

## INFORMATION FOR CHOICE

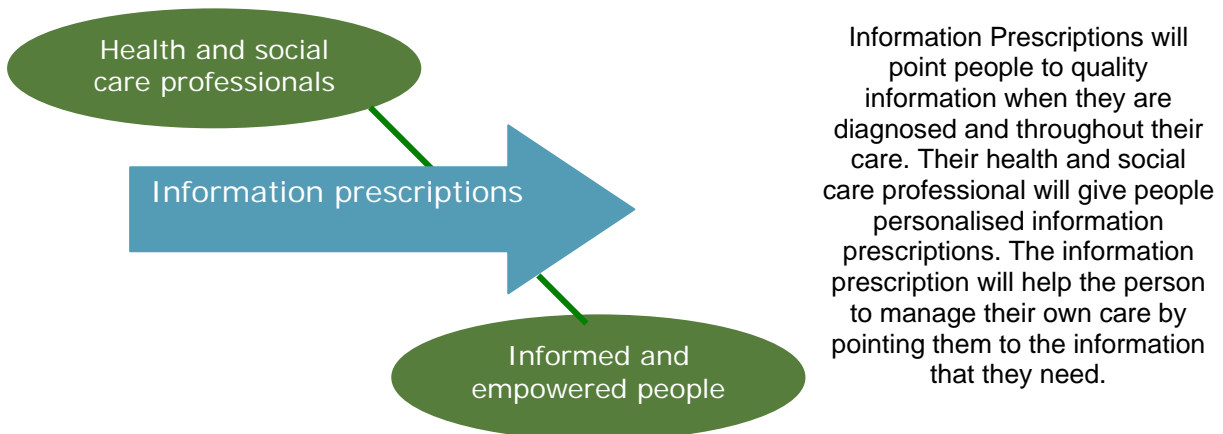
### **Information prescriptions: the right information, at the right time.**

We know that people use information to support them in making choices about their health and social care<sup>1</sup>. Quality information empowers people to make choices that are right for them. Information plays a crucial role in supporting people with long-term conditions to take care of themselves and improving their quality of life.

There is currently no mechanism to ensure that a person will have access to or receive the right information when they need it most – at diagnosis and as their needs continue. The development of **information prescriptions will be fundamental in filling this gap to ensure people get the right information at the right time.** Information prescriptions will allow everyone access to the information they need to manage their health and care.

Information prescriptions will point people to sources of information about their health and care – for example information about conditions and treatments, care services, benefits, and support groups. It will include addresses, telephone numbers and website addresses that people may find helpful and where they can go to find out more. The information prescription will be given to people and their carers by health and social care professionals (for example GPs, social workers and district nurses).

The aim of information prescriptions is to empower people to manage their care more effectively, to help them stay more independent and to feel more in control. Information prescriptions also aim to improve equitable access to the quality information people want and need by standardising the process of giving people information, making the delivery of information systemised and routine. It is anticipated that information prescriptions will become a routine part of care – just like prescriptions for medicines.



We are conducting pilots throughout 2007 that will inform the design and delivery of information prescriptions, and will provide evidence of their effectiveness and their impact on the public, professionals and organisations. The information and momentum built through this piloting phase will be used to develop the final strategy for delivery of the full scheme during 2008, when information prescriptions will be rolled out nationally.

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<sup>1</sup> Eighty-six per cent of people who completed the online questionnaire in the 'Your Health, Your Care, Your Say' White Paper listening exercise thought that being given more information about their health and condition would give them more control over their health and wellbeing. 24 April 2007

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