

PRESS RELEASE from The Relatives & Residents Association

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Care, Support and Independence: The Case for Change – why England needs a new care and support system

‘Better deal needed for older people living in care homes,’ says the R&RA.

In the light of current plans to reform the funding of social care, the Relatives & Residents Association says it is time for government to acknowledge the special position of care home residents.

‘Plans to reform the current system do not properly take into account the difficulties and unfairness that face many older people moving into care homes,’ said Gillian Dalley, R&RA chief executive.

‘Because of financial means testing, about a third of people in residential care currently have to pay the whole of their care homes fees themselves and that can mean anything between £400 and £1000 a week – or more. People who have worked hard all their lives find that when they become too infirm to look after themselves, all their savings will have to be spent on care. What is the point of working hard, contributing to the public purse throughout your working life, only to find that the state is not there to help when you really need it?’ She went on, ‘Even when the local council carries out its obligation and agrees to support you financially, your family or friends may be pressured unfairly into paying a top-up on a regular basis to cover the gap between what the care home charges and what the council unrealistically decides it will pay.’

She concluded, ‘We believe that government, in putting together its proposal for a radical reform of the social care system, must take the opportunity of redressing these injustices.’

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Notes to editors:

1. The R&RA is the national charity that supports older people in care and their relatives, and campaigns for improved standards and better quality of life for all care home residents. Website: www.relres.org Advice line: 020 7359 8136.
2. Care, Support and Independence: The Case for Change – why England needs a new care and support system is a government document currently out for consultation. See www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk
3. For further information, contact Gillian Dalley, R&RA chief executive on 020 7359 8148 or Les Bright, R&RA professional adviser on 01392 424696.

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