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**Living Independently In Blaenau  
Gwent In The 21st Century**

**Commissioning Strategy For Older  
People Aged 65 Plus  
2006 – 2021**

October 2006

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This fifteen year commissioning strategy has been formulated to achieve a number of goals:

- a) to respond to the express wishes of older people and their carers, meeting their changing needs and expectations
- b) to satisfy national standards and give full implementation to the National Service Framework for Older People and the WAG 10 year strategy for social care 'Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities', in partnership with the National Health Service

- Managing our affairs
- Valuing our staff
- Promoting partnership
- Being clear about roles and responsibilities

Health plans and priorities also have a major influence on the development of the strategy, as social care provision and health care provision need to complement and support each other. The key health developments locally are:

- Clinical Futures – proposals for the reconfiguration of secondary hospital care in the pan Gwent area
- Blaenau Gwent 2010
- Primary Care Estates – proposals for the redesign of general practice arrangements

### 3. BACKGROUND

Local authorities are in the forefront of dealing with the implications of an ageing population and in re-defining their role and place within their local communities. This requires a fundamental change in attitude towards old age, moving away from the negative stereotypes of dependence and loss to a more positive appreciation of the value of older people.

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services to meet the requirements of Making the Connections (2004) to work together as the “Welsh Public Service”.

The project has consisted of five major components:

- A comprehensive needs analysis
- Research into best practice
- A participation stage to gather views from a wide range of stakeholders about the model of service delivery
- Preparation of a draft commissioning strategy proposals
- An extensive consultation process with all key stakeholders on those proposals

#### 4. THE VISION FOR OLDER PEOPLE’S SERVICES

The analysis and research undertaken as part of the processes has constructed a clear vision for future service delivery. The vision contains a number of elements and these are set out below: -

1. A modern flexible and responsive service that enables older people to maximise their independence and live with appropriate support in their communities.
2. A 24-hour service, 365 days per year service.
3. A combination of borough-wide specialist services, combined with local services that reflect the 4 main communities of Blaenau Gwent - Abertillery, Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale and Tredegar.
4. A ‘whole-system’ approach with a range services for a range of needs and excellent links with healthcare providers, transport, housing and leisure services to ensure the best quality of life possible.
5. Complementary provision with Health, combining social care commissioning intentions with healthcare commissioning intentions, such as Tredegar 2008, Blaenau Gwent 2010, Clinical Futures and the Primary Care Estates Strategy.
6. Ensuring that ‘Best Value’ is achieved in service delivery, making sure that the people of Blaenau Gwent derive the most benefit from available resources.
7. Working with a range of partners from the planning stage.

#### 5. DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Over recent years there have been a number of developments both locally and nationally that have required a review of existing service provision, these include:

- The key strategic aims and core themes of the Council, including the aim for individuals to live as independently as possible with access to services that are local, high quality, efficient, safe, timely and delivered in modern facilities.
- Key national strategies such as ‘Making the Connections’, the ‘Strategy for Older People in Wales’, the ‘National Service Framework for Older People’ and ‘Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities’. The intention is to promote health and social care policies which enable older people to live at home with appropriate support as long as is possible.

- The demographic pressures we face in the future, with increasing numbers of frail older people, many of who will require social care and health care.
- The need to adapt service provision to meet the changing expectations of older people in the future.
- The developing role of Health and Social Care partnerships to effectively plan a future “whole system” service for Blaenau Gwent. This approach will further develop the integration of Social Care and Health care, to provide a ‘seamless’ service and break down traditional boundaries and barriers between social care and health.
- The Joint Review of 2003 stipulated that Blaenau Gwent needed to develop, in partnership, a vision for a range of services to meet the needs of older people to live independently rather than in residential care, by reconfiguring provision of “traditional and often expensive” services.
- The findings of the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales Report on Adults Services (2005) that Blaenau Gwent places a high number of people in a care home setting whilst supporting a higher than average number of people in their own homes.
- The recommendations of an independent report (M Boyle, 2004) of older people’s services in Blaenau Gwent, which include the need to develop a clear strategy and the need for the Council to ‘start planning for the replacement of its existing homes’.
- An internal audit report, ‘Residential Homes Options Appraisal’ which recommends considering all options, deciding on any preferred option and ‘encouraging “clients to stay in their own homes, where possible, rather than placing them in residential care”’.

This commissioning strategy responds to the above whilst recognising that a coherent range of services will only be established through a combination of joint and collaborative approaches that change the status quo.

In carrying through the programme of change, outlined in this report, the Social Services Department will place the emphasis on caring ‘with’ people instead of caring ‘for’ people. Social care provision being seen much more as an exercise in partnership, more fully utilising the resources of individuals themselves, their families and local communities as well as those of all the other care and mainstream services.

## 6. PROFILE OF BLAENAU GWENT’S OLDER CITIZENS

Table 1:

Population Projections, South East Wales, (area including Blaenau Gwent and nine other local authorities), by age group and year.

Age groups	2003	2006	2012	2016	2022
45-64 years	341,100	354,100	374,300	379,000	374,900
65-74 years	118,600	120,100	137,100	151,000	153,200
75 and over	107,100	109,300	115,400	122,600	144,400
Total 65+	225,700	229,400	252,500	263,600	297,600
All ages	1,408,100	1,428,100	1,456,700	1,479,600	1,513,600

## 7. FUTURE SERVICE PRIORITIES AND COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS

The needs analysis has identified the likely demographic pressures that have to be faced in the future. It also analysed current service provision, which has highlighted that there are some over provision as well as significant gaps.

In response to the above the service model proposed is based on some provision being borough wide, with services that respond to needs across the whole area, alongside services that are based in each of the main communities, providing core more local community based services.

### Borough-wide services:

- The new District General Hospital being developed in Ebbw Vale
- A Hospital Discharge Team, facilitating hospital discharge
- Specialist health services, including regional hospital provision
- Specialist services – e.g. the mental health social work team and support for people with learning disabilities
- Intermediate Care facilities, where social care and health combine to prevent admission to hospital or institutional care and provide support enabling people to regain their independence
- Reablement services that support people to regain skills and confidence
- Specialist domiciliary care services, for example caring for those who are elderly mentally infirm
- Rapid response nursing services
- Supported living facilities (for people with dementia – linked to extra care)
- The SMART House, to demonstrate the benefits/possibilities from assistive technology
- Supporting People Floating Support Services that help people to keep their our accommodation
- Improved transport links, such as the new railway link, enabling older people to access mainstream services

### Core Community-based Services

In each of the 4 main communities: Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, Brynmawr and Abertillery, the following services will be developed.

- Long term care:
  - Fewer older people being placed into institutional care, including standard residential care;
  - Less standard residential care places;
  - Increased availability of specialist residential and nursing care for those who are elderly mentally infirm;
- Housing
  - Development of Extra Care Sheltered Housing, supported by specialist personal care; mixed tenure & levels of need.  
(There is potential to have some services for people with dementia included with the Extra Care, e.g. a linked dementia bungalow/unit)
  - General needs housing for older people (Sheltered accommodation)
- Assessment & Care Management/Social Work support





- The Directorate will seek to commission, jointly with Health, an increased number of placements in independent sector care homes with nursing, particularly for those suffering from advanced dementia. We expect EMI residential places to increase by 90, nursing EMI places by 98 and standard nursing places by 118.

## Priority 2: Domiciliary Care

As the provision of residential care is reduced, it will be necessary to expand significantly the range, volume and quality of services available to maintain people in their own homes by, moving resources from residential services to community provision. Domiciliary support services will, in future, be more sharply focused on promoting the capacity of older people to live independently.

The in-house home care service will be concentrated on more specialist provision. These will include a focus on dementia care and re-ablement programmes to reduce the longer-term need for domiciliary support. The service will be further developed to increase the range and flexibility of service provision; through seeking to adapt the times staff and services are available moving towards a 24/7 approach.

In addition we will seek to introduce 'Brokerage' arrangements to better match demand and supply, whilst also freeing up assessment and care management staff from some of these processes.

Supporting People monies will be used to the full to fund the prescribed support functions at all levels of need.

The commissioning framework for independent sector domiciliary care providers will be revised to focus on large-scale longer-term maintenance support and more block or cost and volume contracts, moving away from such a reliance on spot contracts. We will also seek to attract more providers to facilitate increased choice, flexibility and value for money. In developing a more robust framework the Directorate will allow for more availability for Direct Payments.

### Commissioning Intention:

- Develop a night service, estimated costs of £236k
- Develop a Twilight Service, estimated costs of £133k, plus £100k in each of years 2 & 3, total eventual cost of £333k
- Develop a domiciliary support service for Extra Care Sheltered Housing, estimated costs based on 40 units with a third of low, medium and high care needs, estimated costs as pro rata for night service less travel, £250k
- Develop a reablement service, estimated costs of £65k.
- Expand the service to accommodate up to 400 additional service users, based on a mixed economy of care and increased use of both in –:bs.ice usebaaK6B

activities, requiring the support and involvement of the Local Authority's Lifelong Learning and Leisure departments possibly with the support of voluntary and community groups. The former includes more specialist day care, which will be delivered by the Directorate, in conjunction with Health, on a personalised basis, aimed at restoring people's capacity for independent living.

Commissioning Intention: The Directorate will develop more opportunities for older people to access mainstream services, underpinned by an appropriate strategy on transport.

The Directorate will support voluntary and community groups to take on a lead role in providing a fuller range of day care opportunities for older people.

The Directorate wishes, with Health, to undertake a comprehensive re-design of the current day care provided by both agencies, focussed on rehabilitative support and day respite.

#### Priority 4: Assistive Technology

To collaborate with Housing and Health in providing a twenty-four hour support service to contain many more of the crises affecting older people without recourse to emergency decision-making and to exploit to the full the advances in assistive technology to keep older people safe and supported in their own homes.

Commissioning Intention: The Directorate will expand, with Housing, the range of support services offered by the Piper Community Alarm Service, backed up by rapid response services, capable of containing situations where no family carers are available.

The Directorate will take a corporate lead, with Health, in developing a strategy for increased investment in Assistive Technology (e.g. alarms, reminder and energy cut-off systems) with the aim of reducing the requirement for domiciliary visiting and diverting staff to where they are most needed, to meet the increased demand overall, for services.

#### Priority 5: Direct Payments

To facilitate independence and choice by giving many older people the opportunity to take charge of their own care and to influence wider service developments. This will require the availability of sufficient support mechanisms and also independently-provided facilities in

The provision may include special independent living facilities for older people with dementia. The potential of a 'Retirement Village' with up to 200 units of accommodation is not being prioritised as the local community focus of the population would not support such a model.

The suitability of existing housing, both public and private, will also be critical and opportunities to adapt and improve accommodation will be required, including for example disabled facilities grants and minor adaptations.

Commissioning Intention: The Directorate has collaborated with Housing colleagues to develop, in partnership with Linc Cymru a Registered Social Landlord, a bid to develop a forty unit ECHS scheme in 2008/09. The eventual aim is to develop up to four ECHS schemes in Blaenau Gwent.

#### Priority 7: Intermediate Care

To establish equitably across the Borough Special Care Centres that are the focal points for delivering services to older people with a higher and/or more complex level of needs. These Centres will offer a full range of residential and non-residential services for both short and longer term needs.

Commissioning Intention: The Directorate wishes to develop these Centres very much in partnership with Health, with the aim of jointly commissioning Intermediate Care and other services on both a residential and a community outreach basis. The Centres will, amongst other purposes, become the hub of services for older people with chronic health and other disadvantaging conditions, like dementia, who require intensive care management. The range and type of services offered by these Centres will vary according to the needs of the communities they serve.

These Centres will also act as the focal point for the support of carers, offering

Equally, all of the agencies will need to agree on, and resource a comprehensive Training and Workforce Development Strategy to equip staff from all sectors with the necessary skills.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

More detailed work on these commissioning intentions and resources will take place