

Cheselden Continuing Care Limited
Official response to the Government Green Paper
'Shaping the future of care together', published on 14 July 2009

Cheselden Continuing Care Ltd welcomes any attempt to reform the current failing adult social care system. But the proposals in this Green Paper are over-complicating the issues in hand. If the new system is run in the same way as the current one, poor training and implementation will mean that money is wasted on numerous, badly coordinated departments and excessive bureaucracy. People who have worked and saved hard will still be unfairly treated by being made to pay for their care in order to recoup money wasted by the system.

Health Secretary, Andy Burnham, says, *"I accept this is a difficult debate and perhaps we should have grasped the nettle sooner."* But the Green Paper ignores the fact that there are a significant number of chronically ill people paying for care that are 'in the system' right now. These people's assets and life savings are being stolen to pay for care they should be receiving free from the NHS – an issue that the Paper does not address.

Whilst being a single step in the right direction, the 'care insurance' and 'comprehensive' funding proposals laid out in the Green Paper would only serve to perpetuate the current system. Those with assets over a certain amount (currently £23,500) will still be means tested and have to pay for care even if they are ill – and this is after they have paid for the new 'care insurance', which is merely an extension of the current National Insurance scheme.

Or, under the 'partnership' system, they could be forced to surrender their home to a deferred payment scheme (which is the case now except that the scheme is currently voluntary) in order to meet high care costs.

In addition, the Green Paper proposes stopping the Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowances benefits for better-off people. AA and DLA are given to ill people requiring assistance. If recipients pay for their own care, the benefits are used to offset the care costs. This is the thin end of the wedge for means-testing those people who are ill; that is whose primary care need is a healthcare need. For those people that require nursing care 24 hours a day, it is difficult enough to find out what their rights are to funding, never mind being put into a separate means-tested group.

The Government claims to want to end means-testing for care fees, and yet it proposes that those on lower incomes will still have their full care costs covered. It

suggests a sliding scale of individual contribution according to ability to pay. That is contradictory to the proposal of 'ending means-testing'.

The current social care situation is in tatters because of overreaching bureaucracy fuelled by budget-protecting, yet money-wasting, NHS and local authority departments. We acknowledge that the Green Paper is a step in the right direction, but much more needs to be done if its aims of a 'fair and consistent social care system for all' stand a chance of being met.