

EMBARGOED until 00.01 hours Wednesday 11th May 2011

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COUNSEL AND CARE APPLAUDS THE LAW COMMISSION'S FOCUS ON ADVICE AND INFORMATION, BUT CONCERNS REMAIN ABOUT ELIGIBILITY FOR CARE

Counsel and Care, the national charity working with older people, their families and carers, broadly supports the Law Commission's recommendations on adult social care. These are a welcome move, alongside the forthcoming conclusions of the Dilnot Commission, toward a sea change in the way social care is carried out and regulated in England and Wales. A focus on wellbeing, prevention, and information and advice are critical to ensuring older people get the dignity and respect that they deserve. The proposal to enshrine these in law is without a doubt a great leap forward for the future of adult social care.

Peter Watt, Chief Executive, Counsel and Care hailed the Commission's recommendations: "We have long campaigned for the entrenchment of quality advice and information in adult social care policy. The recommendation to increase the role of Local Authorities in ensuring that all adults, even those ineligible for council-funded services, receive advice and information is welcome.

Self-funders and carers who are not eligible to receive council services should have the right to needs assessments, guidance, and assistance in planning their immediate or future care. We welcome the empowerment of Local Authorities to help adults to make

informed decisions in their best interests. And in a 'Big Society' landscape, the role of voluntary organisations to help deliver this will become more and more central."

"We are still concerned, however, that the recommendations do not recognise that many councils are moving from providing substantial to critical care services only. This will have a severe and long-term negative impact on older people needing care and is not consistent with the messages of prevention and wellbeing. We would ask the Law Commission what they will do to prevent further instances of councils evading their duties to adults needing social care in future."

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Our response to the Adult Social Care Consultation (July 2010):
<http://www.counselandcare.org.uk/category/policy/pdf/adult-social-care-law-reform>
2. Counsel and Care is a national charity working with older people, their families and carers to get the best care and support. Advice on issues affecting older people and carers can be obtained by calling 0845 300 7585 or emailing advice@counselandcare.org.uk
3. Counsel and Care's Advice Service opening hours are 10am-4pm Monday-Friday.
4. More information about Counsel and Care can be obtained from www.counselandcare.org.uk