

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ADULT CARE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY 27 JUNE 2002 AT 10.30 A.M.**

Agenda item No.

**Annex 'A'**  
**to**  
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RESPONSES FROM PUBLIC ABOUT EXPERIENCES IN RESPECT OF  
RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING HOME CARE

1. Following the recent case of Mrs Rose Cottle which received national coverage when she lobbied the Government about the closure of her residential home, the Hertfordshire public were asked through a letter to the local media from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman whether they had any experiences they would like to bring to the Committee's attention that were relevant to the supply and demand of residential, nursing and home care.
2. The following are the responses from members of the public:-

Letter 1

The following issues concern an 85 year old lady who had lived in a residential home for 14 years until taken into a Hospital Psychiatric Unit in January 2001. Matters of concern are:-

- (a) the inappropriateness of homes suggested by hospital staff
- (b) problems concerning social workers at local team who went off sick
- (c) disillusionment with home finder at the hospital
- (d) difficulties as to "suitable homes", within the price paid by Herts County Council.
- (e) unhappiness with what seems to be "a heartless" system.

Letter 2

Elderly persons in their 80's contemplating moving to affordable accommodation possibly with warden service but such accommodation not being available. Could not local authorities provide affordable appropriate accommodation for the elderly, freeing up move expensive accommodation for younger people.

Letter 3

Concerns for an 87 year old man living alone as to the provision of services for him via care agencies.

The cost of the elderly persons rehabilitation from hospital into a residential home, at the cost of £400 per week of which Social Services pay £325. It is felt that this person could be cared for at home at much less expense had help been available. The County Council should have a duty to provide sufficient places for the elderly and not rely on the private sector. There was also concern that had not the elderly persons son not been able to afford the top-up fees his father would still be bed-blocking in a local Hospital.

#### Letter 4

The daughter of a 93 year old lady who is a carer for her mother feels that when she goes on holiday that more appropriate respite care should be able to her mother. Although very grateful for the services provided she points out that on the last occasion her mother was placed with people with dementia and her mother was distressed at the "antics" and noise of the residents.

#### Letter 5

An anonymous letter from a person looking after an 86 year old who suffers from heart disease. Difficulties around finding information. The writer of the letter feels there is a need for a user friendly information service. The carer outlines her experiences and frustrations at trying to obtain care for her father and her experiences of the system.

#### Letter 6

A resident of Hemel Hempstead makes the following observations:-

- (a) provision of nursing home care should be the duty of the health service to supply. As for the provision of residential home care the best solution was for the local authority to provide warden controlled units with communal facilities of the type that already exist such as The Driftway in Adeyfield and Two Beeches at Grove Hill, Hemel Hempstead.
- (b) lots of support should be given to people who continue to live in their own homes with a high level of both nursing and home care services
- (c) the supply and demand for home care and more importantly that the funding of the home care services needs more consideration
- (d) consideration should be given to setting up a system along the lines of neighbourhood watch to encourage the formation of local volunteer groups to care for people who are in their own homes.

Letter 7

The user of the service who receives care from a Home Care Agency asks that the administration of the system be improved to enable carers to assist the user at times convenient to the user.

Letter 8

A resident of St Albans asks for help to obtain suitable accommodation in the area for her wheelchair bound husband.

Letter 9

Communication by e-mail from a resident offering to meet members of the Committee if they so wish to discuss experiences of the supply and demand of residential and nursing home care together with home care.

Letter 10

Telephone call from officer at Watford Borough Council - suggesting that the Adult Care Services Scrutiny Committee should consider the provision of nursing homes for ethnic elders.

The original letters are available for inspection before the meeting, please contact Peter Hull on 01992 555565

The Director of Adult Care Services will reply to the detailed points in each of the letters after the meeting.

Prepared by Peter Hull on behalf of Roma Mills and Ken Coleman

13 June 2002