

## Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2018 – End of Life

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Cabinet Member: Christine Lawrence

Division and Local Member: All

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. The production of an Annual Report is a statutory requirement of the Director of Public Health, although the contents are entirely at the discretion of the DPH. This draft of the 2017 report is being brought to Scrutiny for information and discussion.
- 1.2. This year's report looks at the care required by people in the last year of life, usually referred to as End of Life. It shows how this needs to be seen as far more than simply medical care, and includes the emotional and spiritual support from family and communities, and how families and friends themselves need to be supported. The report shows how an inevitably very difficult time can be made more bearable with the right preparation

### **2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations**

- 2.1. Members of the committee are asked to consider the report, and how this broad approach to End of Life care can be supported within health and care services.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. This report describes the trends in the numbers, causes and places of death in Somerset, describes how end of life is currently supported in the county overall, and how individuals, families, health and care services can contribute to making end of life as compassionate and dignified as possible.
- 3.2. It highlights how the whole health and care 'system' can work together to provide the best possible care, emphasizes the role of communities in providing wider support and encourages us all to prepare for the end of life, making preparations such as Power of Attorney and Advanced Care Plans.

### **4. Consultations undertaken**

- 4.1. This report has drawn upon the views and accounts of a range of people who have experienced the loss of family members in the county. These people have been drawn from patient groups in the county. We have also spoken to a range of professionals working in the End of Life sector in Somerset in primary and secondary care, St Margaret's Hospice and the ambulance service.

## **5. Implications**

- 5.1.** End of life brings into sharp relief the importance of individual responsibility and preparation, community support and working together to support good health, which includes, wherever possible, a 'good death'. This shows how health and care professionals need to move the conversation with the public and patients away from simply reacting to need and towards a broad view of health, wellbeing and self-reliance.

## **6. Background papers**

- 6.1.** The draft Somerset Annual Health report for 2018 is attached.