

# Carers Week 2018: Accommodation Event

## Carers Recommendations and Issues Raised

Carers Said	Iain MacBeath's response
<p>Planning for the future should be a regular part of a person's annual Assessment/Review, from transition planning onwards and could also be discussed as part of the annual Carer's Assessment/Review.</p> <p><i>Note: This should happen for all client groups and include the 0 – 25 service, the Adults with Disability Service, the Community Mental Health Service and CGL Spectrum as appropriate.</i></p>	<p>I agree. Our social care practitioners should ask if people are thinking about alternative accommodation and planning for the future, regardless of their age or disability. And people can raise this with us at any time. I will ask that this is added to the guidance for social workers on annual reviews and care assessments.</p>
<p>There should be a clear accommodation pathway – possibly supported by a central online gateway providing direct links to information about housing options.</p>	<p>We have a lot of information available about different types of specialist accommodation available for older or disabled people (like care homes or supported living). But Hertfordshire County Council does not have general housing responsibilities (this is the role of the ten District Councils in Hertfordshire) so we must signpost or support people to deal directly with those councils. Each of our teams has a dedicated housing link with each district council to progress things – and each district council does things differently and has different policies about what they will allow. And there is a general shortage of housing in Hertfordshire</p>

	<p>meaning people are sometimes disappointed. However I will think further – particularly about how we can better support the 0-25 cohort.</p>
<p>People who want to move into supported housing/flexicare housing/or other accommodation options should be allocated a named worker to co-ordinate the process and to support them and their carers through it.</p> <p><i>Note: The named worker could be the person’s Case Manager or Care Co-ordinator but does not necessarily have to be a qualified health or social care worker. They do need to be well informed about housing options and the accommodation pathway and to work in a person-centred manner.</i></p>	<p>For younger people with disabilities, this does generally happen – unless we know it will take several months / more than a year for housing to become available. For older people, we do try to keep the same worker allocated. I will take this back to the teams to see if we can do more on this.</p>
<p>In line with a person-centred approach, people should be offered local accommodation options so that their new home is in a familiar area, near to existing friends, family, social networks, day services, volunteering or paid employment. This will help to reduce isolation and to encourage recovery for mental health and drug/alcohol service users.</p>	<p>I agree. And we always strive to do this. But there is a general shortage of accommodation in Hertfordshire. We are looking to encourage the building of much more Flexicare Housing and supported living – and our politicians agreed a new Accommodation Strategy in December 2017. We will be looking for new partners to help us build and operate these.</p>
<p>People should have a named social care professional or care manager to ensure consistency and to provide a known and trusted contact.</p>	<p>As above, I will see what more we can do. Hertfordshire was a pilot council for the national ‘named worker’ project – and this is being evaluated.</p>

<b>Carers are Worried about</b>	<b>Iain MacBeath Replied</b>
A shortage of sheltered and supported housing in South East Hertfordshire.	Yes – this is indeed the area of the county with the least sheltered housing and supported housing. This area is our first priority and we are in advanced talks with Broxbourne Borough Council and East Herts District Council to build more.
Difficulty in finding and recruiting Support Workers and Care Workers to work with people in supported accommodation or in their family homes and a consequent lack of continuity and consistency in the support teams. Carers considered that the shortage of Support/Care staff is aggravated by the cost of housing and the cost of living in Hertfordshire as this are relatively low paid jobs. This requires a system-wide response.	I agree. Recruiting and retaining a high quality caring workforce is my biggest concern – and lack of affordable housing for those workers on low salaries is a big part of the reason we don't recruit more staff. As well as raising this with the Government through national contacts and MPs, the County Council is looking to build thousands of homes over the next 10 years and a high proportion of these will be affordable homes. The NHS is similarly worried about this.
Transport issues where people are housed in rural areas.	We intend to extend our dial-a-ride services to assist people where there are not regular bus services.
Vulnerable people not receiving sufficient support if they leave the family home and move into supported housing or that support being removed subsequently.	The Care Act says we must provide people with sufficient support to meet their eligible care needs. And Hertfordshire is one of the higher spenders on adult social care in the country. But as the workforce does not grow in line with demand, and as the council's budget is reduced we will need to look for ways to get

	people support or activities in their local community rather than with paid staff.
<b>Carers Asked</b>	<b>Iain MacBeath Answered</b>
In <i>exceptional circumstances</i> a person in receipt of Direct Payments can use the funding to pay a family member, who lives in the same house, to provide them with care and support. What is the process for agreeing that circumstances are exceptional?	We do this through our usual care assessment process. When a Direct Payment is discussed as an option for someone, we can have a conversation about a family member being paid to care for the person in need of support. The usual concerns are about whether that is sustainable (i.e. the person doing the caring will not be exhausted), that the person will be safe and that there are alternative arrangements should something unexpected happen. As we struggle to find care workers, payments to family members is happening more and more.
What can be included in Disability Related Expenditure when financially assessing someone in respect of social care charges? <i>Note: Guidance is required.</i>	We have added a lot more information on our website about DREs. <a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/care-and-carers/arranging-and-paying-for-care/paying-for-your-care-costs.aspx#DynamicJumpMenuManager_1_Anchor_6">https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/care-and-carers/arranging-and-paying-for-care/paying-for-your-care-costs.aspx#DynamicJumpMenuManager_1_Anchor_6</a>  We will facilitate a workshop with carers on the material and guidance we have produced so far to see how this can be improved.

<p>Under the Care Act 2014 an annual review of a care plan should take place ‘no later than every 12 months’, i.e. at least annually. What percentage of care plans within ADS and the Older People’s Service have had an annual review over the past two years? Should carers have a review of their Carers assessment within the time timescales?</p>	<p>In the year up to June 2018 (my latest information) we completed reviews on 49% of people aged 18-64 and 70% of people aged 65 and over. This is an average of 60% overall. We can never get to 100% because many older people pass away before their review in the care home is due. But we have set a target of 70% overall. We have just recruited an additional five reviewing officers in the Adults with Disability Service to provide an extra focus on the 18 – 64 year old group.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>We Wanted to Know</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What You Told us</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What supported housing is available for our relative</li> <li>• How our relative can access that housing – do they have to register on the local Council’s housing list or do they approach housing providers direct</li> <li>• What is ‘affordable’ housing</li> <li>• What eligibility criteria applies</li> <li>• What is the role of their relative’s social worker/ care co-ordinator in helping them to move in supported or flexi-care accommodation</li> <li>• What financial support there is for paying rent and Council tax</li> <li>• How the social care support is provided and what</li> </ul>	<p>I won’t attempt to answer each of these bullet points because some are issues for District Councils and some require a lot of explanation. But I will pass the whole document to my teams as examples of what people are asking about accommodation and whether our current offer and information could answer the points. Thank you for taking the time to ask.</p> <p>Iain MacBeath  Director of Adult Care Services  17 August 2018</p>

it can consist of

- What are the costs of the social care support likely to be and, in the case of a large support package, do costs include food/drink/travel + washing costs for support staff
- Whether the supported housing strategy includes support for people to remain living with family – on the style of a ‘Granny Annexe’ – or for families to come up with solutions, i.e. how flexible is the system.