

Michael Fitzpatrick to Beverley Tarka, Haringey Interim Director of Social Care

16 January

Re: Clarification on scope of 'reablement'

Thanks for meeting with us on Tuesday 13th January. Further to that discussion I would be grateful if you could clarify a few points that emerged in this (and indeed earlier) discussions.

1. Transferring the burden of care.

You rejected our claim that the budget proposes to shift the burden of care from the Council onto individuals, families and carers.

But under the heading 'Care Purchasing Packages' in the document *P2 Savings 631214 (final) item 778*, an appendix to the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-2018 (there are no page numbers), it states: 'the proposal is...to make more use of personal, community, family and voluntary sector resources rather than professional help'. Further on, under the heading 'Corporate Priority 2 Savings', a table provides figures on 'care package reductions' to be achieved through 'more reablement focused reviews' and through 'promoting independence, self-help and use of family and community support'.

*Surely this means that individuals and families will be required to shoulder an (even greater) burden of care than they do at present?*

2. The scope of reablement

You insist that 'reablement is not for everybody' and it is true that reablement is not explicitly mentioned in relation to 'day opportunities' and 'accommodation' for people with learning disabilities.

However, under the heading 'Care Purchasing Packages': 'the proposal is... to review the appropriateness of packages through a reablement approach'.

Further, 'possible approaches' to the proposed reduction in spending 'could mean... 'providing a period of intensive Reablement, (up to six weeks) with a view to promoting full independence or reducing on-going high-cost care packages'.

Given that all current recipients of social care meet FACS criteria of 'critical' or 'substantial' need – and many have learning disabilities and other complex needs - it remains unclear how many of these would be considered appropriate for the reablement approach.

When I inquired specifically what proportion of the 648 people with severe learning disabilities currently receiving adult social care might be considered appropriate for 'reablement', you suggested 'perhaps one or two per cent'.

*If you can reassure us that the reablement model will not generally be applied to people with severe learning disabilities, could you also indicate how the proposed overall 20% reduction in spending on care packages can be achieved?*

3. Reablement or Enablement?

You seem to accept the limited applicability of the 'reablement' approach (particularly the six-week intensive 'homecare reablement' model which has been promoted by Gerald Pilkington and the Department of Health, the only model for which there is any research evidence). You suggest an alternative 'enablement' model, which can be implemented over a longer period – and not necessarily in the home, which may be more appropriate for people with mental health problems. Under the heading 'New pathways for people with learning disabilities – day opportunities' the budget proposals recommend 'access to supported employment/employment, within the borough and beyond'.

What sort of enablement model do you consider suitable for people with severe learning disabilities? Given their level of need, how many of these individuals might be considered appropriate for employment schemes?

With best wishes,

Michael

PS I am attaching some background documents on the evidence for reablement and its relevance to Haringey's proposals.