

F34 Adult Social Care

Conference believes in a social care system that:

- A. Enhances the independence, privacy and dignity of individual citizens.
- B. Encourages individual health and well-being, whilst meeting the needs of a changing society.
- C. Empowers service users and their families, enabling them to make fully informed decisions about every aspect of the care they receive.
- D. Improves fair access to services and promotes intergenerational equity.
- E. Follows best practice in protecting older people from abuse.

Conference welcomes the Coalition Government's commitment to provide additional investment to support social care, reaching œ2 billion per year by 2014-15, and further welcomes the Commission on the Funding of Social Care and Support (Dilnot Commission) recommendations and the Law Commission report on Adult Social Care.

Conference calls on the Government to:

1. Use the publication of the Dilnot Commission recommendations as a basis for implementing long-overdue reform of the social care system, including to:
 - a) Ensure that people are protected from the high costs of their social care.
 - b) Devise access criteria and a transparent assessment system which enables users and their families to understand their entitlements and liabilities and to plan their care.
 - c) Work with local authorities to devise a sustainable system of deferred payments, which is fair to individuals and enables communities to develop new social care services.
 - d) Extend the means testing threshold, guaranteeing support for those of lower means.
2. Implement the Law Commission's main recommendations, including to:
 - a) Put wellbeing at the heart of all decision-making about the care of older people, using new statutory principles.
 - b) Build a single, streamlined assessment and eligibility framework to be implemented consistently nationwide.
 - c) Protect service users from abuse and neglect with a new legal framework and to confer comparable rights to adults at risk of abuse as those afforded to children.
 - d) Place adult safeguarding boards on a statutory footing thereby giving them greater powers to prevent abuse.
 - e) Improve portability within the social care system, allowing service users to receive continuity of support and ensuring they do not have to negotiate a new care package when moving between local authority areas.
 - f) Allow for new joined-up commissioning arrangements that focus on quality of outcomes, rather than quantity of supply. Local authorities would commission providers to supply a package of services with the aim of maintaining independence or reducing dependency.

3. Create an independent Older People's Commissioner for England, funded in part by the private care industry, who would:
 - a) Champion the rights of older people.
 - b) Commission research into older people's needs and new service models.
 - c) Ensure that older people are involved in decision making on issues of concern to them and their families.
4. Ensure that older people and their families have access to high quality, independent information and advice about care services, eligibility and funding.
5. Devise a complaints system that guarantees complaints made by staff and service users are responded to effectively, quickly and sensitively.
6. Take further action to highlight and prevent the growing problem of the abuse of older people, including:
 - a) Steps to improve the inspection regime for care homes to monitor for abuse and take action when concerns are raised.
 - b) Improved assistance for victims of abuse, whether it occurs in the home or in a care institution and greater protection for those who uncover or witness abuse.
 - c) Support for a non-statutory EU-wide Code of Conduct for long term care, including a Charter of Rights for older people.
 - d) Encourage the pro-active exchange of research and best practice in Britain and other EU member states on the prevalence of abuse and effective measures to prevent it.

Applicability: England only.