

R&RA Press Release



For Quality of Life of
Older People in Care

The Relatives & Residents Association states that the Government's proposed change in the frequency of inspections of care homes by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to ONCE IN THREE YEARS and to concentrate on spot checks is:

DANGEROUS, DISABLING AND DISCRIMINATORY - AND dismissive ...

This policy is a deregulatory disaster. It misunderstands the nature of residential care: its fragility, its reliance on a largely, untrained and mobile workforce and few rigorous checks and balances. It relies on an untried and untested self-evaluation process. R&RA has no confidence in the Minister's announcement that there will be more unannounced inspections to balance the reduction in the number of announced visits. The CSCI's budget is being severely cut – how will it afford to undertake more 'spot checks'?

This change is dangerous because of the vulnerability of older people at the end of their lives, many unable to speak for themselves or without anyone to speak for them;

It is disabling because people – relatives/friends/potential commissioners will not be able to gauge the quality of care/supervision/food /activities;

It is discriminatory because it treats older people less favourably than others; it attacks the human rights of residents in care homes even further; already local authorities do not have a statutory duty to review their care or ensure their protection, unlike children;

It is also dismissive of CSCI's own evidence about:

- (a) the prevalence of neglect with regard to malnutrition;
- (b) poor practice in medication standards; and
- (c) the quality of care and proper expectations about standards.

What's more, IT IGNORES THE RESULTS OF THE CSCI'S OWN CONSULTATION PROCESS WHERE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE PUBLIC WANTED MORE FREQUENT INSPECTIONS (both unannounced and announced)

Notes for editors:

1. Department of Health Press Release: 'Government gives go ahead to watchdog to increase care home spot checks' Published: Thursday 2 March 2006 Reference number: 2006/0080
2. R&RA exists to promote the wellbeing of older people in residential care and their relatives. It does this through the provision of advice, information and support through its telephone advice line, campaigning for higher standards in care homes and project work to improve the quality of care received.
3. Chair, Judy Downey, can be contacted on 0208 883 9401 or 07812580307
4. Chief executive, Gillian Dalley, can be contacted on 020 7281 3526 or 07971 055072

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