

Introduction

The focus of this document is community based social care services for vulnerable adults in Kent. It is aimed at current and potential providers of care and support services, so they can understand the present and future demands and how services need to respond to the transformation journey the Council has embarked upon.

Kent County Council must find more effective ways of making public money go further and deliver better outcomes, this responsibility has never been more important than in the current context, as the financial settlement between central and local government is more challenging than ever.

We want to stimulate a diverse market for care that offers people choice so that they are supported to remain as independent as possible, for as long as possible and enjoy a good quality of life, within their local communities. We need a wide range of high quality services that maintain the population's wellbeing and independence and supports those with complex or long term conditions.

Demographic forecasts suggest that the number of people funding their own care will continue to increase and we must redefine our relationship with the market and Kent's residents to offer greater choice in service delivery and greater transparency regarding the quality of care offered, whether the Council manages an individual's care or not.

We believe significant changes in the social care market are necessary to respond to the changing demographics and economic environment. Transformation of services will give us an opportunity to work with the market, including private providers, small and medium enterprises and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in new ways.

This Market Position Statement forms part of our approach to market shaping and development. We have started on a journey of transformation and have been using co-productive models and approaches; we will continue to facilitate an ongoing dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders and citizens. We think this is essential in order to develop future effective approaches to care and support. We recognise that we have a wide variety of skills and knowledge to draw upon, from people using and providing services. We know that it is crucial to harness and use this resource as we all face the challenges ahead of us.

People Self-Funding their Care and Support

The Care Act gave new duties to local authorities to facilitate and shape their market for adult care and support, in order that it meets the needs of all people in their area who need care and support, whether arranged or funded by the state, by the individual themselves, or in other ways.

Adult Social Care is means tested, unlike health services which are free at the point of delivery. This means there are many people who fund their own care, in whole or in part.

In the future, the number of people who will fund their own care will grow. While accurate local data is not available, national studies suggest that between 15% and 57% of older people currently fund their own care in residential settings (depending on local levels of deprivation), equating to around 45% of all registered care home places. In addition, our estimations show around 40% of people currently fund their own care at home entirely, with others topping up local authority funded care to some extent.

This will mean more people will need information and advice and a diverse range of support without approaching the local authority, it will be increasingly important for all providers to think about enabling access to their services for those who will purchase with them directly.