



# Information and Advice Strategy

2018 – 2021



**Hertfordshire County Council  
Adult Care Services  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/adults](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/adults)**



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## 2. Vision for information and advice

Our vision is for an information and advice service available to everyone that promotes the opportunity for people to lead healthy, purposeful and independent lives. That helps people to take control and make well informed choices about the care and support they want - and how they find it. Our service will offer a personalised experience that embraces digital innovation and ensures accessibility is at the core of everything.

The Connected Lives model for Hertfordshire sets out our ambition for people to live the life they want – with independence, choice and citizenship available to everyone. Our information and advice service is key to this; ensuring people can connect to communities, technology, services, networks, employment and positive activities.

## 3. Background

Information and advice is core to supporting people to lead healthy, independent lives where they have choice and control. It can help people to understand the care and support system and how to access services from the council; and from community and voluntary organisations. It can provide wellbeing and crisis support, aiming to prevent or reduce care and support needs and helping people at risk be safe.

Information and advice is a top strategic priority for Adult Care Services and is set out in our three and 15 year plans. Our focus is to:

- Support people to prepare and plan for a longer life – staying healthy, resilient and active
- Support more people to access community and informal services and opportunities – better for their quality of life whilst ensuring formal care resources are targeted at those with the greatest needs
- Help people in crisis and ill-health to remain independent
- Give people a say in the services we offer

- Tell people about the services there are and help them choose what's right for them
- Support to family carers
- Explain paying for care and how to find independent advice

#### 4. The Care Act

The Care Act sets out the information and advice duty for local authorities and says what we need to tell all residents and people with care and support needs:

- How the social care system works and how people can access it
- What's available and a choice of how people receive services (to include health, housing and employment)
- Financial advice to understand care charges, ways to pay, money management and where to get independent final advice
- How to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing

Key people who need information and advice:

- People wanting to plan for their future
- People who may develop care and support needs in the future
- Family members and carers
- People subject to safeguarding concerns
- People in prison
- People assessed as being in need of care and support
- Young people becoming adults



#### Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) Information and Advice 'I Statements'

**Making it Real** is a national framework for how to do personalised care and support. They have developed a set of personalised principles that focus on what matters to people. The **Information and Advice 'I Statements'** describe what good looks like from an individual's perspective.

- I can get information and advice that helps me think about and plan my life.
- I can get information and advice about my health and how I can be as well as possible – physically, mentally and emotionally.
- I can get information and advice that is accurate, up to date and provided in a way that I can understand.
- I know about the activities, social groups, leisure and learning opportunities in my community, as well as health and care services.
- I know what my rights are and can get information and advice on all the options for my health, care and housing.
- I know how to access my health and care records and decide which personal information can be shared with other people, including my family, care staff, school or college.

## 5. Our information and advice service for adult care and support

The Information and Advice Service is a made up of range of information access points, materials and online platforms. It also includes credible care and support information provided by health services and the community and voluntary sector in Hertfordshire and nationally.

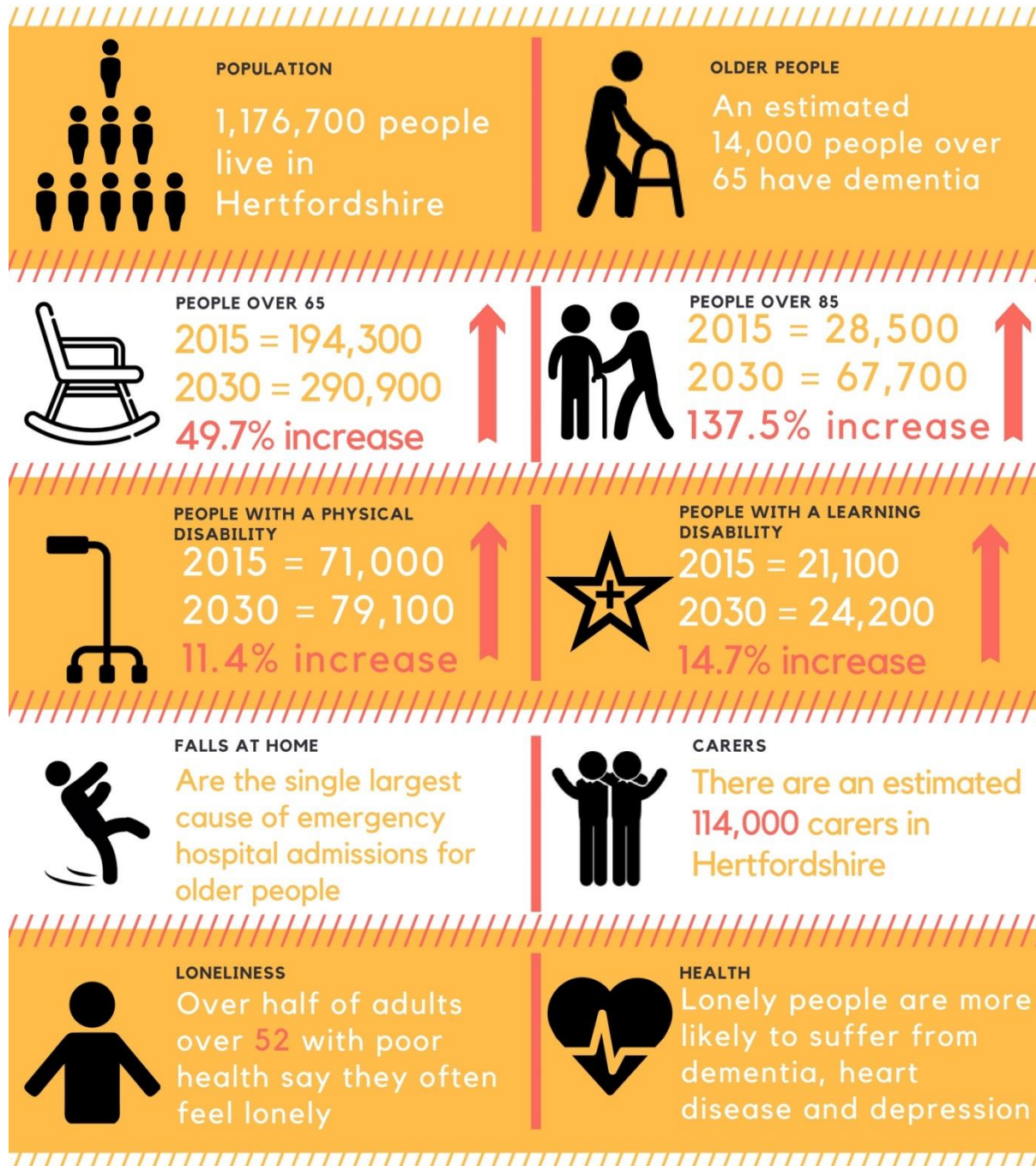
### Hertfordshire's Information and Advice Service for adult care and support



## 6. National and Local Context

### The Hertfordshire Picture

# ADULT CARE AND SUPPORT IN HERTFORDSHIRE



SOURCE:  
Hertfordshire 15 Year Plan  
Herts Insight

## **Our response to the current social and economic climate**

Hertfordshire is responding to the current social and economic pressures in social care by ensuring we target care resources to those most in need; and place more emphasis on wellbeing, prevention and enablement. We are moving away from thinking about needs and services to focus on outcomes for people and how we can support them to be citizens and get the most out of life.

**Connected Lives** is our new aspirational model of social care in Hertfordshire that places more emphasis on prevention, enablement and community opportunities. We think the idea of connecting people with what is important to them will allow them to stay independent and prevent or reduce reliance on formal care services.

Information and advice is a core and essential element of providing everyone, including people with care needs, carers and professionals the tools and knowledge to connect people with people and support networks, with knowledge, opportunity, personal independence, aspiration and positive daily occupation.

## **How information and advice can help a changing society**

- Motivate and inspire people to live healthier and active lives to reduce, avoid or prevent health and social care needs.
- Guide people to supportive social networks and community services to reduce the demand on publically funded services.
- Support people who are living longer to plan for their future.
- Set out choices and opportunities to ensure people living longer with disabilities, dementia and other long-term health conditions can be more in control of their own lives and play a full part in family, economic and community life.
- Make sure the increasing number of family and unpaid carers can access information and advice, support, training, employment and benefits.
- Involve and include people to help design, deliver and monitor good quality care services that people want and need.
- Capitalise in advances in digital technology and social media to create new possibilities for providing care and support, with people and families able to co-ordinate their care.
- Create opportunities for seamless information and advice with social care as part of a broader interconnected system with health, housing and community services.

## 7. Information and advice priorities

**Priority 1:** Connect people to information and advice to improve their outcomes and support key Adult Care Services (ACS) prevention priorities

- Work with partners to collate or develop self-help information for people to prevent or reduce the impact of people experiencing crisis including people:
  - who are bereaved or suddenly alone
  - experiencing carer breakdown
  - experiencing new health issues or long term conditions
  - information for distant relatives
- Develop seamless information and advice with partners and other council departments on:
  - housing
  - employment and volunteering for people with disabilities
  - assistive technology
  - social isolation
- Ensure people have opportunities for face to face contact and can talk to the right person from the start:
  - Promote a culture of ‘no wrong door’ in Hertfordshire with wider HCC staff and community organisations.
  - Explore new opportunities to offer social care information and advice in community and business settings such as pharmacies and veterinary surgeries.
  - Use our Connected Lives strategy to offer face-to-face meetings with people to assess their care needs and promote community opportunities.
  - Work with public health and libraries to promote social care information and advice
- Promote the benefits and impact of positive life choices
  - staying healthy and preparing for older age
  - paying for care
- Implement digital solutions such as instant web chat, self-service care records and online contingency planning to respond quickly and efficiently to people
- Develop staff with training and awareness to understand, develop and promote information and advice as part of Connected Lives practice.

### **Priority 2: Inspire people to connect to digital technology and online services**

Inspire people to access more online services to improve the customer journey, reduce costs and make information accessible to more people:

- Create opportunities to access information and advice through digital technology
- Digital self-service with care records

- Increase the use of social media to give information and advice
- Encourage people to use assistive technology and help staff and partners to promote it
- Promote community resources to people

### **Priority 3: Work in partnership to give people a more seamless information and advice service**

Work with health services and other council departments in Hertfordshire and the voluntary and community sector in the production of high quality public facing information to give people a seamless service:

- Co-develop health and social care information to support key ACS priorities and enhance existing pathways
- Tailor information and advice through supporting the development of shared care records
- Develop toolkits and training packages to support partners and businesses to deliver information and advice directly

### **Priority 4: Inform the commissioning strategy for information and advice provision including HertsHelp**

Develop HertsHelp and other information and advice commissioned services to ensure our information and advice offer is streamlined and targeted to offer an efficient and independent service that is focussed on ACS priorities. Ensure all information and advice services promote wellbeing and prevention strategies.

- Understand the current data, costs, users and referrals to support development
- Keep a strategic oversight of all information and advice commissioned services
- Use the HertsHelp website to signpost to preventative and self-help information
- Marketing and communication at places with the greatest impact
- Coordinate campaigns across the community and voluntary sector and collaborate with the HCC corporate communications team

### **Priority 5: The ACS gateway**

Review and develop the most appropriate service to deal with first contact from people, to deliver Connected Lives and ensure that wellbeing and preventative needs can be met with information and advice where appropriate:

- Develop a new strategic model for first contact and information and advice making sure that all aspects of the Connected Lives approach are supported
- Involve key partners to identify opportunities where our approach to information and advice can be reflected in commissioned services and joint projects
- Align with the access workstream of the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) to shape what integrated access will look like and ensure it meets the needs of people and follows our principles



- Align and shape the Serco Customer Service Centre (CSC) and Information and Advice service improvement process, and our thinking about new approaches for when the current contract arrangements end in March 2021

## Priority 6: Involvement and Accessibility

Ensure our information and advice service is accessible and provides what people want and need in a way they can understand:

- As a matter of course produce video versions, BSL video, easy read and large print versions of all key leaflets and web sections
- Promote accessible information and advice routes to target groups
- Provide simple guidance to explain the information people may receive from frontline teams (letters, assessments, care plans) and where they can find further sources of support.
- Ensure all information and advice starts with what people need and want by engaging with people and co-producing material where possible
- Always test information and advice on people and act on feedback
- Case study and myth busting around key topics
- Re-procure video relay interpreting service for BSL users and DisabledGo accessibility guides
- Promote the NHS Accessible Information Standard and review compliance

## 8. Information and advice principles



1. Involve people who use services and their carers to develop our information and advice service. We will always ask for feedback and act on it when we can
2. Our information and advice will be made available in a range of formats and through a range of channels, taking into account people with sensory needs, people who don't speak English and people who have a learning disability
3. Let's keep it simple, using informal language and plain English. Wherever possible we will have the same source of information for the public and professionals
4. We will always check that information and advice is understood and can be acted on, which may include offering an independent advocate
5. We won't reinvent the wheel – and signpost to other credible sources of information. We will work with partners to develop consistent and proportionate information and advice

6. We will always take opportunities to connect people to opportunities, promoting wellbeing and signposting people to preventative and universal services – whether we provide them or not
7. We will make sure that those most vulnerable are kept safe from harm and that people know how to keep themselves safe or report abuse or harm if it occurs

## 9. Evaluating the strategy

We will regularly review and publish information about the effectiveness of the information and advice service locally, including customer satisfaction. The measures for information and advice in the ACS Three Year plan are set out below:

### INFORMATION AND ADVICE TARGETS

How we will measure success	2017/18 performance	2018/19 target	2019/20 target	2020/21 target
We will increase the proportion of people whose enquiries are successfully resolved at first contact (No further services or Signposted)	62%	65%	67%	69%
We will increase people's satisfaction with information and advice	84%	86%	87%	88%
We will increase the number of people accessing assistive technology	7,000	8,050	9,000	12,000
We will reduce the proportion of people contacting us again after receiving information and advice from the social care access service	31%	25%	22%	20%

Adult Care Services Three Year Plan 2018 – 2021

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For further information and to feed back on this strategy please contact:

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