



## Consensus Statement on Improving Health and Wellbeing between NHS England, Public Health England, Local Government Association Chief Fire Officers Association and Age UK

**This consensus statement describes our intent to work together to encourage joint strategies for intelligence-led early intervention and prevention; ensuring people with complex needs get the personalised, integrated care and support they need to live full lives, sustain their independence for longer and in doing so reduce preventable hospital admissions and avoidable winter pressures/deaths.**

### Headline consensus statement

We will work together to use our collective capabilities and resources more effectively to enhance the lives of the people we work with and we will support and encourage our local networks to do the same in their communities.

### Introduction

Demand for health and social care is rising as a result of an increase in the numbers of children and adults with long term conditions, alongside an ageing population. The NHS Five Year Forward View highlights the need for an increased focus on integration and prevention so that resources are utilised more effectively, outcomes are improved and demand is reduced. It also recognises the need to broaden and deepen the involvement of the third sector in developing solutions. At the same time the number of fires has decreased due to preventative work by Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) and regulatory measures. This has resulted in new opportunities for the FRSs to complement and further support the health and social care sector.

Representatives from NHS England, Public Health England (PHE), the Local Government Association (LGA), Age UK and Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) met on 14 April 2015 to agree to develop a new working relationship with the shared aim of identifying and improving the quality of life of those who could benefit the most from early engagement with local services; for example, older people and people with multiple long term conditions and complex needs. This consensus statement represents a joined-up multi-agency approach to put into practice the national commitment to more integrated care, closer to people's home. Its emphasis is on local initiatives to deliver preventive interventions to our people who would benefit most in their own homes and supports local action to deliver better health and well-being outcomes.



**CFOA**  
Chief Fire Officers  
Association

### **Shared purpose**

There are common underlying risk factors which increase demands on both fire and health services, such as the number of long-term conditions, cognitive impairment, smoking, drugs or substance misuse, physical inactivity, poor diet, obesity, loneliness and/or social isolation, cold homes and frailty. By identifying people with these risk factors and taking a whole system approach to interventions which are centred on peoples' needs, we intend to make every contact count, irrespective of which service it is from.

### **Our individual and collective strengths**

**FRS:** The 670,000 home visits carried out by the FRS in England provide an opportunity to deliver improved proactive support that delivers improved integrated care between the relevant organisations.

**NHS, Public Health and local government:** Equally health and local government staff have opportunities to identify households with complex conditions/needs and who are at an increased risk of fire

**Age UK:** with and through our network of 165 independent local Age UKs we provide, coordinate and signpost to a range of services for individuals, their families and carers, and with groups of older people in their own homes and in the community to help them to manage their long-term conditions, while improving their health and wellbeing.

**Collectively we can offer** an integrated approach to targeting through the better co-ordination, prevention and early intervention that has been demonstrated to increase the reach and impact of all services. For instance, in areas of best practice, health services have commissioned the fire and rescue service in collaboration with Age UK (and other voluntary sector organisations) to make interventions in people's homes that have resulted in improved health and reduced risk. Early results have been positive, with a measurable significant impact on improving outcomes. This work could be expanded with the fire and rescue service working with a number of local commissioners.

### **Supporting local action and flexibility**

We encourage local organisations to work together more effectively in partnership and to consider seeking greater integration of services where possible, while supporting meaningful local flexibility in the way this happens. FRSs, by working in an integrated way as part of a whole systems approach, can add even greater value and resilience to communities by understanding and responding to local needs and drivers.

Local areas, and the organisations we represent, are too diverse for a 'one size fits all approach'. However, there are some key actions which we will take nationally to support local action.

- Producing this consensus statement between NHS England, CFOA, PHE, Age UK and LGA that sets out how health, public health, the fire and rescue service and the Age UK can work together to encourage local action to prevent and minimise service demand and improve the quality of life of older people and children and adults with long term conditions.
- Developing the design principles for a Safe and Well Visit that is informed by existing good practice within the FRS and Age UK network. The visit aims to identify and tackle risk factors that

impact on health and wellbeing and which can lead to an increase in demand for health and local authority services. Wider health impacts are also addressed during the visit, such as the identification of frailty, promotion and support of healthy aging, help to avoid trips and falls; and signposting to relevant services through making every contact count and sources of help.

- Identifying and exploring opportunities to improve local services, making them more efficient and effective by working more closely together and where appropriate integrating services through measures such as better information sharing, the promotion of existing guidance and initiatives, access to inclusion to improvement support programmes and joint communications.
- Investigating the opportunities for more effective and appropriate information sharing across NHS England, PHE, Age UK and FRS.
- Developing shared communications for our collective networks, the public, professionals, partners and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the benefits of a more connected approach and to provide reassurance about skills and knowledge, appropriate information sharing and joined up pathways.
- Promoting and encouraging local collaboration through Health and Wellbeing Boards, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, System Resilience Groups as well as through the commissioning of collaborative approaches.