

# **Beacon Council Scheme Round Five**

## **Services for Older People**

### **Theme**

#### ***Evidence on Current Practice, Best Practice and User Satisfaction***

#### **Background**

This paper presents key findings on current practice, best practice and user satisfaction in the selected theme. This information has been taken from the Round Five theme reports completed by the central government policy leads in each theme in late Spring 2003. The full theme reports can be found at:

[www.local.odpm.gov.uk/research/beacon/beacon.htm](http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/research/beacon/beacon.htm)

The user satisfaction data and analysis was completed by MORI in August 2003 and the full report on all themes is available at

[www.local.odpm.gov.uk/research/beacon5.pdf](http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/research/beacon5.pdf)

The evidence base on theme research and user satisfaction is designed to assist the Independent Advisory Panel in creating the selection criteria for the scheme. It is also designed to assist local authorities in applying for the scheme and in improving services generally. The research evidence base on the Beacon Council Scheme is crucial in identifying current and best practice in service provision whilst taking into account the satisfaction of those that receive the services. This evidence base also enables local authorities to identify areas for improvement as well as potential areas for innovation in attempting to achieve continuous improvement in service provision.

The research evidence base can also demonstrate whether the scheme is achieving its long-term objective of improving services. Warwick University Business School has commenced work on a three to five year ODPM / IDeA funded project entitled *An Impact Evaluation of the Beacon Council Scheme* and this will yield further evidence shortly and greatly contribute to the future evidence base on service improvement.

#### **Section A - Current practice in Services for Older People**

A range of central and local government departments, as well as the private and voluntary sector administer services for older people. In local authorities, personal care services for older people form the major area of responsibility and these are located in social services departments. Other services, such as housing and transport, are dealt with by their respective departments. More local authorities are developing older people strategies to encompass all services to ensure that their needs are considered and planned for. A few are piloting a more holistic approach and providing 'one stop shops' where older people can access a range of services (see p above).

#### **Initiatives**

## **Social services**

*Out in the Open. Breaking Down the Barriers for Older People (2000)*

Produced by the Public Services Productivity Panel and DH to examine how local councils can improve the commissioning of services to meet the needs of older citizens. It identified considerable variations in the unit costs and patterns of commissioned institutional and domiciliary care. The causes of ineffective commissioning and a range of possible solutions were identified. Four sites were selected for direct external intervention in their processes of commissioning services. The interventions were successful in generating rapid changes in services; similar direct interventions, with greater involvement of central government in providing support for commissioning strategies, the closer involvement of independent sector providers and more consultation with users and carers were recommended.

*Improving Older People's Services - Policy into Practice (2002)*

A Social Services Inspectorate inspection of older people's services in 23 councils found that overall, services were continuing to improve but identified some areas for further action.

- More training and support to facilitate change among front-line managers and staff to promote a culture of supporting independence.
- Better quality commissioning (including improving quality assurance for domiciliary care services and reducing delays).
- More support tailored to the needs of black and ethnic minority elders.
- Care plans often service-led rather than personalised.
- Improved monitoring and reviews of established care packages.
- Better IT systems for more efficient case management, information management and compatibility with other agency systems (particularly health).

*Direct payments*

These have been explicitly advocated by the Government as the means of 'modernising' older people's services (including services for those at risk of hospital admission or needing increased support on discharge). However, as with younger disabled people, it is likely that take-up is highly localised; the 2001 SSI inspection of 23 local authorities found only 188 older people receiving direct payments. Five of the 23 local authorities contained 78% of these direct payment recipients, while seven councils had no older direct payment users at all.

## **Welfare rights**

Some local authorities have highly developed units and others fund voluntary organisations to do this work. A recent NAO report<sup>1</sup> recommended that central and local government work together and with the voluntary sector to increase benefit take-up. The NAO commissioned research that clearly illustrates the advantages of maximum benefit take-up, not only for the health and welfare of individual pensioners, but also to local communities in terms of increased spending on local goods and services. The Local Government Association and The Pension Service jointly published a good practice guide on increasing benefit take-up in 2002 for use by local authorities and voluntary organisations.

## **Housing**

### *Supporting People*

An ODPM programme to provide housing-related support for vulnerable people, it brings together transitional housing benefit, supported housing management grant, probation accommodation grant, income support and jobseekers allowance into a single pot in order to fund housing-related support services from April 2003. Supporting People includes people in sheltered accommodation and those receiving support from housing improvement agencies. However, it is not at all clear how far local schemes are actually investing resources in support for older people (compared to other vulnerable groups such as homeless or mentally ill people).

### *Quality and Choice for Older People's Housing: A Strategic Framework*

Changing demographic patterns requires local authorities to consider what type of housing the future population will need. The poor quality housing in which some older people live, the lack of choice and the challenges of an increasingly diverse older population are highlighted. The document identifies the following priorities:

- increasing diversity and choice
- ensuring services are responsive and promote independence
- providing information and advice
- increasing flexibility in housing and service models
- improving the quality of housing and support services
- improving integration of housing, social and health services nationally and locally

### *Preparing Older People's Strategies: Linking Housing to Health, Social Care and other Local Strategies*

Detailed guidance on preparing local strategies that integrate housing with other relevant services.

## **Transport**

- Ten year transport plan published.
- Minimum half fare on local bus service for people over 60 (local authorities have autonomy to provide more generous schemes).
- Good practice guidelines - with case studies for bus operators to improve personal security on public transport.

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<sup>1</sup> Comptroller and Auditor General (2002) *Tackling pensioner poverty: Encouraging take-up of entitlements* NAO

## ***Services for Older People - Current examples of good practice<sup>2</sup>***

### **Tameside - Really Important Questions Conference and Group**

Over 100 members of the public attended a conference designed to elicit solutions to some of the major difficulties experienced by older people. Nine discussion groups took place, addressing topics such as Staying at Home with Confidence, The Hospital Experience, Coping with Depression, and Having Your Say. Following the conference the Really Important Questions Group was established to progress the work identified and to provide a forum for older people. The group sends two representatives to the Joint Strategy Sub Group for Older People. A second conference was held in November 2001, and a booklet was produced, updating on progress in tackling the issues identified in the previous year.

### **Bolton - Better Government for Older People**

Since the completion of the pilot project, Bolton has taken a number of initiatives to reinforce the achievements of the project and respond to the 28 recommendations in the national report which fall within the remit of local authorities. These include the identification of an 'older person's champion' at executive member level; appointment of an older people's services co-ordinator; involvement of older people on the policy development group; and an expectation that every Council department will produce action plans for implementing the recommendations. In addition, specific actions taken as part of the pilot have continued; these include the attendance of Benefits Agency staff at community care centres, and other places where older people meet, to provide advice and assistance on benefits issues.

### **Gloucestershire - Involving Users and Carers in Developing Charging Policies**

Since the Joint Review, and in response to Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care Gloucestershire is revising its current charging policies. The Council set up a steering group drawn from representatives of user and carer organisations to look in detail at the draft policy. The group worked through the policy and proposed amendments. They were able to make a range of significant improvements to the proposed policy which were subsequently ratified by the Council.

### **Methods used to develop excellence and innovation**

- Best value performance reviews
- Pilots – eg BGOP, Care Direct

## **Section B - Indications of Excellent Practice in Services for Older People**

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<sup>2</sup> Audit Commission (2002) *Tracking the Changes in Social Services in England*

- There is a strategy for responding to national objectives (eg National Service Framework) and there are clear signs that the strategy is being implemented.
- Local objectives and performance measures established that reflect national priorities and Best Value.
- Services are planned in a co-ordinated way across departments
- There is evidence of working in partnership with local older peoples' voluntary organisations in developing services – not merely consulting them.
- There are appropriate channels for communicating directly with older people themselves to obtain their views and evidence that the views inform future planning.
- Services
  - actively promote independence and choice
  - are fair and consistent
  - treat customers with dignity and respect individual cultures and lifestyles
  - are accessible to all, and address social exclusion issues
  - sufficiently flexible to meet individual needs
  - capable of adapting quickly to changing circumstances
- Information about services is
  - comprehensive and covers all available choices
  - in clear, simple language setting out main eligibility criteria
  - available in a variety of accessible formats
  - freely available to older people, families and carers and voluntary organisations
- Consultation should
  - be in forms older people are comfortable with (not formal public meetings)
  - involve older people on a wide range – not just 'older people's issues'
  - be followed by clear reporting on outcomes and feedback to contributors

### **Section C - User Satisfaction in Services for Older People**

Much national survey data exists on the subject services for older people. There is extensive Best Value data available, and MORI has carried out a series of studies, most notably the Peoples Panel surveys on behalf of the Cabinet Office. The bulk of this data covers the views of people towards local services for the elderly, rather than recording the success with which councils and other local bodies have had in boosting the benefit take-up amongst people of pensionable age.

Elderly peoples' attitudes towards the 'Care in the Community' scheme, their level of satisfaction with local health and care services and the extent to which they feel informed about these services are outlined in the tables below:

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**Q** *Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the statements about 'Care in the Community'?*

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*Base: All panel members (3,303).*

*Base: All panel members aged 50+ (1,159).*

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	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Agree	Neither /Nor	Tends to disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ no opinion
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Overall, the Care in the Community policy has been a success</b>								
All Panel members	5	28	33	7	28	21	49	11
All panel members aged 50+	6	24	30	6	26	25	51	13
<b>Care in the Community has successfully re-integrated many people into local</b>								
All Panel members	8	39	47	9	23	11	34	10
All panel members aged 50+	8	36	44	9	21	12	33	13

*Source: Cabinet Office/MORI People's Panel (1998).*

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**Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of each?**

Base: All panel members aged 50+ who use these services.

	Your GP	NHS Hospitals	Home Helps	Residential care homes for disabled and elderly people
	%	%	%	%
	(1,968)	(1,184)	(103)	(81)
Very satisfied	66	52	60	40
Fairly satisfied	28	33	25	29
Neither/nor	3	5	8	7
Fairly dissatisfied	2	6	2	1
Very dissatisfied	1	2	1	9
Don't know/not stated	*	1	4	14
Satisfied	94	85	85	69
Dissatisfied	3	8	3	10
Net satisfied	+91	+77	+82	+59

Source: Cabinet Office/MORI People's Panel (1998).

**Q Still thinking about the same organisations, how informed do... keep you about the services they provide?**

Base: All panel members aged 50+ who use these services

	Your GP	NHS Hospitals	Home Helps	Residential care homes for disabled and elderly people
	%	%	%	%
	(1,968)	(1,184)	(103)	(81)
Very well informed	37	25	38	23
Fairly well informed	36	36	32	38
Gives me only a limited amount of information	14	21	6	18
Doesn't tell us much about what it does No	10	14	8	10
No opinion/no answer	2	4	16	11

Source: Cabinet Office/MORI People's Panel (1998).

The Best Value surveys also provide an indicative benchmark against which comparisons with the national picture can be made. The national satisfaction data for services for older people amongst all residents and service users is shown in the tables. However, caution should be exercised when analysing these findings because of the small base sizes involved. In addition, while Best Value studies are carried out at the local authority level the base sizes among users of each services are too small to allow meaningful comparison between council type.

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**Q** *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which Social Services for older people are provided in your local area?*

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	<b>Users %</b>	<b>All %</b>
<i>Base:</i>	<i>All service users (216)</i>	<i>All residents (2,568)</i>
Very satisfied	25	5
Fairly satisfied	39	24
Neither/nor	9	15
Fairly dissatisfied	11	9
Very dissatisfied	6	4
Don't know/not stated	11	43
Satisfied	64	29
Dissatisfied	17	13
Net satisfied	+47	+16

*Source: ODPM (2001 Best Value).*

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**Q** *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which Meals on Wheels is provided in your local area?*

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	<b>1998 %</b>	<b>2000 %</b>
<i>Base: All service users</i>	<i>(35)</i>	<i>(50)</i>
Very satisfied	42	42
Fairly satisfied	21	22
Neither/nor	2	3
Fairly dissatisfied	5	6
Very dissatisfied	17	10
Don't know/not stated	12	18
Satisfied	63	64
Dissatisfied	22	16
Net satisfied	+41	+48

Note: small base size

*Source: ODPM (Best Value).*

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**Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which Home Helps & Home Care are provided in your local area?**

	1998 %	2000 %
<i>Base: All service users</i>	(76)	(113)
Very satisfied	33	36
Fairly satisfied	39	29
Neither/nor	0	5
Fairly dissatisfied	10	4
Very dissatisfied	12	15
Don't know/not stated	7	12
Satisfied	72	65
Dissatisfied	22	19
Net satisfied	+50	+46

*Source: ODPM (Best Value).*

**Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which other Council run services and facilities for the elderly is provided in your local area?**

	1998 %	2000 %
<i>Base: All service users</i>	(75)	(92)
Very satisfied	26	23
Fairly satisfied	38	32
Neither/nor	6	16
Fairly dissatisfied	5	12
Very dissatisfied	2	6
Don't know/not stated	23	10
Satisfied	64	55
Dissatisfied	7	18
Net satisfied	+57	+37

*Source: ODPM (Best Value).*

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**Q** *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way these services (Health, Housing, Social Services) worked together to meet your needs?*

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*Base: All aged 50+ who have experience of at least two providers of long-term care (314).* %

Very satisfied	40
Fairly satisfied	39
Neither/nor	4
Fairly dissatisfied	10
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know	1
Satisfied	79
Dissatisfied	15
Net satisfied	+64

*Source: Cabinet Office/MORI Peoples Panel (1998).*

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**Q** *Over the past two years or so, do you think your Council's services for elderly people have got better or worse, or have they stayed the same?*

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	1998	2000
	%	%
<i>Base: All users of any services for the elderly who have lived in area for at least two years.</i>	(137)	(166)
Better	22	14
Worse	14	18
Stayed the same	54	49
Don't know	10	19

*Source: ODPM (Best Value).*

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**Q** *How much, if anything, do you feel you know about Council services for elderly people?*

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	1998	2000
	%	%
<i>Base: All users of any services for the elderly.</i>	(145)	(180)
A great deal	8	6
A fair amount	34	21
Just a little	34	34
Hardly anything	15	29
Don't know	9	11

*Source: ODPM (Best Value).*

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**Q In the past two years or so, has your Council asked your views about any assessment or provision of service for elderly people, or not?**

	1998 %	2000 %
<i>Base: All users of any services for the elderly who have lived in the area for at least two years.</i>	(137)	(166)
Yes	10	18
No	78	69
Don't know	12	12

*Source: ODPM (Best Value).*

Data is available from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Office of National Statistics (ONS) which shows the proportions of people of pensionable age claiming key state benefits<sup>3</sup>. In November 2000, 98% of the population over state pension age and resident in Great Britain claimed 'a key DWP benefit', although the proportion of women claiming at least one of the key state benefits is slightly lower than for men. When analysing take-up of benefits by Government Office Region, pensioners living in London are less likely to claim key state benefits as the table below shows.

**Claimants over State Pension Age of key benefits by gender and Government Office Region: November 2000** (thousands & percentages)

	All		Men		Women	
	(000s)	% of pop <sup>4</sup>	(000s)	% of pop	(000s)	% of pop
<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>10,273</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>3,759</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,514</b>	<b>97</b>
England	8,801	98	3,237	100	5,564	97
North East	479	99	175	102	304	97
North West	1,231	99	444	101	787	97
Yorkshire & Humberside	907	98	331	101	576	97
East Midlands	753	98	283	100	470	97
West Midlands	952	98	352	100	601	97
East	996	99	376	102	621	98
London	1,003	94	361	96	642	94
South East	1,454	98	535	100	919	96
South West	1,025	99	381	101	644	98
Wales	563	96	207	98	356	95
Scotland	910	99	316	100	594	98

*Source: Department of Work & Pensions Statistics 2001, ONS (2001).*

<sup>3</sup> Please visit <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE3>

<sup>4</sup> Population over state pension age. Population data sources ONS and Scottish Registrar. November 2000 percentages based on 1999 population estimates.

**Suggested further reading:**

'*Grey Power*', conducted by MORI (1999). This paper includes government statistics covering demographics and economic information and MORI research data to measure behaviour, knowledge and/or views of the elderly community. For more information please visit <http://www.mori.com/polls/1999/pdf/greypower.htm>.

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**January 2004**