

The Care Act and the Information and Advice Sector: A very short briefing

Act highlights

- Comes into force on 1 April 2015.
- New emphasis on preventing and delaying needs for care and support – not just waiting till crisis point.
- Embeds rights to choice through care plans and personal budgets.
- Places onus on local authorities to support people with information, advice and advocacy to understand their rights and responsibilities.
- New onus on local authorities to support people to plan for their future needs.
- Puts carers on the same footing as those they care for.

Relevance for Information and Advice

Section 1 Clause 4 of [the Act](#) *specifically* relates to Information and Advice. All of sections 1-5 are somewhat relevant to the sector. There is a huge emphasis on prevention: there is a new expectation that local authorities deliver services that *prevent* problems. This includes ensuring there are information and advice services for everyone, not just people already “in the system” via receipt of benefits or as an existing service user.

There is an expectation that there is good quality and wide ranging information available to both residents and carers of residents, regardless of whether they have an immediate care need.

Local authorities are expected to have an information and advice strategy and plan in place which links with health and social care services. This must be written in consultation with key stakeholders.

Strong emphasis on financial information and ensuring everyone has access to independent information to help them plan, prepare for and pay for care costs. This does not necessarily need to be free.

The Act demands that authorities take a holistic approach to assessing individual people’s needs and proactively seeking to support people before their needs become critical.

Further reading and resources

a) Care Act 2014: statutory guidance for implementation - [view](#)

b) Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) 3 part guide:

1. Shaping the future - [view](#)
2. Gearing up for change - [view](#)
3. Seeing the benefits - [view](#)

c) TLAP Commissioning for Support Planning Brokerage Tool - [view](#)

The new commissioning landscape

Organisation	Services Commissioned
NHS England	
	primary medical services
	dental services
	community pharmacy
	specialised services
	offender health care
	health care of the Armed Forces and their families
	Health visitors and family nursing
Public Health England	
	National information for healthy lives
CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups)	
	planned hospital care
	rehabilitative care
	urgent and emergency care
	most community health services
	mental health and learning disability services
Local Authorities	
	public health services and social care

Transition period

There is not any more money available for councils to commission services (although they have all received a small pot from the DoH's "Better Care" fund to support implementation) so there will be a period of transition and potentially re-jigging of resources and allocations.

For boroughs in bi- or tri-borough constellations, this is likely to be even more of a challenge.

Suggested next steps

- CEOs and managers in advice sector read up on the Act and the guidance (cf. overleaf)
- Discuss the Act at borough Advice Forum.
- Develop map of commissioning landscape for - incorporating all the above.
- Most boroughs have appointed "Care Act Implementers" –find out who this is.
- Look at alliance commissioning model – cf. examples in TLAP guidance.
- Work together as partners in borough to make clear to local authority sector is best placed to support them to implement Act and meet responsibilities.
- Get involved as key stakeholders in development of borough Info & Advice strategy.

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