and their families and will work with them and others to achieve this.

Becky Shaw, Chief Executive, East Sussex County Council

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Disabled Children's Charter for Health and Wellbeing Boards

The **Health and Wellbeing Board** is committed to improving the quality of life and outcomes experienced by disabled children, young people and their families, including children and young people with special educational needs and health conditions. We will work together in partnership with disabled children and young people, and their families to improve universal and specialised services, and ensure they receive the support they need, when they need it. Disabled children and young people will be supported to fulfil their potential and achieve their aspirations and the needs of the family will be met so that they can lead ordinary lives.

By [date within 1 year of signing the Charter] our Health and Wellbeing Board will provide evidence that:

1. We have **detailed and accurate information** on the disabled children and young people living in our area, and provide public information on how we plan to meet their needs
2. We **engage directly with disabled children and young people** and their participation is embedded in the work of our Health and Wellbeing Board
3. We **engage directly with parent carers** of disabled children and young people and their participation is embedded in the work of our Health and Wellbeing Board
4. We set **clear strategic outcomes** for our partners to meet in relation to disabled children, young people and their families, monitor progress towards achieving them and hold each other to account
5. We **promote early intervention** and support for smooth transitions between children and adult services for disabled children and young people
6. We work with key partners to **strengthen integration** between health, social care and education services, and with services provided by wider partners
7. We provide **cohesive governance** and leadership across the disabled children and young people's agenda by linking effectively with key partners

Signed by Date

Position: Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board.

For guidance on meeting these commitments, please read the accompanying document: [Why sign the Charter?](#)

**every disabled
child matters**

Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) is the campaign to get rights and justice for every disabled child. It has been set up by four leading organisations working with disabled children and their families – Contact a Family, the Council for Disabled Children, Mencap and the Special Educational Consortium. EDCM is hosted by the National Children's Bureau, Charity registration number: 258825.

The Children's Trust, Tadworth is a national charity providing specialist services to disabled children and young people across the UK. These services include rehabilitation and support for children with acquired brain injury, expert nursing care for children with complex health needs, and residential education for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties at The School for Profound Education. Charity registration number: 288018. Find out more about the work of The Children's Trust, Tadworth at www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk


**The Children's Trust
Tadworth**
For children with multiple disabilities