
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee met on 14 June 2012

Present: Councillor Pragnell (Chairman)
Councillors Barnes, Healy, Ost, Scott, Taylor and Mrs Tidy
Janet Colvert (LINK representative)

Also present: Councillor Bentley, Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Councillor Elkin, Lead Cabinet Member for Children's and Adults' Services

1. Scrutiny review of dementia – caring for people with challenging needs

- 1.1 The Committee has completed its scrutiny review of dementia – caring for people with challenging needs. A copy of the Committee's full report has previously been circulated to all members and is available on request from Andy Cottell (Tel: 01273 481955).
- 1.2 Dementia is a syndrome in which there is a progressive decline in memory, reasoning, communication skills and the ability to carry out daily activities. Most people with dementia will eventually exhibit behaviour that challenges. There are a wide range of patterns of behaviour that challenge and these are often very individual and require a tailored response. Prevalence of dementia is expected to increase by 20% over the next decade.
- 1.3 Relatively few people with dementia and challenging behaviour will be cared for at home. However, approximately two-thirds of people in care homes have dementia and often it will be undiagnosed. Initiatives to reduce the inappropriate use of anti-psychotic drugs mean that care homes will need to be more equipped and better staffed to deal with challenging behaviour in the future.
- 1.4 The Council has recently carried out reviews of the capacity of care homes to respond effectively to dementia and challenging behaviour. This led to the development of a guide to improve the standard of dementia care in care homes and encourage more of them to adopt Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) status. A similar review of homecare providers has led the Council to recommend a systematic increase in dementia training for homecare staff.
- 1.5 The Carer's Breaks Dementia Service and the Care Home In-Reach Service play an important role in supporting care providers and carers in responding to challenging behaviour. It is clear that the increasing prevalence of dementia in East Sussex will increase the significance of this work and the teams should be evaluated to ensure that their effectiveness is maximised.
- 1.6 There is a lack of community awareness of dementia. The public often reacts in a negative way to seeing someone displaying challenging behaviour in a public place. To enhance community awareness of dementia, the Council should consider applying for the Alzheimer's Society "dementia friendly community" status for East Sussex or specific local communities. The Council should also develop the proposed dementia 'hub' on its website.
- 1.7 The Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee **recommends** to the County Council –

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

- 1.7.1 To endorse the implementation of the recommendations from the Adult Social Care report: Framework homecare providers and the care of people with dementia – a report on the current position with regard to specialist training, which envisage a stepped approach to upskilling homecare providers in relation to dementia:
- by actively promoting training to independent sector providers (initially managers);
 - by co-producing action plans with providers to embed the nationally recognised ‘Common core principles for supporting people with dementia’; and
 - by proposing changes to future contract specifications that will require providers to have achieved specific targets.
- 1.7.2 An evaluation of the Carer’s Breaks Dementia Service should be undertaken, to encompass the wider roles that have been developed by the service.
- 1.7.3 The Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee should consider the evaluation of the Continuous Improvement Strategy for Dementia Care Homes project in order to identify further actions required to develop practice.
- 1.7.4 Adult Social Care should examine all potential avenues to encourage or incentivise care homes to continue to develop the skills of their staff in relation to dementia.
- 1.7.5 The evaluation of the impact of the Care Home In-Reach Service should be reported to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- 1.7.6 East Sussex County Council and the Alzheimer’s Society should consider whether there are opportunities to better co-ordinate their training packages.
- 1.7.7 Consideration should be given to the potential benefits and resource implications of applying for “dementia friendly community” status for East Sussex or specific local communities.
- 1.7.8 The County Council should develop the proposed website dementia information ‘hub’ to support increased community awareness and availability of information to care providers.
- 1.7.9
[See also Report of the Cabinet, paragraph 3]

Peter Pragnell
Chairman

14 June 2012