

MEETING:	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
MEETING DATE:	28 JANUARY 2015
TITLE OF REPORT:	CARE ACT 2014 UPDATE
REPORT BY:	Director of Adults and Wellbeing

Classification

Open

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the timeline for Care Act implementation and progress on local implementation activities.

Recommendation

THAT: the Care Act update at Appendix A is noted.

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options. The Care Act places new legal requirements on the Council from 1 April 2015. The purpose of the briefing is to provide an update on implementation activity and timescales.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The Care Act represents the most significant change to adult social care in over 60 years. It is therefore essential that the Health and Wellbeing Board are informed of progress with the Act and its impacts locally.

Key Considerations

- 3 There are two parts to Care Act implementation – those aspects which take effect from April 2015 (most of the Care Act) and those which take effect from April 2016 (which are mostly the funding reform aspects).
- 4 Locally, implementation activities for the 2015 aspects of the Act are well under-way, although progress in certain areas has been limited as local authorities wait for clarifications from the Department of Health on areas where the regulations and guidance are unclear. Herefordshire, like most local authorities, has adopted a risk analysis approach to prioritise certain aspects of the Act for implementation.
- 5 Regular engagement with regional and national networks indicates that implementation progress in Herefordshire is very much on a par with other local authorities.
- 6 The draft regulations and guidance for the 2016 aspects of the Care Act (e.g. the care cap and care account) are due to be released by the Department of Health for national consultation later this month. Once we have sight of these draft documents we will be in a position to start planning for implementation of these other aspects of the Care Act.
- 7 A significant amount of communications activity has taken place during 2014 to raise awareness about the Care Act both within the council and the wider care and support sector in Herefordshire. Local communications and engagement will continue throughout 2015.
- 8 A national communications campaign will run in Feb-March 2015 and will focus on the introduction of a national eligibility threshold, carer's rights to assessments and the introduction of deferred payment agreements. This campaign will use various media, including online, local radio adverts and leaflet door-drops to target postcode areas. The local communications plan is in the process of being updated to ensure all stakeholders are briefed and informed on what communications activities are happening when.

Community Impact

- 9 The Care Act is intended to have a range of positive implications for Herefordshire residents, including service users and their families and carers.

Equality and Human Rights

- 10 By simplifying the care and support system, the Care Act intends to ensure that all those in need of care and support are treated equally and with respect.

Financial Implications

- 11 The Care Act will have significant financial implications for Herefordshire Council both in terms of implementation costs and on-going costs going forward.

Legal Implications

- 12 When the Care Act comes into effect in April 2015 (April 2016 for certain funding reforms), a number of new statutory duties and requirements will be placed on the local authority.

Risk Management

- 13 As the Care Act introduces a number of new statutory duties and requirements for local authorities, there will be significant risks for the council in failing to meet these new statutory requirements.

Consultees

- 14 Not applicable – briefing note only.

Appendices

Appendix A – Health and Wellbeing Board Care Act 2014 Update, January 2015

Background Papers

None identified.