

Health and Social Care Committee

Inquiry into residential care for older people

RC57 – Vale of Glamorgan Care Home Association

Vale Of Glamorgan Care Home Association

16th December 2011

Residential Care for Older People

I was the Responsible Individual for Bethel House Residential Care Home in Dinas Powys and I am currently Chairman of the Vale of Glamorgan Care Homes Association.

As you consider Residential Care within the Welsh Assembly there are the following points I would like to draw to your attention.

Of the 38 residents in Bethel House 35 are over 93 years of age and are classed as 'frail elderly'. These residents have come into our home because they cannot cope with their daily routines they need to have assistance available 24/7. Many have felt total isolation living on their own, which has affected their quality of life. It's a difficult decision to place a relative into care but this has proven to give the person a renewed quality of life.

Residents are encouraged to view this residential care as their own home where relatives and friends are able to visit or even take them out. They can choose what food they would like and join other residents in the dining room or eat in their own rooms.

Over the past years the quality of care provided has greatly improved. The introduction of qualifications for care staff by the Care Council for Wales [NVQs] now [QCFs] has proven very beneficial in staff development / training.

Future predictions for Wales are showing that there are going to be far more 'older persons' over the next 10 years.

We need to ensure that there are sufficient care homes to meet these predictions.

One area which needs attention is the registration classifications. More flexibility needs to be given by CSSIW into why residential homes are having to move residents on due to be classified as suffering from dementia, most of these residents can be well looked after in their existing care home providing staff have been trained in dementia care. To take these vulnerable people out of their familiar surroundings and carers they are used to and place them in new surroundings and with a team of completely new carers does not help them stay in the place of their own choice.

There is greater emphasis being placed on the 'older people' staying in their own homes receiving domiciliary care, which is very good, but I would question when packages are costing more than care home rates can the local authorities continue to pay these high costs as some specialist domiciliary care costing over £2,500.00 per week?

Extra care has been introduced as the answer but those who are living in these places find out that whilst they remain healthy these places are very good but once their health deteriorates the cost of providing the care required is very expensive, as they are charged for everything including extra if their medication is increased, there are also reports that once their mobility slows down they feel isolated in their homes.

I am prepared to discuss these points in more detail and would invite you to visit Bethel House to see the quality of life our residents enjoy.

Yours Sincerely

Brian West

Chairman

Vale Of Glamorgan Care Home Association