Inquiry into regulation of care for older people

Mary Archibald

All people over 80 should be given a yearly medical examination by their GP. Thus highlighting health issues before they become problems, this I know is done, but not by all doctors. Also doctors should look after their own patients both at night and during weekends. It should be compulsory that on discharge from hospital the family doctor attends his patient. This is not always done. There should be guidelines to cover this.

In the past the Care Commission announced when they were inspecting care homes. This did not work well as it leads to care homes presenting the inspectorate with an inaccurate picture of how the home is run on a normal daily basis. I believe this practice has now ceased and ad-hoc inspections are now carried out. This should never have been allowed in the first place.

It is important that all staff who come into contact with the older people speak fluent English as most elderly people are hard of hearing and just do not understand what is being said.

There does not appear to be a lot of stimulation for the elderly in both care and hospital environments. The elderly should be encouraged to do daily tasks i.e. making tea, toast and once a week visiting the shops!! (the latter of course would not be possible in hospital). This aspect of care should be monitored more closely.

The fees for care homes are horrendously high. Who regulates the level of fees and what can customers expect for their money? Customers – or their family – etc. etc. should be able to see where money they pay is spent. Also there should be on display in each establishment exactly what standard of care is on offer i.e. bathing 5 times a week – and if this is not being done they can immediately address this – or any other failure of standard of care – immediately before things get out of hand!!! as unfortunately has happened recently.

The fact that people who own their own homes are expected to pay towards their care is totally unacceptable. These are people, who are not normally rich, and have saved most of their life to own their property and pass it to their family. There seems to be discrimination against those who own their own home. It is fair that everyone should pay a nominal sum towards their care but there should be no differential between homeowners and others who have no property. This is a great source of worry and upset to older people.

Mary Archibald
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