

**AGE CONCERN ENGLAND  
AND  
MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION**

***INQUIRY INTO MENTAL HEALTH  
AND WELL BEING IN LATER  
LIFE***

**Dr. June Crown  
Chairman**

**WHY AN INQUIRY?**

- **A serious policy gap in National Service Frameworks**
- **Long standing inadequate funding**
- **Double discrimination**
- **Demographic change with social and economic implications**

## **SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY**

- **Mental health and well-being of present and future generations of older people**
- **Services and support for older people with or at risk of mental health problems and their carers – from prevention to long-term care**

## **INFORMATION SOURCES**

- **Inquiry Board and Advisory Group**
- **Participants from Cabinet Office and 4 countries**
- **Literature and policy reviews**
- **Call for evidence - responses from more than 880 older people and 120 organisations and professionals**
- **Focus groups with “hard to reach” groups**

## **THE FIRST REPORT: PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN LATER LIFE**

- Consistent evidence from all sources that key issues are:
  - Discrimination
  - Participation
  - Relationships
  - Physical health
  - Poverty

## **WHAT CAN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DO?**

- Not much!
  - Long term sustainable pension provision
  - Age discrimination legislation

## **WHAT CAN LOCAL ORGANISATIONS DO?**

- **A LOT !**

## **DISCRIMINATION**

- **Involve older people in development of civic plans**
- **Avoid rationing local services by chronological age**
- **Train all staff to treat every client with respect and understanding**

## **PARTICIPATION**

- **Provide opportunities for work and/or volunteering for older people**
- **Offer training and education for all ages**
- **Encourage pre-retirement planning across all sectors**

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

- **Provide venues and support for social and group activities for all ages**
- **Encourage intergenerational contact through schools and colleges**

## **PHYSICAL HEALTH**

- **Promote facilities in ways that do not deter older people**
- **Provide good public transport to facilities**
- **Develop urban designs to encourage walking and cycling**
- **Provide healthy food at affordable prices at all venues**

## **POVERTY**

- **Mitigate effects:**
- **Provide information about benefits**
- **Provide subsidised public transport**
- **Provide subsidised access to sports, educational and leisure facilities**
- **Assist with housing and adaptations**
- **Encourage employment of older people in local businesses**

## WHAT CAN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS DO?

- **Influence professional and service organisations to be exemplar employers**
  - avoid discrimination in employment and training
  - avoid service rationing by chronological age
- **Influence professional training programmes**
  - develop positive attitudes to older people, avoid patronising, ensure dignity at all times

## THE IMPACT OF SUCCESS

- **Humanitarian**
  - happier and more fulfilled later life
- **Economic**
  - maintain economic contributions: each year people over 50
    - contribute £230 billion (25% GDP) as workers
    - spend £239 billion
    - provide £24.2 billion-worth of voluntary service
- **Workforce**
  - non-sustainable with current retirement patterns

## THE SECOND REPORT

- To be published in spring 2007
- About services for older people with or at risk of mental health problems
- Range - prevention to long term and palliative care
- Information from literature review, round table discussions, older people and carers
- Emphasis on most neglected areas



**Mental Health** Foundation

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