

## **PRESS RELEASE from The Relatives & Residents Association**

For immediate release (27 January 2009)

### **Charity questions Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)'s report of improvement in care home standards**

The publication of CSCI's latest report on the state of social care in England worryingly reveals that around a third of all care homes for older people are rated as 'poor' or 'adequate' by government inspectors and that 22% of older people assisted by their councils are being placed in such homes.

Being rated as poor or adequate means that such homes are likely to have failed to meet a number of the national minimum standards which inspectors check against when visiting homes. Characteristically, such homes may have fewer staff and as a consequence residents wait longer for such basic needs as food and drink to be met, or assistance to use the toilet.

While the report highlights year by year improvements in overall performance against the minimum standards this is only part of the picture. One in three homes, for example, still fails to meet the required level of performance for the management of medication, and a similar number appear to have no plans in place for managing their residents' care, despite efforts by CSCI in past years to make improvements in this area a top priority.

'Many care homes residents are in poor health and require medication to manage their situation and so it is vital that good clear records are kept to ensure that no mistakes are made and that safety is not compromised,' said Dr Gillian Dalley, Chief Executive of the Relatives and Residents Association. 'Minimum standards are just that – minimum. It is unacceptable that after five years of regulation, so many homes still fall below the threshold.'

'Government policy is aimed at providing people with a more personalised service, and yet with so many homes failing to draw up and monitor care plans for residents this seems like a very distant hope indeed,' she continued.

Since the introduction of star ratings last year, homes that do well are visited less often, leaving inspectors to concentrate their attention on the worst performers. It is clear that they have their work cut out to deal with around one third of all homes struggling to meet these minimum requirements.

**ENDS**

#### **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.

2. *The state of social care in England 2007–08* is published by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)

3. For further information, contact Gillian Dalley, R&RA Chief Executive, on 020 7359 8148 or 07971 055072, or Les Bright, R&RA professional adviser, on 01392 424696 or 07712 386846.

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