

## **Press Notice**

### **GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES NATIONAL DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF CARE AND SUPPORT**

#### **£31 million hi-tech home healthcare scheme begins**

Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Health Secretary Alan Johnson today launched an intense six month debate about the future shape of care and support services.

A rapidly ageing population means that in 20 years' time a quarter of the entire adult population will be over 65 and the number of people over 85 will have doubled.

The growth in the number of people with care and support needs will put tremendous pressure both on services and on the financial support that they receive through benefits and other funding streams.

Over the next six months, the government will be asking the public and stakeholders at a series of regional events for their views about care and support to create a new system that:

- Promotes independence, choice and control for everyone who uses the care and support system
- Ensures everyone can receive the high quality care and support they need, and that government support should be targeted at those most in need
- Is affordable for government, individuals and families in the long-term.

Millions of people across the country are involved with providing and using care and support services. This reform is about finding a new way to help people stay active, care for family members, retain maximum dignity and respect and have the best possible quality of life.

Alan Johnson said:

“Society is going through huge change - care and support must adapt to meet the challenges this will bring because the current system is simply not sustainable in the long term. There is no option of a quick fix. Radical change is needed to bring together the range of activities, services and relationship that underpin care and support so that people are clear about what they are entitled to and how and where they can get it.

“Funding is a vital part of this debate, but it is not just about money. It is also a question of individual choice, enabling people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible.

“Today we are rolling out a £31million programme to test the potential of innovative technologies like telecare in supporting care for those with complex health and social care needs. Improving care with new scientific advances and innovation is vital if the NHS is to continue to offer the very best services, but this innovation must be at the frontline of the NHS to help people manage their conditions better themselves.”

The public will be able to contribute to the debate through a series of events and through a new national website [www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk](http://www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk)

Today also marks the beginning of the £31 million Whole System Demonstrator Programme that will test the potential of innovative technologies like Telecare and Telehealth in supporting care for those with complex health and social care needs.

The pilot is being rolled out across Kent, Cornwall and Newham where people with complex health and social care needs such as diabetes, heart and chest problems and the elderly and the frail will use the technology.

Clients can also trigger requests for help should they fall and automated safety devices will be installed to ensure people are able to live at home for longer.

The programme aims to give people the support necessary to help them retain their independence in the community and greatly improve their quality of life by managing their conditions in their own homes.

Benefits of the scheme are expected to be reduced emergency admissions, reduced use of the acute hospital sector and reduced dependence on care home settings. If successful, then savings generated by reduced admissions could potentially more than offset the cost of the initial investment in the technology.

Health Secretary Alan Johnson added:

“Improving patient care with new scientific advances and innovation is vital if the NHS is to continue to offer the very best services. But new gadgets aren't just about specialist innovations in hospitals – it is about using innovation at the frontline of the NHS to help patients manage their conditions better themselves.”

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. The intention to publish a Green Paper on the future of care and support was announced in the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. A Green Paper is expected in 2009.

2. Care and support

- Care and support describes the activities, services and relationships that help people to be independent, active and healthy, as well as able to participate in and contribute to society, throughout their lives.

It is about helping people to do day-to-day things like:

- living in your own home
  - working
  - cooking
  - shopping
  - caring for a family.
- The reasons why people might need care and support include accidents, long term illnesses, being disabled and growing older
  - In 20 years time, the cost of disability benefits could increase by almost 50% (*Disability Benefits (DLA, AA and CA) long term projections, DWP Forecasting Division, Nov 2007*) and we expect a £6 billion 'funding gap' for social care (*PSSRU projections, forthcoming 2008*)
  - If current levels of service provision and patterns of care continued, public expenditure on Personal Social Services for adults is projected to rise from £12.7 billion in 2007, to reach £24.1 billion in 2026 and £40.9 billion in 2041 at 2005 prices (*Future demand for social care, 2005 to 2041: projections of demand for social care for older people in England, PSSRU, Forthcoming*; *Future demand for social care, 2005 to 2041: projections of demand for social care and disability benefits for younger adults in England, PSSRU, Forthcoming*)

## 2. Telecare and Telehealth

- The three Whole System Demonstrators sites (Newham, Kent, Cornwall) were announced in May 2007 following a competition. Since then the sites have been designing the new services and procuring the telecare and telehealth technology they need to go live.
- **Telecare** is the continuous, automatic and remote monitoring of real-time emergencies and lifestyle changes over time in order to manage the risks associated with independent living
- **Telehealth** is the delivery of healthcare at a distance using electronic means of communication – usually from service user to clinician e.g. a service user measuring their vital signs at home and this data being transmitted via a telehealth monitor to a clinician.
- The focus of the demonstrators will be on three patient/user groups;
  - People of any age who are at risk of current or future hospital admission due to at least one of the following long-term

conditions (telehealth eligible): *Heart failure, Diabetes and COPD*;

- Individuals with social care needs (telecare eligible) who are at risk of current or future hospital admission, who have complex health and social care needs (they may have one or more of the above conditions);
  - Individuals with both health and social care needs as defined above
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- The successful sites were announced in a press release on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007. They are Cornwall, Kent and Newham who collectively serve people from a variety of demographic and geographical contexts.
  - The demonstrators will run for a minimum of two years and will be on a scale significantly greater than anything undertaken to date in England. They will be subject to a rigorous real time evaluation process. We believe this evaluation of the benefits of telecare and telehealth is the largest of its type in the world.
  - The value of the programme is £31M over three years. This expenditure cover the costs on each of the three sites of providing services to 2000 people per site (6000 in total), the complex large scale evaluation, programme and project management, learning dissemination, together with the costs of testing for the first time how health and social care data can be linked electronically in a standardised way.

3. Media enquiries call the Department of Health newsdesk on 020 7210 5221