

Health Sub-Committee

Date of Meeting:	16th Feb 2012	Agenda Item No.	
Title:	Dementia needs assessment		
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1 BACKGROUND

The dementia health needs assessment aims to assess current and future health needs of adults with dementia in order to inform future commissioning. It does this by: describing the national and local context for this work; providing epidemiological information on the prevalence of dementia in adults; examining the size and severity of health issues and inequalities within the area to provide an assessment of needs; examining current service utilisation and identify unmet needs; consulting with key stakeholders including carers to obtain a wide range of views on local needs; and making recommendations for further action to improve care and outcomes for individuals with dementia.

2 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The report was informed by work with patients, carers, statutory, voluntary and health service sectors from a wide range of services in Bromley. The partnerships formed will continue as the needs assessment is finalised and turned into a full strategy based on local and national guidelines.

3 OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES

The dementia needs assessment is a new document which recommends the following priorities:

- Training should be focused to a greater extent on person-centred care.
- Mechanisms for continual improvement should be put in place for care homes and respite staff.
- Expansion of the memory service to the levels set out in the national dementia strategy should be strongly considered as this will improve the levels of early diagnosis and in the longer term should be either cost neutral or saving.

- Many separate organisations disseminate excellent information about dementia. However, stakeholders felt there was a need for these to be better coordinated which would reduce overlap and any inconsistencies that exists in the current multiple providers.
- Processes should be put in place to ensure all individuals are offered a social needs assessment, rather than having to request one or be specifically referred for review.
- People with dementia, while they have capacity, should have the opportunity to discuss the use of advance statements, advance decisions to refuse treatment and local protocols should be put in place to formalise these discussions.
- The development of psycho-educational and peer support programmes for carers should be supported.
- Additional work should be carried out to determine the requirement for a liaison service over and above the current informal provision which may not be sustainable in the longer term and such a service is important for the quality of inpatient care of people with dementia.
- Greater flexibility of respite care provision should be promoted as this was felt important for stakeholders.

4 CHALLENGES

Many challenges were identified by the report, however, in summary:

- Dementia is progressive and largely irreversible syndrome that is characterised by a widespread impairment of mental function.
- A significant population of black and minority ethnic groups have dementia as well as individuals with young onset dementia and learning difficulties who require tailored services to their needs which differ to the majority of those with dementia.
- There is good evidence regarding the costs and benefits of implementing the national guidelines for dementia.
- The memory service is not currently staffed at the levels as set out in the national dementia strategy and increasing its capacity and services should improve the number of people being diagnosed in the earlier stages of disease
- People with dementia and their carers should have the opportunity to discuss the use of advance statements, advance decisions to refuse treatment and local protocols should be put in place to formalise these discussions as they are not widely used or promoted amongst patients with dementia.
- Carers of people with dementia are able to have an assessment of emotional, psychological and social needs, however, it is not always offered and in many cases must requested by the carer.
- Meeting the needs for the provision of respite care for those with dementia is challenging and greater flexibility of respite care provision should be promoted as this was felt important for stakeholders.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- Acknowledge the report
- Support further developments of dementia strategy in line with national policy