

Date: 8 May 2002

Time: 14.00 - 17.30

Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly Building, Cardiff Bay

**Title: Strategy for Older People in Wales
Paper for Information**

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the Committee about the outcome of the work of an Advisory Group I established last Spring to support the development of a Strategy for Older People in Wales.

Action

2. The Committee is invited to note this paper and the summary of the Advisory Group Report at Annex A. A copy of the full Report has been placed in the library and on the Intranet.

Background

3. Over the last century the proportion of the population who are aged 50 and over has doubled. Over the next 20 years the overall population will remain fairly stable but the number of people of retirement age in Wales will increase by 11 percent to 650,000. The number of very old people (85+) in Wales will increase by over a third to 82,000. By 2020 there will be almost the same number of people in their sixties and over as there will be in their twenties and thirties.

These demographic changes will significantly change the balance of the population. This will offer both opportunities and challenges and mean that the Welsh Assembly Government's future policies and programmes must reflect the needs of an ageing society. People will progressively live longer and more healthy lives but will require care, support and services at key points which are more personalised and integrated. Social trends such as changing family living patterns, fewer children and the increasing number of single people will also have a strong impact.

3. In Spring 2001 I announced the establishment of an Advisory Group, Chaired by Dr Brian Gibbons AM to support the development of a Strategy for Older People in Wales. The Advisory Group had a wide expert representation including 4 older people and met on 11 occasions. The process of developing the Group's report has been underpinned by advice to the Group on findings from literature reviews of extant research on older people, contributions from subject "champions" and an extensive consultation programme including focus groups, a conference, Regional Committee sessions

and a questionnaire. All told, this programme has involved over 1,000 people in Wales.

Advisory Group Report

4. A copy of the Executive Summary and Recommendations of the Advisory Group Report “When I ‘m 64.. and More” is at Annex A. The report makes over 100 recommendations to improve services for older people and other issues related to their well being to guide the Assembly and other statutory bodies to develop future policies and plans to reflect the changing demography and social circumstances.

5 The Advisory Group recommendations are wide ranging across the Assembly’s responsibilities and also encompass some non-devolved issues. Some of the proposals that are likely to receive attention on publication include:

- Consideration of the case for an Older People’s Commissioner for Wales
- a Welsh Assembly Government Minister should be designated as Older People’s Minister
- establishment of an Older Peoples Committee at political level working across all Assembly areas of responsibility
- establishment of a new permanent Older Peoples Partnership Forum at National level
- the development of a funded Task Force/Tasglu Cymru of older people at a local level to enhance their contribution to the community
- The UK Government should consider how the concept of an “age of entitlement” rather than an age of retirement could be taken forward ie “ an age which establishes an entitlement to retirement benefits, but does not activate retirement where the individual wishes and is able to continue to work”.
- research and evaluation to identify the level and range of unmet need in provision of social care for older people and urgently examine options for how the deficit might be addressed.
- challenge the UK Government to fund and implement free personal care in the context of UK taxation, benefits and inheritance policy.
- develop a dedicated research and development programme on ageing as a basis for a better understanding of older people and their concerns and to inform policy development

6. The report cannot commit the Welsh Assembly Government to any action at this stage and is advice to be considered and to be consulted on in developing our own Strategy and Implementation Plan. The main narrative of the report provides summary findings from the research and consultation programmes in chapters that relate to the key stages of ageing - from healthy and active ageing

through to dependency. Committee Members are invited to provide initial comments on the Advisory Group report in the Plenary Debate on 16 May but I would welcome more detailed contributions in writing over the consultation period.

Timetable and Next Steps

7. The timetable to take forward action on the Advisory Group report is:

- the Advisory Group's report is being discussed by the Health and Social Services Committee on 1 May;
- a plenary discussion on the Older Person's Strategy and Free Personal Care is being held on 16th May;
- a public consultation exercise on the Advisory Group until early August
- production of a Welsh Assembly Government Strategy and Implementation Plan to be considered by the Health and Social Services Committee before the end of November.

Jane Hutt

Minister for Health & Social Services

Contact Point: Steve Milsom, Social Care Policy Division, ext 3206

WHEN I'M 64 ... AND MORE

THE REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY GROUP ON A STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN WALES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

May 2002

**FOREWORD BY DR BRIAN GIBBONS AM – DEPUTY MINISTER
FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AND CHAIR OF THE
ADVISORY GROUP**

The implications of an ageing society effect all of us no matter how old we are or what our circumstances might be. We must respond positively to these changes because they bring new opportunities to promote the self-fulfilment and independence of older people.

Older people are also more likely to need help from our health and social care services. This care must be of the highest quality and be provided without discrimination or prejudice.

The Welsh Assembly Government wants to show leadership in planning for an ageing population. This is why an Advisory Group was established to help us develop a Strategy for Older People in Wales. We have consulted extensively and used much research to inform the work of the Group.

I have been impressed with the enthusiasm and imagination that the Group have tackled its task over the last 10 months. Their findings and recommendations deserve serious consideration by everyone. I hope you are able to take time to let us have your comments.

The Report makes over 100 recommendations covering all of the National Assembly's responsibilities and beyond. Some key themes emerge. One is to break down the boundaries that blinker our thinking about ageing and which lead to ageism and discrimination. Another is to ensure that the contributions that older people can make are recognised and strengthened. Engagement and participation with older people by Government at all levels must be a priority.

We need to plan ahead and bring new thinking to the increasingly important role older people will play in our society.

The Welsh Assembly Government will be finalising a Strategy for Older People and an associated implementation plan over the next 6 months or so. We want to hear your views on the recommendations in this report to inform that process. Please send them **by 8 August 2001** to:

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OLDER PEOPLE'S STRATEGY REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- 1. The proportion of the population of retirement age and over is increasing significantly and this will mean that the Welsh Assembly Government's policies and programmes must reflect the needs of an ageing society. People will live longer and healthier lives but will require care, and services that are more personalised and integrated. The Strategy Report outlines a range of proposals for action to be taken forward which would improve the position of older people.**
- 2. This Report provides the basis for the development of a Strategy for Older People in Wales. Through the Strategy we hope that the Welsh Assembly Government will put in place a framework that helps to ensure that over the next 10 years that in Wales we are proactive in planning for and addressing these changes rather than reacting to circumstances.**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3. The following terms of reference were agreed by the Strategy Advisory Group:**
"That older people in Wales should have the right to live independently and with dignity. To support them in achieving this, we will formulate a Strategy to provide services in a timely and appropriate way, to promote their health and well-being and which enables them to maximise their independence, potential and participation."
- 4. The following 7 themes formed the basis for the Strategy Report and were also used in the consultation programme:**
 - Social inclusion: older people within the community; personal security and safety; the role of the voluntary sector; ageing and ethnicity, age discrimination
 - Transport, access, mobility; non-urban living
 - Lifelong learning and employment of older people
 - Housing and housing services for older people; other local government services
 - Health promotion and healthy living for older people:
 - Health and Social Care for older people
 - Non Devolved issues: Better Government, benefits, pensions, and savings, take up of the Minimum Income Guarantee.
- 5. The terms of reference for the Strategy Advisory Group were extended to include consideration of the implications of extending free provision to personal care in Wales in the context of a Strategy for older people.**

CONTENTS OF THE REPORT

- 6. Chapters 1 and 2 of the report explain the terms of reference for the Advisory Group, the themes and issues addressed, the broad vision of the Strategy, the case for change and the methods adopted.**

7. Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 present a brief account of the findings from the consultation exercise and the literature reviews undertaken and set out the recommendations of the Advisory Group. Chapter 3 deals with issues of citizenship and ageing, Chapter 4 covers promoting healthy living, Chapter 5 deals with ensuring independence and discusses the issue of free personal care in Wales, and Chapter 6 covers accessing services with increasing dependence.
8. Chapter 7 discusses putting principles into practice and suggests the next steps in the process.
9. **The Report makes over 100 recommendations to support future policy making and action. These recommendations are listed at the end of each chapter. In outline, the main issues covered by the recommendations are:**
 - To ensure that a higher profile is given to older people's issues throughout Wales and in all aspects of life and to ensure that older people's interests are represented in National and Local Government
 - To ensure that older people are able to participate fully as citizens in every aspect of society
 - To ensure that future consultation on new policies includes participation of and engagement with older people at all stages
 - To challenge and address ageism and other forms of discrimination against older people and promote more positive images of older people
 - To strengthen and promote participation in community activities and volunteering by and for older people
 - To remove barriers to participation in education by older people
 - To develop schemes to secure improvements in mobility and to integrated transport services for older people
 - To combat poverty and poor housing among older people and promote greater uptake of benefits
 - To review the current strategies for tackling crime, their impact on the needs of older people, with particular reference to schemes to combat confidence tricksters, rogue trades-people and others who prey on or abuse older people
 - To promote the development and improved awareness of the benefits of links across all generations
 - To promote health promotion and preventive medicine for older people, including pre-retirement action to improve health and decrease dependency in old age
 - To promote health and social care policies which enable older people to live at home with appropriate help as long as possible
 - To develop more effective intermediate care and rehabilitation services
 - To ensure that the Strategy for Older People is implemented in an effective and timely manner throughout Wales
10. The Report also has several Appendices, setting out the membership of the Advisory Group, the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, the methodology adopted by the Advisory Group, and a list of supporting

documentation available.

THE WAY FORWARD

11. If the Strategy is to lead to action, each of these general proposals must be broken down into detailed actions that are co-ordinated, monitored and quality assured. The Welsh Assembly Government will need to develop an over-arching Strategy and Implementation Plan that can be taken forward to agreed standards and timescales. A key task will be to engage the statutory and other bodies that need to take a concerted approach to implementing the recommendations.
12. The Strategy and Implementation Plan will need to be finalised and published by the Welsh Assembly Government and will need to consider:
 - What are the priorities for issues to be dealt with?
 - How will the Strategy be resourced?
 - What detailed projects should flow from each of the recommendations?
 - What are the objectives, projects, milestones and targets?
 - What further issues need to be addressed to achieve the stated aims and principles?
 - What mechanisms are need to engage the planning and resource processes of relevant statutory bodies?
 - What monitoring and evaluation processes should be in place?
13. It will be essential that local government, the NHS and other statutory bodies all have their own Strategy and planning processes to implement the recommendations relevant to them. There will be no single approach to fit all requirements and tailored frameworks for implementation should be developed. A partnership approach, involving older people, the voluntary sector, the private sector and others must be followed. Action must also be taken forward on a cross-organisational basis within existing planning processes. This will require leadership and support at all levels to ensure co-ordination and for momentum to be maintained. The financial implications will need to be taken into account in budgeting processes but that should not be allowed to create barriers to progress.

Recommendations

Chapter 2 – Vision, Objectives and Case for Change

2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government’s “Vision for Wales” should be adjusted to make an explicit reference to older people and the aspirations that are held for “a better society for older people”.

2.2. The Welsh Assembly Government should consider the case for the appointment of an Older People’s Commissioner for Wales. A specification should be drawn up for consultation including the status, powers, role and responsibilities that the post should have to make a difference to the lives of older people, and if necessary seeking primary legislation to achieve this objective.

2.3. The Welsh Assembly Government, local government and all their partners should challenge and address ageism and other forms of discrimination against older people including in access to goods and services and promote positive images of older people and the contribution they make to Wales eg in Government’s advertising. The diversity of older people and their needs should be recognised in taking forward this action.

2.4. A Welsh Assembly Government Minister should be designated as Older People’s Minister to take an overview responsibility of how the Strategy and the National Assembly’s powers generally are used to benefit older people

2.5. The Welsh Assembly Government should establish a new permanent Older Peoples Partnership Forum at National level to advise it on policy issues effecting older people and ensure a continuing dialogue with the Assembly, local Government and others. Older people and their representatives should make up a majority of the membership.

2.6. Local Government in Wales should implement the Better Government for Older People recommendation to appoint “Older People’s Champions” at an elected member level. Building on existing structures local authorities should ensure effective local consultative structures such as Older People’s Forums funded to ensure participation and engagement with older people in local democracy and in developing community strategies and services. Development work in engaging older people must also be undertaken.

2.7. In developing its future policies and programmes the Welsh Assembly Government should ensure the consequences of an ageing population are taken into account in a structured and joined up framework. Appropriate targets and performance indicators should be established.

2.8. The National Assembly for Wales should establish an Older Peoples Committee at political level working across all its areas of responsibility to ensure that a higher profile is given to older people’s issues and progress in implementing the Strategy is monitored and scrutinised. This Committee

should have effective links to the UK Government's Inter-Ministerial Group for Older People to ensure co-operation, particularly in respect of the impact of non-devolved matters.

2.9. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop effective internal structures and provide sufficient resources to carry through the agenda of change outlined in this Strategy Report.

2.10. The Better Government for Older People organisation should work with the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure that its agenda is taken forward robustly in Wales in a way that complements and ensures coherence with the Strategy.

2.11. Across all its areas of responsibility the Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that consultation on new policies and programmes includes participation of and engagement with older people at all stages. This should happen through a meaningful involvement and contribution of older people through funded forums and panels, Information Communications Technology, representative organisations and other structures not just in written format.

2.12. The Welsh Assembly Government should consider how recognition could be given to the achievements and valuable work of older people in the community and through volunteering and caring.

2.13. Local Government and Local Health Boards should ensure a joined up strategic approach is taken to the impact of an ageing population, particularly through its new health and well being agenda, partnership arrangements and community planning responsibilities. Older people should be encouraged to participate in the Communities First programme through local partnerships and forums.

2.14. Councils should develop and publicise locally tailored strategies and related programmes to develop and improve services for older people in close collaboration with a wide range of older people. Political leadership and sufficient resources for local strategies – leading to action - must be an integral part of the process.

2.15. The Welsh Assembly Government and its statutory partners should regard the development of this Strategy Report as only the starting point. It should act as a catalyst for change, innovation and improvement in services for older people in the medium term.

Chapter 3: Citizenship and Ageing

3.1. A programme should be developed for tackling problems of poverty and social exclusion identified by research work. Addressing the needs of retired people and the problems of rurality should also be a part of this programme as should combating isolation and loneliness amongst older people and promoting intergenerational links.

3.2. Community regeneration projects and the Communities First programmes should be required to fully involve older people and introduce measures that drive up income levels of older people.

3.3. The Welsh Assembly Government, local government and the voluntary sector should consider how investment in community activity by older people can be taken forward more proactively and consistently. The role of Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) in developing new skills should be considered in this context.

3.4. In the context of broad community investment strategies, the development of a Task Force/Tasglu Cymru of older people at a local level to enhance their contribution to the community should be investigated as an option. This should include exploring the potential for the use of funding incentives to encourage and sustain participation.

3.5. Building on existing volunteering initiatives, a specific initiative should be launched by the Welsh Assembly Government in collaboration with the voluntary sector to strengthen and promote participation in community activities and which stresses the many benefits of volunteering by and for older people.

3.6. The UK Government should ensure that consumer protection measures are in place for older people including advice, guidance and support so that they receive help that is appropriate and meets their needs. The Welsh Assembly Government should work with Police Services and Trading Standards Authorities to devise schemes to combat confidence tricksters and rogue trades-people who prey on older people.

3.7. The UK Government should move urgently to tackle age discrimination in employment on a statutory basis, encourage employers to recognise the advantages of older workers and promote good practice.

3.8. The UK Government should consider how the concept of an “age of entitlement” rather than an age of retirement could be taken forward.

3.9. The UK Government should place less reliance on means testing within their benefit policy and practice and make higher provision of a more adequate level of state pensions to sustain decent standards of living. Local authorities and others should be proactive in using measures such as welfare rights advice to increase take up of pensions, attendance allowance and other Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) benefits, housing and council tax benefit

3.10. The Department for Work and Pensions should undertake a targeted approach, tailored to the needs of Wales, to improve take up of the Minimum Income Guarantee and other state benefits for older people.

3.11. Given the commitment of the UK Government to the introduction of Pension Credits, it should be handled in a simple and sympathetic way that

takes account of older people's needs and provides an integrated and easy access approach to advice and support and in a user friendly manner to ensure maximum take up.

3.12. The Welsh Assembly Government should lead the development of integrated, flexible and innovative transport schemes to address transport needs of older people, particularly in non-urban areas. This should include the provision of shelters at bus stops, disabled access, portering services, improved access to information, staff training to increase sensitivity to older people's needs and other safety issues

3.13. The Welsh Assembly Government should require local authorities to promote practical schemes to secure improvements to transport links to Hospitals, GP surgeries and other primary care facilities etc where older people are often the dominant users.

3.14. Further development of community transport should be undertaken through an integrated, structured programme co-ordinated by all local authorities in Wales. Urban and transport planning should take more account of the needs of older people more effectively eg potential increase use of powered scooters and wheelchairs, timing of pedestrian crossings

3.15. The Welsh Assembly Government should investigate the cost and benefits of utilising school buses, post office vans etc "out of hours" to improve transport for older people. The business potential for local transport schemes and the development of voluntary transport schemes should also be explored. Extension of the free bus scheme to trains and community transport as well as to include carers accompanying older people should be considered.

3.16. The Welsh Assembly Government and local government should support the initiative to extend and integrate services for older people through sub post offices and work proactively to maximise the potential role of Post Offices as a community resource to provide services, sources of information, advice and support for older people.

3.17. The UK Government should eradicate ageism through legal action. The UK Government and the Welsh Assembly Government should provide leadership in challenging ageism through its policies and funding programmes and seek to change attitudes, avoid stereotyping and to and promote positive images of older people.

3.18. Further research on the experiences and future needs of older people from ethnic minority communities in Wales should be undertaken to improve the knowledge and understanding of policy makers and service providers about the needs of this group and improve the impact of policies.

3.19. A development programme should be introduced to address the priorities that research and on-going work reveals for older people from ethnic

minority communities in Wales and to identify specific actions to improve their access to and take up of health and other relevant services.

3.20. In the period before EC/UK legislation is implemented we recommend that the UK Government should give greater emphasis to the use Codes of Practice to tackle ageism in employment and allow continued access to labour market for older people.

3.21. To encourage employers, the Welsh Assembly Government should publicise and disseminate good practice on recruitment/retention of older people in employment in Wales. To show leadership in this we recommend that Government schemes/National Assembly for Wales funded bodies should develop their practices so as to act as best examples in promoting the employment of older people.

3.22. Promoting participation in education by older people should be a key policy objective for the Welsh Assembly Government and ELWA. In particular the disincentives for older people to participation in learning should be addressed, including consideration of policies for fees, student loans, Assembly learning grants and for increasing opportunities for informal courses.

3.23. ELWa and Careers Wales should produce better information and advice on life long learning for older people which emphasises the health and life benefits that can be gained from education and learning.

3.24. The Welsh Assembly Government should undertake a review of how the further expansion of learning through non traditional routes such as University of the 3rd Age, Retired Service Volunteers Programme, Older and Bolder etc could be effectively funded and achieved.

3.25. Further work should be completed to promote the development of community information technology facilities to provide more equal access including in public libraries and post offices. We recommend that ELWA should investigate how information technology training tailored to needs of older people can be made more readily available, accessible in a range of common meeting places.

3.26. The Welsh Assembly Government and local government should take the initiative to explore how its communications to older people generally might be promoted and better co-ordinated. Consideration should also be given to the development of a general access web site and public forum facility for older people in Wales

3.27. The UK Government and the Welsh Assembly Government should review the current strategies for tackling crime, their impact on the needs of older people and how more could be done to focus on the fear of crime experienced by many older people. The impact of distraction or doorstep crimes on older people should be included in this work. Street lighting and

police liaison with older people's groups should also be considered in this context.

3.28. In the light of the work of the Beth Johnson Foundation the Welsh Assembly Government should undertake further development work to define how the awareness and benefits of intergenerational links could be promoted in Wales. They should also consider the development of a programme of intergenerational activity that could be taken forward in collaboration with local government, the voluntary sector and others.

Chapter 4: Promoting Healthy Living

4.1. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop a tailored Strategy for health promotion for older people in Wales including pre retirement action to improve health, decrease dependency in old age and avoid practices that are health- damaging.

4.2. Building on "Better Health Better Wales", the Welsh Assembly Government's health and social care policy development should give firmer emphasis and direct targeted funding toward health promotion, benefit uptake and the prevention of ill health.

4.3. The Welsh Assembly Government should give priority to developing a coherent and effective approach to health promotion for older people. In so doing, the Welsh Assembly Government should take a joined up approach to policy development and take into account related issues from other areas of its responsibilities e.g. health, local government, life long learning, housing, benefits take-up, rapid response programme etc

4.4. The Welsh Assembly Government should improve publicity, information and communications on health promotion specifically targeted at older people and groups with specific needs eg wheelchair users, blind and deaf people - covering all aspects of physical and mental health including exercise, healthy lifestyle.

4.5. Further research should be undertaken on nutrition and diet for older people. The findings of this research should be used to provide advice and publicity to stress the benefits of healthy eating and to encourage and facilitate older people to change to healthier diets and to shop for healthy and affordable food.

4.6. A programme of development and training in health promotion for older people and groups with specific needs eg wheelchair users, blind and deaf people should be taken forward for GPs and other Primary Care professionals by the Welsh Assembly Government and its partners.

4.7. Further research should be undertaken on the availability and impact of chiropody services and how support might be improved and developed.

4.8. Building on existing examples, an evaluation study should be undertaken as a basis for promotion and development of ‘healthy ageing’ day health centres for older people across Wales that include a range of “one stop shop” services and trained staff. The NHS and local authorities should develop a clear policy objective as a consequence.

4.9. Working with its partners, the Welsh Assembly Government should lead the development of a programme to promote exercise and avoid falls in old age including training and development for carers, other care providers and professionals.

4.10. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop guidance in collaboration with its partners to promote well co-ordinated and effective continence services for older people throughout Wales. Access to public toilets and toilets in commercial outlets for older people should be promoted.

4.11. The Welsh Assembly Government should promote the development of Health Alliances. Further work should also be undertaken to facilitate the sharing of good practice across Wales including joint working, practical schemes e.g. easy walking schemes, healthy eating facilities, safety at home etc.

4.12. The Welsh Assembly Government should review the provision of cancer services in Wales to ensure the availability of timely and appropriate diagnostic/screening facilities regardless of age.

4.13. We recommend that a programme should be developed to promote the benefits of good oral, ophthalmic and hearing health in older people and offer practical advice and encourage regular check-ups.

4.14 We further recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government takes action to ensure the adequate provision of dental services to older people in the community and in residential care. Oral health needs must be seen as an integrated component of all health and social care plans for older people.

4.15. The Welsh Assembly Government should also review the efficiency and cost effectiveness of alternative models of health and social care checks for other 75s.

4.16. The Welsh Assembly Government and local government should develop a specification of the requirements of older people for leisure and exercise facilities. Existing services should be developed to ensure that they are accessible, affordable and suitable for older people.

Chapter 5: Ensuring Independence

5.1 In the context of the development from the Housing Strategy for Wales, a National debate should be led by the Welsh Assembly Government about the options for meeting the future housing needs of older people. The debate

should be wide ranging and ensure participation of all key interests including older people themselves.

5.2. The Welsh Assembly Government should take action to further strengthen the links between health services, social services and housing departments

5.3. The Welsh Assembly Government should review the role of Housing Associations and related regulations on residential homes and supported accommodation so that they can participate effectively in the implementation of health and well-being and care strategies.

5.4. Further research and development should be undertaken to identify and evaluate how the use of equity release schemes (including small sum releases) can benefit older people, improve their housing and increase income safely.

5.5. Consideration should be given to how changes in the private sector housing renewal arrangements might help in improving living conditions for older people.

5.6. The Welsh Assembly Government should give priority to progress their initiative as to how handyman and other home maintenance services might be enhanced and developed on a more consistent and stronger basis.

5.7. The Welsh Assembly Government should examine The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme conditions to ensure they do not present any unnecessary barriers for participation by older people

5.8. Development of Fair Traders Registers and quality assurance kite marks for specific trades such as builders should be considered by local authorities to enhance consumer protection for older people

5.9. Action should be taken to ensure that the Welsh Assembly Government e- Health Strategy and future e-Health services are developed to provide the benefits of new technology to support older people living in their own homes.

5.10. Further action should be taken by the Welsh Assembly Government and local government to promote health and social care policies which support older people to live at home with appropriate help and to be able to access high quality supported and residential accommodation when necessary.

5.11. In the light of the Nuffield Institute report, the Welsh Assembly Government should undertake follow up research and evaluation to identify the level and range of unmet need in provision of social care for older people in 2002 and urgently examine options for how the deficit might be addressed.

5.12. The Welsh Assembly Government, local government and care providers should undertake a review of domiciliary care provision in Wales and consider

how the sector could be stabilised and developed to ensure older people can continue to live independently in their own homes for as long as they are able.

5.13. As part of its continued development of the Carers Strategy, the Welsh Assembly Government should give consideration as to how respite support can be enhanced and made available on a regular and consistent basis by local authorities. Further work should also be undertaken to ensure that carers' rights to assessment are met.

5.14. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop policies and guidance that secure greater consistency and fairness in eligibility, access and charges for community care services across Wales.

5.15. The Welsh Assembly Government should look to develop coherent, systematic and integrated arrangements for the funding and distribution of health and social care specialist equipment. Arrangements should be developed to: improve service and supply to older people, use the joint assessment as a catalyst, bridge different funding streams, be less bureaucratic, returns/recycles equipment effectively for further use, and provides the help when and where it is needed. The concept of joint health and social care equipment stores should be promoted and developed. The equipment needs of disabled people should be given particular attention in seeking all of these improvements.

5.16. Further research should be undertaken on the prevalence and impact of disability in older people and how policies and programmes might better meet requirements and address the short-falls that present barriers to healthy and active ageing for people with disabilities.

5.17. The Welsh Assembly Government, the NHS, Primary Care. Local government, the voluntary and independent sectors should all review their information giving strategies and practices to secure quality, improvement and innovation to better meet the needs of older people. The piloting of Social Care Direct in Wales should be taken forward.

5.18. Targets established to measure performance in waiting times for social care should be applied consistently, reviewed and progressive improvement made, in the light of available resources. Local Authority Policy Agreements should be used to monitor the effectiveness of care for older people.

5.19. The Welsh Assembly Government should put in place measures to secure fairer charging structures for long term care. This should include examination of the cost, benefits and other implications of improving the position under the capital limits for means testing arrangements where people have to sell their homes to pay for care

5.20. Local Government working with the voluntary sector should consider how support for "less intensive needs" might be made available to older people in cost effective and innovative ways and as part of integrated prevention strategies at a local level.

5.21. As part of its Primary Care Strategy, the Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that the needs and requirements of older people are addressed. A range of action should be considered including greater emphasis on nurse and allied health professional led assessment, easier and more flexible access to GPs of choice, more community health clinics, greater use of nurse practitioners training and skills development, role of health visitors, better liaison between GPs and hospitals, and better GP services to individuals in residential care

5.22. The Welsh Assembly Government, the NHS and local government should ensure the provision of accessible and co-ordinated transport services to health facilities, including specifically location of bus stops close to health centres, surgeries and hospitals. Improved community transport services should also contribute to the resolution of this problem.

5.23. Local government and the NHS should ensure the needs of Welsh speakers are addressed more effectively when planning and providing health care services.

5.24. Local government and the NHS should ensure the needs of ethnic minority language speakers are addressed more effectively when planning and providing health care services including those whose use of English has deteriorated due to illness and age.

5.25. Further emphasis should be given to the development of joint working at the interface between health and social care and housing and other local government services including use of the Health Act flexibilities. The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure its internal structures reflect the need for an integrated approach across NHS, Social Care and Housing.

5.26. We recognise that in a number of areas in Wales, development in the housing market and local services threatens the supportive social and cultural network for older people and we ask the Welsh Assembly Government to undertake further research to explore this issue and identify action that might be taken.

5.27. The Welsh Assembly Government should formally accept the Royal Commission's recommendations. The Welsh Assembly Government should challenge the UK Government to fund and implement free personal care in the context of UK taxation, benefits and inheritance policy as the Royal Commission had intended.

5.28. The key principles and driving force in charging policy for long term care should be the Unified Assessment Framework and diagnostic equity rather than the definition of nursing and personal care currently used.

Chapter 6: Accessing Services With Increasing Dependence

6.1. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop a National Service Framework for older people in Wales, tailored to the requirements of Wales and should issue robust guidance on its implementation to the NHS and local government.

6.2. The Welsh Assembly Government should work with all relevant statutory and voluntary sector bodies in Wales to ensure there is a comprehensive and appropriately funded Strategy for Mental Health Services for Older People. This should address the areas for action identified by the Audit Commission including securing early support, assessment and information, strengthened joint working to help people stay at home, better integrated services for those who cannot stay at home and consistent accountability and strategic leadership, commissioning and planning.

6.3. The development of joint working between health and social care, housing other local government services and the independent sector should be given priority as new Partnership arrangements for health and well-being are developed.

6.4. User and sector participation, strategic planning, common definitions, funding methodologies, policies and procedures, joint training, joint assessment and sharing resources should all be taken forward proactively to secure effective joint working in all areas of Wales.

6.5 The Welsh Assembly Government and local government should work in close partnership with the care sector to address current problems of capacity, quality, choice and accessibility and bring greater stability, looking at both short and medium term solutions.

6.6. Up to date research to identify and record good practice in the provision of health and social care for older people across the European Community and elsewhere should be used to inform future policy development

6.7. The Welsh Assembly Government should examine the role which leaders or “champions” for older people might have in local health boards and health and well-being partnerships (when formed) to ensure that all health housing and social care services are sensitive to their needs and are free from policies or practices that could be perceived as discriminatory on grounds of age.

6.8. Action should be taken to monitor performance of the NHS in the delivery of policies to address age discrimination and ensure there is equal access to services regardless of age.

6.9. Local Government should ensure that robust local policies and effective monitoring are in place to help prevent abuse and to deal with it effectively where it occurs including liaison with the police on involvement in reporting of abuse by families.

6.10. Action to tackle delayed transfers of care from hospital to the community is needed, to ensure that support provided to older people is appropriate, timely and co-ordinated and focuses on their needs rather than on the operational demands of the NHS. Improved follow up action once people have returned to the community is also needed.

6.11. In the development of a Palliative Care Strategy, the Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that older people and their carers are fully involved and that improvements are achieved across all aspects of the services from hospice to community. Palliative care should be available for all conditions that require it, good quality care at the end of life should be the right of all. Bereavement support services should particularly seek to combat social isolation and provide help for surviving partners at a particularly vulnerable time.

6.12. A Strategy to develop more effective prevention and rehabilitation services should be developed by the Welsh Assembly Government with all of its care partners to offer an integrated and cost effective approach that ensures the maximum possible degree of independence is restored and maintained, and that inappropriate hospital stays are avoided.

6.13 The concept of intermediate care requires development and clarification. It should be taken forward through a clear policy and implementation framework. This should be linked to the development of comprehensive care pathways utilising the unified assessment framework.

6.14. The implementation of the Unified Assessment Framework for Wales should lead to much closer, timely multi-disciplinary collaboration in the assessment process, especially for the frail older people. Using skilled specialist staff, a training and development programme should be undertaken to underpin the implementation process for the Framework. The medical component of the assessment process, particularly in avoiding hospital admission where possible, should be given strong emphasis.

6.15. An effective structure of support services and training for the informal carers of older people, including particularly older carers, should be developed, that ensures that all carers have access to a common assessment of their needs and to appropriate levels and types of respite care.

6.16. Consideration should be given to the development of clinical networks to ensure the provision of co-ordinated services for older people, with particular reference to specialist medical services.

6.17. Consideration should be given as to how older people's choice of where to die can be respected.

CHAPTER 7 - PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

7.1. The Welsh Assembly Government should produce a comprehensive Implementation Plan for the Strategy for Older People in Wales that takes account of the

outcomes of consultation on this Strategy Report. A clear and robust monitoring and evaluation framework should be drawn up

7.2. The Welsh Assembly Government should consider the financial implications of implementing this Strategy Report ensuring a priority is given to identifying sufficient resources to enable priorities to be addresses. In the light of recommendations at Chapter 2, consideration should be given to the development of a dynamic and effective process for leading and monitoring the implementation of a Strategy for Older People in Wales.

7.3. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop a dedicated research and development programme on ageing as a basis for a better understanding of older people and their concerns and to inform policy development across its statutory responsibilities. A priority for responsive research on older people should be agreed. Data collection and forecasting of demography, population movements should all form part of the programme.

7.4. Local Government and other relevant statutory bodies in Wales should develop and resource their own strategies and implementation plans to take forward the relevant recommendations in this Strategy Report.

7.5. The Welsh Assembly Government should finance Local Government, Local Health Boards, Assembly Sponsored Bodies, national voluntary organisations and other statutory bodies to develop the organisational capacity to deliver the action on older peoples issues set out in this Report.

7.6. The Voluntary and Independent sectors should be supported to engage in the development and implementation of the agenda set out in this Strategy Report.

May 2002