



Health and Social Care Committee

Consultation on terms of reference for inquiry into residential care for older people

RC25 ToR – Care Forum Wales

Committee Clerk
Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA
By email: HSCCommittee@wales.gov.uk

Friday 14 October 2011

Dear Sir / Madam

Terms of Reference for Enquiry into Residential Care for Older People

We would like to thank you for drawing our attention to the draft terms of reference for the Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into Residential Care for Older People. Care Forum Wales is the leading professional association for independent sector care providers in Wales with our membership including care home and domiciliary care providers from the private and voluntary sectors. We aim to engage and professionally support independent providers, and to spread good practice and help members provide a high quality service.

We are pleased that the committee will be enquiring into the sustainability of the sector, which has concerned us for some time, and have two comments on the draft terms of reference:

- We assume that the enquiry covers both types of care homes: residential homes providing personal care only and nursing homes providing personal and nursing care. It would seem impossible to separate the two given that many homes cater for both types of residents, but we noticed that the focus of the discussion in the committee was on places commissioned by local authorities rather than nursing care commissioned by the NHS. In terms of taking a view about the sustainability of the sector we believe both residential and nursing homes should both be considered by the enquiry and would like confirmation that this is the case.
- We also note that the terms of reference include regulation and inspection arrangements with regard to the financial viability of providers. Since the majority of residents in care homes are publicly funded, homes cannot be viable and deliver quality care without sustainable fees being paid by Local Authorities and Health Boards. We note that the process for setting fees by public authorities, who are effectively in a monopsony position, was discussed by members of the committee during its consideration of this



enquiry. We understand why an enquiry focussed solely on fees was considered too narrow, but we would not want to see this significant issue lost from the proceedings.

We are keen to give both written and oral evidence to the enquiry when it commences and look forward to hearing from you further.

Yours faithfully

Mary Wimbury

Mary Wimbury
Senior Policy Advisor
Care Forum Wales