Policy:
End of life care

Purpose:
To explain the policy which must be adhered in respect of end of life care for persons over the age of 18.

Scope:
Everyone working with adult patients and their carers during the last stages of their life

Contact point:
Department of Adult Social Services
Overview

In April 2015 new legislation called The Care Act 2014 was introduced in England in order to make care and support services better and more consistent across the country. The focus is firmly on the person rather than the service and the new law empowers people to be involved and in control of their care journey and in turn maximise their potential to live a full and meaningful life. Wellbeing is at the core of the Act and its aspiration is for local authorities to help prevent, reduce or delay the onset of care and support services to help people stay healthy and independent for as long as possible. Information and advice services are seen as having a vital role in this process. There will also be new systems in place around payments and charging. It was also planned that from April 2016 a cap on care costs would be introduced as well as an extension to the financial limits which determine who receives financial support. However the Government have now postponed these changes until 2020.

Care and support is a term used to describe the help which some adults need to live as well as possible with any illness or disability they may have. It can include help with things like getting out of bed, washing, dressing, getting to work, cooking meals, eating, seeing friends, caring for families and being part of the community. Care and support includes the help given by family and friends, as well as any provided by Wirral or other organisations. People who are Carers will be entitled to be offered a Carer’s assessment and, if eligible, their own support plans.

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (Wirral Council) has developed a number of policy documents to describe the process which is followed by the Council in relation to the care and support needs of adults in its communities.

Each policy reflects the over-arching commitment to put the person at the centre of all decisions which are made. The focus on personal wellbeing, information, choice and control is at the heart of how care and support is provided by Wirral.

All Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Department of Adult Social Services policies and procedures must be read in conjunction with the following:

Legislation
The Care Act 2014 Chapter 23 Part 1 Care and Support, General responsibilities of Local Authorities.
Mental Capacity Act 2005
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
Human Rights Act 1998
Children and Families Act 2014
Equality Act 2010

Statutory Guidance
Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2016
Wirral Policy and Procedures
Overarching Values and Principles

Referral and First Contact
Support Planning
Safeguarding
Financial (deferred payments and charging)
Carers

Primary legislation to be repealed or disapplied

Title of legislation to be repealed, in whole or in part
National Assistance Act 1948
Health Services and Public Health Act 1968
Local Authority Social Services Act 1970
Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudications Act 1983
Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990
Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
Health and Social Care Act 2001
Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc.) Act 2003
Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
National Health Service Act 2006

Secondary legislation to be revoked
Title of instruments to be revoked, in whole or in part
Approvals and directions under S.21(1) NAA 1948 (LAC (93)10)
National Assistance (Assessment of Resources) Regulations 1992
National Assistance Act 1948 (Choice of Accommodation) Directions 1992
National Assistance (Residential Accommodation) (Relevant Contributions) Regulations 2001
National Assistance (Residential Accommodation) (Additional Payments and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2001
Delayed Discharges (Mental Health Care) (England) Order 2003
Delayed Discharges (England) Regulations 2003
National Assistance (Sums for Personal Requirements) Regulations 2003
Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc.) Act (Qualifying Services) Regulations 2003
Community Care Assessment Directions 2004
Community Care, Services for Carers and Children’s Services (Direct Payments) (England) Regulations 2009
NHS Continuing Healthcare (Responsibilities) Directions 2009
Ordinary Residence Disputes (National Assistance Act 1948) Directions 2010
1.0 Policy name

End of Life Care

2.0 Introduction

End of life care aims to ensure everyone has the choice about how they are cared for during the last stages of their life. It is for adults with an advanced progressive illness, for example people living with cancer, cardiovascular disease or neurological conditions. It includes management of pain and other symptoms at the end of life, as well as psychological, social and spiritual support to help patients and their families.

End of life care can be delivered by a range of professionals including GP’s nurses, support workers, social care practitioners and therapists. Specially trained nurses can also provide nursing care in the person’s own home, offering respite to carers.

Information and support can include:

- Management of pain or symptoms
- Helping to adjust to living with palliative illness
- Information to make decisions about care and treatment
- Advice on benefits and financial assistance
- Help dealing with spiritual questions

Integrated and partnership working across health, social care and third sector organisations are important to providing person centred care and Wirral Council will work with its local partners to facilitate this co-ordinated approach.

3.0 Policy

3.1 Wirral Council believes that End of Life care:

- Is the total care of a person with an advanced, progressive, incurable illness or frailty
- Is not just about dying
- May last a few days, or for months or years
- Begins when, and continues as long as it is needed.

Whilst the management of care and support services will be led by healthcare professionals and services such as GP’s, hospitals, community nurses and hospices Wirral Council will ensure that all their staff who liaise with people, their families and carers who require end of life care will treat them with respect, sensitivity and dignity.
Wirral Council will offer information and advice on, and signposting to community and universal services in respect of end of life care. For example www.wirral.findmehelp.org.uk is a directory of services for people in the last years of life, their families, carers and friends.

Wirral End of Life Care Charter - ‘care, kindness and understanding’

Wirral Council has pledged its support to the Wirral End of Life Care Charter which was launched in May 2015.

The Wirral End of Life Care Charter has been developed by Wirral Health and Social Care professionals and is supported by Wirral Palliative and End of Life Care partnership Group and Cheshire and Merseyside palliative and End of Life Care Clinical Network Steering Group. The Charter is a set of expectations of the stands of care from Wirral Health and Social care teams and other professional groups that serve people at their end of life stage.

Its 12 expectations seek to help everyone understand that help is available for them to have the best quality of life possible, for as long as possible, and their personal choices drive their care plan.

People should expect:

- To be supported with skilled, knowledgeable, health and care professionals who can recognise that you are approaching the end of life and work together to coordinate and manage your care.
- With your agreement, that your plans, if you have made any, are shared with others involved in your care, so that your wishes may be fulfilled.
- That, if you wish, those who are important to you are involved in decisions about your care and treatment.
- A plan for care which includes food and drink, symptom control, psychological, social and spiritual support.
- To have a regularly reviewed, plan for care individual to you and your needs, which includes decisions and actions in accordance with your needs and wishes.
- The possibility that you may die within the next few days or hours will be recognised and communicated clearly and sensitively, to you and those who are important to you.
- To be supported with trained staff, who will help you to think and plan ahead, if you want to, so as to be able to discuss your wishes and references for your care.
- Be helped to remain as independent as possible and supported with health and care staff who maintain your dignity and sense of control throughout the course of your illness.
- The needs of your family and others identified as important to you to be respected and met, as far as possible.
• That you, and those important to you, will be treated with compassion and respect towards the end of life.
• That your body will be treated with dignity and respect after your death.
• That during your illness and after your death those important to you, receive practical, emotional and spiritual support.

3.2 Residential and Nursing Home care providers.

Wirral Council commissioned providers must ensure that residents who are at the end of their life will have their care, treatment and support needs met as set out in their Personal Support Plan and the Provider must work in partnership with other agencies to promote the pre-designated principles of end of life care.

Providers will ensure that their workers undertake ‘The Six Steps to Success Programme’ developed in the North West of England by the Cheshire & Merseyside Clinical Network and the Greater Manchester, Lancs & South Cumbria Clinical Network with support from the National End of Life Care Programme.

The programme aims to enhance end of life care through facilitating organisational change and supporting staff to develop their roles around end of life care. Providers must also ensure compliance with the Department of Health’s National End of Life Care Strategy which includes tools such as: the Gold Standards Framework, Advance Care Planning, Preferred Priorities of Care and the use of a recognised End of Life care pathway.

For more information see Wirral Council’s Contract for the Provision of Residential and Nursing Home care 2013: Schedule 11

Wirral Council expects contracted providers of any service which supports people who are at the end of their life to deliver that service in accordance with this policy.

3.3 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)

DOLS are part of the legal framework set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005. They apply to care homes and hospitals in England and Wales. The safeguards relate to people aged 18 years and over who lack capacity to consent to the arrangements for providing them with care or treatment.

Wirral Council is the supervisory body in relation to DOLS for care homes including hospices and hospitals in Wirral.

Wirral Council will continue to work closely with the above organisations in relation to DOLS and their training programmes and communications for staff in relation to relevant legislation updates and new guidance.

3.4 Continuing Health Care (CHC)
Wirral Council will work in partnership with all organisations involved in a person’s end of life care and support arrangements. However the Council recognises the role of GP’s and palliative care professionals in leading their care.

Where a person has a rapidly deteriorating and terminal condition they may be eligible for NHS Continuing Health Care. Where people are eligible Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group has responsibility for funding and arranging the care and support arrangements.

*The National Framework for NHS Continuing Care and NHS –funded Nursing Care 2012* sets out a shorter and clearer prioritising for consideration of CHC eligibility where people have a terminal condition and are entering a rapidly deteriorating phase this is referred to as the ‘Fast Track Route’. Wirral Council will work to ensure that people with end of life care are fully considered for CHC funding.

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