

Press Release

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Decade of disaster for nation's elderly

THE GOVERNMENT is being slammed for making families wait another decade before it introduces reforms to the under funded and complex care system.

The process to bring in radical reforms to the social care system through a Green Paper could take ten years to come in, especially as the recession means public spending is under increasing pressure.

Thousands of pensioners are being forced to sell their family homes in order to pay for continuing care while a postcode lottery means the elderly in some parts of the country receive more support from their councils than others.

Colin Ball, managing director at continuing care funding specialists, Cheselden, says:

“The bureaucratic continuing care system is a national scandal and the shambolic funding system which denies vulnerable people their right to NHS help needs an urgent and dramatic overhaul – it can not be endured for another decade. It is ever more important to move speedily because of the aging population.

“In my experience, a variety of tactics are used to deny people funding. I’ve seen rules flouted, and deliberately misleading and inaccurate letters sent to people who have enquired about funding. Too many are denied the funding they are legally entitled to.

“As a result, vulnerable people have been forced to sell their homes and have seen their life savings dwindle away as they are forced to pay for continuing care with their hard earned cash.”

The number of people receiving continuing care varies dramatically around the country. The postcode lottery faced by those needing care is due to differences in local criteria for eligibility.

Continuing health care - where the NHS is responsible for, and fully funds care outside of hospital when a person no longer needs acute inpatient care, mainly affects very ill patients in nursing homes.

The Green Paper could see all taxpayers pay a new form of National Insurance or take out private policies in order to cover the cost of support in old age.

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