

Health and Social Care Committee

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

RC29 ToR – Royal College of Nursing

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14 October 2011

Mark Drakeford AM
Chair
Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Mark

The Royal College of Nursing in Wales welcomes the decision of the National Assembly Health and Social Care Committee to conduct an Inquiry into Residential Care for Older People.

We also appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft terms of reference.

Our suggestion, which we urge in the strongest possible manner is to explicitly extend the scope of the Inquiry to residential and nursing care. We make this suggestion for the following reasons:

The healthcare of older people in residential care is a significant concern. There is reason to fear that preventative health care from primary services are not prioritised and that admittance and discharge from secondary care with all of the attendant delays and disadvantages is too prevalent.

The relationship of this situation to nursing care is inextricable. Older people in residential care may require or benefit from nursing care on a temporary basis. Furthermore if an older person has been resident in a home for a long period of time and their health deteriorates it is not always appropriate for that individual to be moved to another facility when nursing care could be provided in situ.

There is also the complex issue of whether an Older Person is assessed as requiring nursing or residential care. This assessment can not only produce significant delays in patient care it can also result in the patient receiving inappropriate care or care in an inappropriate environment. This is an important factor in residential care. Nursing care beds are in extremely short supply in certain areas of Wales which can add to the pressure on residential care.

Finally the draft terms of reference currently reference the need to examine regulatory frameworks for residential care. We welcome this scrutiny and believe it would benefit from examination of the broader vista of regulation covering nursing and residential care. It will be extremely important that this Inquiry consults with a wide range of expert advisers and stakeholders making sure to include professionals from the health as well as social care field.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tina Donnelly". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

TINA DONNELLY
DIRECTOR, RCN WALES