

**TURNING  
POINT**  
CENTRE OF  
EXCELLENCE IN  
CONNECTED CARE  
turning lives around



# Explaining Connected Care



Community led and fully integrated  
health, social care and housing services

Connected Care is Turning Point's blueprint for significant change in how health, housing and social care services are provided.

Our ideas were initially developed in *Meeting Complex Needs: the Future of Social Care*, a report published by Turning Point and ippr in 2004, and are now being put into practice in partnership with communities across the country.

- ✓ Connected Care integrates health and social care and other services.
- ✓ It is an approach that is done with the community, not to it.
- ✓ It provides a detailed assessment of breadth and depth of needs.
- ✓ Connected Care leads to community designed services.
- ✓ It fits with current and emerging government and commissioner agendas.
- ✓ Turning Point has set up the Centre of Excellence to champion Connected Care across England and Wales.

### **A failing system**

Today, health, housing and social care are fragmented – they can be difficult for people to understand or access. Agencies largely focus on their own core services and are not joined up, yet we know that people rarely have just one problem. In reality they have a range of health and social care problems that give rise to a combination of needs. For example, someone with an alcohol problem is likely to have other health and social care issues, problems with housing, employment or family, and underlying mental health issues.

Professional and service silos make the experience of those who have a range of needs overly difficult. People who don't fit neatly into services are bounced around the system having to explain their problems again and again. Other people may be on the books of a whole range of professionals, but may not be engaging with any of them. All because services are commissioned and provided in such a fragmented way.

In addition, we also know that people with above average levels of ill health are more likely to come from areas of high deprivation and are likely to suffer from the least care – this will have a detrimental effect on the community as a whole.

When set out in such clear terms it becomes apparent that today's health and social care provision is failing to meet the needs of the many people who need it most.

### **A new approach**

In addressing this, Turning Point has developed a new approach to service delivery, Connected Care, providing a co-ordinated range of services which directly reflects and responds to the needs of individuals and communities they serve, and which integrates health, housing and social care services.

### **So how does Connected Care work?**

Connected Care will provide commissioners with a new service model that will:

- Provide integrated services that meet the needs of individuals
- Enable local people to design and deliver their own services
- Provide better access to services for everyone in the community
- Engage those who cannot or will not use existing services
- Achieve greater diversity of provision and draw upon the strengths of the third sector
- Foster the development of a skilled, innovative and professionally coordinated health and social care workforce.

The concept of Connected Care is based on engaging with what the community needs and then working with commissioners and the community to redesign service provision in a way which is inclusive and cohesive. This involves a fully coordinated approach from commissioning through to the delivery of services.

### **How can we engage local people?**

Connected Care begins with the community it will serve and puts people at the centre of commissioning. This gives people greater choice and control over their own health and social care provision. It also ensures that services are more effective as the community is involved in a meaningful way in the planning, design and delivery of services. In order to fully involve local communities, a model of community engagement – the Connected Care audit – has been developed.

The Connected Care audit is not simply a consultation or an information gathering tool, it is the first stage in engaging the community in the process of developing a specification for integrated health and social care services. It is also a useful tool for addressing health inequalities, tackling social exclusion and promoting community cohesion.

The Connected Care audit is carried out by local communities themselves. A team from the community are given training in the design and delivery of research methods, specifically around working with difficult to engage groups. The Connected Care audit then assesses how individuals and the community perceive existing services and what they would like to see in the future. This creates a specification which ensures that each community has its own bespoke range of services.

### **Designing interlocking services**

It is not straight-forward to describe what a typical Connected Care service will look like, as it will be based on the specific needs of each local community. This may mean very different things in different places. However the ethos of the service provision will be based on designing interlocking services tailored to the individual.

- People will have easy access to services and will only have to tell their story once.
- This will involve bringing together prevention and early intervention services aimed at meeting low level needs, and high intensive care and support for people with more complex needs.
- It will integrate a range of services across housing, employment, and benefits, in addition to health and social care. Services should recognise and respond to these varying needs.

This means that an individual's experience of Connected Care will be more positive than today's fragmented approach to dealing with a person's health and social care needs.

For example, an older person may want support in their home during the week. Connected Care will be able to make all necessary arrangements, from the arrangement of domiciliary care to ensuring the client has all the other support they need to live as independently as possible.

Someone with complex needs, such as mental health and drug problems will also benefit. They will be engaged immediately by the Connected Care service and assessed just once, meaning they don't have to tell their story again and again. All relevant professionals will have access to the person's information (after permission has been given) and the Connected Care service will be able to bring in the specialist help required as well as acting as a point of engagement for practical issues such as housing and benefits. This cohesive joined up approach to service delivery will benefit individuals, communities and commissioners.

“Connected Care begins with the community it will serve and puts people at the centre of commissioning”

### **Improved access**

Under Connected Care there are no closed doors to services for anyone in the community. Connected Care services are designed to encourage access for people who have traditionally not used or been excluded from existing services. Services will need to be available at more convenient times and places. That means looking at the location, opening times and transport issues when designing services, backed up with proactive information about health and social care and what services are on offer. Services may also need to be provided on an outreach basis.

### **A skilled and innovative workforce**

Connected Care will require a different kind of worker. Staff will be solution-focused, working across service boundaries and sharing their expertise. They will be highly skilled generalists who are flexible enough to provide low level interventions or more specialised support, and make the links between services. Extra training in working with complex needs will support practitioner training and professional development. Connected Care will also support the establishment of multi-disciplinary teams across health and social care.

### **Evidence based and outcome driven services**

All Connected Care services have as their core purpose better outcomes for the individuals and communities in addressing the inequalities facing that community. Outcomes must also be clearly defined in relation to quality and value for money, so that the service can be assessed against its requirements. Connected Care is evaluated in every area to establish the impact for service users and services and assess the cost effectiveness of the interventions.

### **Supporting commissioner and government thinking**

- The Green Paper on social care<sup>1</sup> cites Connected Care as a model for bridging the gap between health and social care.
- The White Paper on Integrated Health and Social Care named Connected Care as a best practice example of commissioning responsive services in poor communities.<sup>2</sup>
- Connected Care is informing government thinking in tackling social exclusion, improving support for the most hard to reach families and rebalancing the relationship between local government and communities.
- Connected Care also helps commissioners to carry out a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to shape future health and social care services.

There is a close fit between Connected Care and government and commissioner thinking. The Government wants commissioners to demonstrate how individuals and communities are at the centre of commissioning. Connected Care provides a ready solution, helping commissioners to audit and understand the needs of local communities and ensuring that communities directly influence and assist in the redesign of their services.

There is evidence of the market moving towards a joined up approach to the provision of care. Connected Care provides an innovative model for this, integrating health and social care, pooling budgets and developing a bespoke outcomes framework.

Commissioners and government have a renewed focus on reaching people from vulnerable groups and with 'complex needs' that are often not reached by service reform. Connected Care provides integrated health and social care in the most deprived communities.

The Government recognises that better care for people with complex needs can save money. Connected Care therefore provides a cost benefit analysis for commissioners to support the reconfiguration of services.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (2005) *Independence, well-being and choice: our vision for the future of social care for adults in England*. London. HMSO

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health (2006) *Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services*. London. HMSO.

### **Changing the shape of commissioning**

Commissioning also needs to change. The benefits of Connected Care can only be achieved by commissioners working closer together to deliver better health and social care for their communities.

Connected Care encourages the development of more unified commissioning with budgets brought together across different funding streams such as health, social care, housing and benefits.

Connected Care specifically works with commissioners to examine the cost benefits of investment in a Connected Care approach that makes the fullest use of health and social care resources.

“the benefits of Connected Care can only be achieved by commissioners working closer together...”

### **Role of the third sector**

The third sector will have a vital role to play in the design and delivery of Connected Care.

Third sector organisations, such as Turning Point, have unique experience in engaging with communities and delivering innovative and flexible services for the most under-served and hard to reach groups. As a large national organisation, Turning Point also has a role in ensuring that smaller community groups are reached and supported effectively.

Social enterprises will feature in all local Connected Care services, enabling the community to deliver some aspects of the service themselves.

The Government has acknowledged that third sector providers can deliver high quality health and social care services. Indeed, better outcomes for the community depend on the NHS, local authority and the third sector working in new and different ways together to reshape and integrate services that are more focused on the needs of that community.

## About Turning Point

Connected Care is being pioneered by Turning Point, the UK's leading social care organisation. Turning Point has set up the Centre of Excellence in Connected Care to champion Connected Care in the most deprived areas in England and Wales.

Turning Point works with people and their communities across the areas of mental health, substance misuse and learning disability. Over 200 services in England and Wales span day support, outreach, residential, nursing and 24-hour crisis provision. Turning Point has particular expertise in working with people who have complex needs and face multiple social challenges.

Turning Point has been turning lives around for more than 40 years. We are now using this experience as a basis for developing more flexible care services for those with the most complex needs.

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