

Guide for Professionals



North Tyneside Council's Values and Priorities

North Tyneside Council's values inspire everything we do:



We listen



We care



We are ambitious



We are good value for money

Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 sets out the borough's priorities for 'A Caring North Tyneside.' These include:

- We will provide great care to all who need it.
- People will be cared for, protected and supported if they become vulnerable.
- We will work to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, and ensure the social rights of the people of North Tyneside are key to council decision making.

These values and priorities guide the work of Adult Social Care, and Ways to Wellbeing supports us to achieve these aims.

What is Ways to Wellbeing?

Ways to Wellbeing is North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care's practice model: the way in which we work. It is designed to meet our legal duties to assess adults' needs and plan their support in a straightforward and accessible way.

Ways to Wellbeing is about supporting people to live a better life, as they define it. It supports our staff to take a strengths-based approach to their work with people with care needs, as well as with carers.

What is a strengths-based approach?

A strengths-based approach aims to make the best use of a person's abilities and the resources around them to meet their goals.

It gets to know people as individuals and finds out what a good life looks like to them. It explores what is strong, as well as anything that is going wrong.



Why do we use strengths-based approaches?

Most people want to live close to the people who matter to them, as independently as possible, with choice and control over their lives. Focusing solely on problems does not support people to achieve these goals.

If professionals are 'deficit-focused', they focus on what they think is most important, rather than empowering people to make their own decisions. They are pessimistic, which erodes people's confidence and self-esteem. They can also be risk-averse, which limits people's independence.

On the other hand, professionals who use a strengths-based approach:



Build trust:

getting to know people, their life story, and what is important to them makes it clear that we care.



Develop confidence:

by having ambitions for the people we work with, they will have more hope for the future.



Find effective solutions:

by bringing people together with their family, friends and community, our plans are much more likely to work well.

Model Overview

Ways to Wellbeing provides a framework for helpful conversations with people with support needs, carers, and those closest to them. It also guides the actions which result from these conversations.



Underpinning Principles

- We get to know people and their goals.
- We recognise that people are experts in their own lives.
- We bring families, friends and communities together.
- We share our knowledge and ideas.
- We use technology wherever it can help people to stay safe and independent.
- We avoid making long-term decisions in a crisis.

Conversation 1: What's Important to You



The first conversation focuses on getting to know people as individuals: their life story, what they value most, and what is happening at the moment.

We ask questions such as:

- What are the most important things in your life?
- What's working well?
- What would a better life look like to you?

People working with Adult Social Care often face risks and challenges.

We explore these carefully, by looking at:

- What's not working so well?
- Is there anything you, or people around you, are worried about?
- What needs to happen to improve things?

After this conversation, we provide information and advice about what the person, their family and friends, community organisations, and other professionals could do to:

- Help the person to stay safe and well;
- Address any concerns; and
- Prevent any challenges from increasing.

If further support might be needed, we move on to Conversation 2 if there are urgent issues, or Conversation 3 to explore the person's needs for support in more detail.



Conversation 2: Action When Most Needed



If we need to act urgently, we do not delay. Conversation 2 is about putting support in place quickly to get things back on track. It looks at:

- What has happened?
- What has changed?
- What are the risks?
- What needs to happen next?

It is difficult to make big decisions when we are overwhelmed. This is why we put short-term support in place to stabilise crisis situations: longer-term decisions should usually wait until things are more settled. Once things have stabilised, we review the situation swiftly.

After a crisis, some people might only need information and advice to stay safe and independent. In other situations, longer-term support might be needed. If this is the case, we move on to Conversation 3.

Conversation 3: Your Life, Your Way



Conversation 3 looks at people's strengths, challenges, and the resources around them in more detail. We look at how people are managing in their day-to-day life, in line with the 'specified outcomes' in the Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2015.

- We start with what people are able to manage themselves – identifying their skills and resilience.
- We then look at the challenges the person faces in their life, what is causing these, and the impact on their wellbeing.
- We use this information to decide whether the person has eligible needs for support.
- Even if a person is not eligible for a support plan, we still provide information and advice about how any needs can be met, reduced, prevented, or delayed.

Support Plan



If the person has eligible needs for support, we offer to create a support plan with person, those close to them, and other professionals.

- Support plans aim to enable the person to live a good life, as they defined it during Conversation One.
- The plan will set out clearly how the person's eligible support needs will be met:
 - This might include aids, adaptations and technology, as well as support from family, friends, other professionals, and community groups.
 - Most people want to be as independent as possible, so paid care services will be used only if their needs cannot be met in other ways.
- We will arrange a financial assessment, to see whether the person is entitled to financial support from the local authority with any costs.
- If the person is entitled to local authority support with the costs of their care, we will offer as much choice and control over this support as possible: for example using direct payments, where this is safe and suitable.

Conversation 4: Staying Well



This conversation reviews the support plan, to find out whether it is still helping the person to meet their needs and achieve their goals.

- Reviews can take place when needed: usually within 4–6 weeks after putting a new support plan in place, and once a year afterwards. However, this is flexible to the individual situation.
- After this conversation, we might keep things as they are, or make changes to the support plan, if the person's goals or preferences have changed.
- If a person's underlying needs for support have changed, we return to conversations 1, 2 and 3.

Outcomes



The Ways to Wellbeing model supports people to have a better quality of life. A good life will look different for each person, but the core building blocks will be similar. We call these building blocks the “5 I” outcomes, that we want everyone involved with Children’s Services and Adult Social Care to achieve:



**I AM
SAFE**

Free from harm
and abuse



**I AM
HEALTHY**

Choosing
healthier lifestyles



**I HAVE
OPPORTUNITIES**

Living the life
I want



**I HAVE
A VOICE**

An active citizen
with influence



**I AM
HAPPY**

Resilient and
enjoying life



How are colleagues supported to use Ways to Wellbeing?

All jobs in Adult Social Care require great skill. A strengths-based approach needs workers to:

- Be creative, hopeful and ambitious.
- Have the courage to take positive risks.
- Motivate people towards change.
- Challenge their own thinking.
- Challenge others' thinking.

This may be complex at times, but our workers are not alone: we offer many opportunities for learning and development, and support our colleagues to manage the demands of challenging work. This support is provided through:

- Workforce Development's training offer.
- Peer-to-peer support and group supervision.
- 1:1 supervision with skilled and experienced line managers.
- Wellbeing support, including our Employee Assistance Programme.

Get Involved

We want to create a learning culture throughout Adult Social Care, where 'better never stops'.

The **Innovation Hub** brings colleagues together to provide feedback on how Ways to Wellbeing is working, and shape improvements.

The **Inspire Forum** is a group of people with lived experience of Adult Social Care, who work to improve services alongside professionals.

Contact the Principal Social Worker (Adults) to get involved:

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