


Implications of demographic change: experiences from the frontline

Louise Hobbs
Age UK
Eastern Regional Team

March 9 2011




Age UK – For Later Life




- Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern England and Help the Aged – launched on 19 April 2010
- Age UK is inspired by the belief that we can improve the lives of people in later life.





Age UK in action

- We will provide help and support with our partners to those who need us -Helping people to maintain their independence
- We will make the powers that be listen and act: campaigns for changes in legislation
- We will act internationally: Help Age International
- We will carry out vital research: to find solutions for later life
- We will deliver market leading products and services: address market failure with age-friendly products
- We will change public attitudes: challenging public and professional attitudes
- We will reach into communities in the UK.

The Age UK 'family'

- There is a large network across England (and Wales, Scotland and Ireland) of local Age Concerns and Age UKs: independent charities
- Also a large network of older peoples forums, which Age UK supports
- Local partners provide a range of services to older people and their families for example lunch clubs, home help services, toe cutting, and day care for people with complex needs, for example dementia
- Local partners also carry out a lot of influencing work locally



A few facts



- Now more people in the UK age 60 and above than under 18
- Over 12 million people of state pension age
- Nearly 12000 centenarians: 1 in 4 children born today can expect to live to 100
- About 3.7 million older people live alone
- 1.8 million pensioners live below the poverty line
- Between £3.2 and £5.4 billion of means-tested benefits that should rightfully go to older people went unclaimed in 08/09
- One in six pensioners in rural districts lives on a low income – similar to that in urban districts
- 600,000 pensioners in low income households – 2/5 of total – live in rural districts

More facts



- Over half of all people aged 75 and over live alone
- 6% of older people (nearly 600,000) leave their house once a week or less
- 39% of people aged 60 or over use local bus services at least once a week
- 57% of rural households are within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service
- 28% of rural households do not have access to a supermarket within 4km
- Exclusion from technology increases with age – 60% of 45 – 75 age group are non-users without home access to the internet

Issues facing older people



- Access to health and social care services
- Lack of recognition of mental health problems such as depression
- Isolation: loneliness, transport, accessibility
- Money: pensions, poverty, low savings, fuel poverty
- Work and learning: increasing need for employment
- Equality and human rights: age discrimination, elder abuse

Not all doom and gloom!



- We should celebrate longer life expectancy
- Older people are more likely to vote
- Nearly 4.9 million people aged 65 and over (58%) take part in volunteering or civic engagement
- More older people are working not just because they need to but because they want to
- 18% of 65-74 year olds and 13% of those aged 75+ have taken part in learning in the last three years

What issues face Age Concerns/Age Uks?



- Cuts to funding, competition from private sector, changes to commissioning practices
- Information and Advice funding in particular
- Maintaining the importance of the prevention agenda: help to remain independent
- Heavy reliance on volunteers
- Increasing demand for services – because of cuts and because of demographic change
- Ensuring comprehensive coverage

