



RCN Policy Unit

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Shaping the future of care together

Green Paper Consultation by HM
Government setting out a vision for a
new care and support system

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Introduction

On 14 July 2009 the Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Secretary of State for Health Andy Burnham launched the Green Paper, *Shaping the future of care together*. The aim of this consultation process is to engage with the public and key stakeholders about how the existing social care and support system can meet the challenges of the future.

The engagement process has now started with

Surveys have consistently shown that there remains widespread public confusion about what social care is and who pays for it. The Government believes that the forging of a new funding system and more awareness of the 'contract' between individuals, families and the state will be a key element of an effective care and support system.

Why does the Government want to have a debate about the future of care and support?

The Government has highlighted that we are living much longer. In 20 years there will be twice as many people in England aged over 85, and four times as many people aged over 100. This means that more people need care and support, and for longer. In 20 years time, we would need an extra £6 billion a year just to provide the same level of services as today.

The Green Paper notes that two in three women and one in two men will develop high care needs during their retirement. The cost of care and support is high. A 65-year-old person can expect to need care costing on average £30,000 during their retirement. But there are great differences in people's needs and the amount that they pay: for example, 20 per cent of people will need care costing less than £1,000 during their retirement and 20 per cent will need care costing more than £50,000. Some of those who spend years in a care home could face a bill of more than £100,000.

In addition, expectations have changed. People today want more choice and services that are flexible and personalised. There is now an increasing trend towards supporting people in their own homes rather than viewing care homes as an inevitable destination for the very old. Over the past 15

2) A wider range of care and support services

As people begin to have greater choice ove

For the options described above the Green Paper mentions the following ways for individuals to fund their care:

- through a lump sum on retirement
- by deferring their state pension
- paying instalments throughout their retirement
- paying out of the individuals estate (i.e. defer until death)
- a mixture of these options
- in time – regular contributions throughout working life.

Does this consultation mean the current means testing arrangements will be changed?

As the UK moves towards addressing the future needs of those requiring social care services within our communities, new and challenging questions are arising in the way Government organises, finances and manages new services. A key part of this equation is to consider the amount that individuals should be expected to pay; the amount of help they should be entitled to from others via state spending, and the amount that perhaps their families might be expected to pay.

The Government also proposes the establishment of an independent body to provide advice on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of different types of care and support. This would be the equivalent of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) for social care.

The Green Paper points out that the numbers of people needing care will increase in the future and the cost of care and support is currently high:

- by 2026 there will be 1.7 million more adults who need care and support
- a 65 year old can expect to need care costing an average of £30,000 during their retirement. While some people will pay less, others will pay more: 20 per cent of people will need care costing less than £1,000 during their retirement - but 20 per cent will need care costing more than £50,000.

The Government has said it will need to increase funding available for care services to pay for a better system in the future. One of the ways it proposes to bring more money into care and support is to merge the money currently spent on Attendance Allowance - a non-means tested benefit for disabled people aged 65 and over - with care funding.

The RCN has highlighted that an effective social care system is widely considered as an essential part of any civilised society and the health sector cannot meet its responsibilities fully without working in partnership with a strong and capable social

A number of further questions have been formulated to gain feedback from members and inform the RCN response to the consultation. Members are also strongly encouraged to respond to these questions through the **online response template** but for information these questions are also provided below:

- In your view how should a new social care system be funded? (please indicate your preference):
 1. Regular contributions through a State Insurance scheme?
 2. Regular contributions through a Private Insurance scheme?
 3. Lump sum on retirement?
 4. Paying installments throughout retirement?
 5. A claw back through a levy on the estate of the deceased (through inheritance tax)?
 6. Through general taxation on income?
- Should health and social care work more closely together? If so, how?
- Are there any nursing specific issues or implications that you would like to

RCN policy development- your policy debate

The RCN Policy Unit will be conducting further analysis of the content of the consultation document in the context of the wider debate on social care. Your comments and the issues raised will be used to inform RCN position statements and influence wider RCN policy in the area of social care provision.

You can also take part in one of the Department of Health stakeholder events. For further details please see the Department of Health's care and support website: www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk/greenpaper.

The RCN is seeking views from members about the consultation paper. Members are encouraged to send their thoughts and views to the RCN by completing the online response template.