IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL SERVICE FRAMEWORK FOR OLDER PEOPLE: LOOKING AT OLDER PEOPLE AND CARER INVOLVEMENT

Outline of a research project funded by the then North West NHS Executive and undertaken by the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) and the North West Dementia Centre (NWDC)

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The National Service Framework (NSF) for Older People was published in March 2001 and includes clear reference to the importance of involvement of older people and their carers in the planning and implementation of health and social care developments. The vehicle for taking the NSF forward is designated as the Local Implementation Team (LIT) made up of representatives from local Primary Care Trust(s); Hospital Trust(s), Social Services Department(s), Borough Council(s), the private sector, voluntary organisations and older people and carer representatives. Each LIT is required to produce a Joint Action Plan and a Joint Investment Plan annually, which detail how health and social care services will be developed in that area.

In the North West, to assist in this process of involvement in the NSF, 7 Age Concern Groups have been funded to take forward the development of a ‘Critical Network’ approach involving older people and carers.

The study will examine how the NSF involvement requirements have been put into practice in the North West and particularly in the areas in which the ‘Critical Network’ approach to older people and carer participation is being piloted. Although LITs are at an early stage of their development having only completed two planning cycles, it is anticipated that different approaches to involvement and outcome will be discernable. The study will attempt to identify and categorise this. In addition, it will examine the perceptions of older people and carers involved in the work of the LITs and whether different approaches to involvement lead to different outcomes.

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The 7 LITs in the North West given ‘Critical Networks’ funding have been selected for inclusion in the main study which began in April 2002. This will be supplemented by additional data from other LITs in the North West. The study, conducted over 2 years, has 3 stages.

- In stage one, the ways in which LITs are presently involving older people and carers will be detailed and the different approaches analysed.

- The second stage will examine whether different approaches lead to different outcomes.

- The third stage will translate evidence about effective involvement from all North West LITs into a good practice guide.

DISSEMINATION Dissemination of the findings will be at both local and national level, involving a report of the study, journal article and good practice guidance. The report will also be made available on the PSSRU website.

FURTHER INFORMATION The PSSRU/NWDC staff conducting the study at the University of Manchester are Judy Scott, Reba Bhaduri, Jane Hughes, David Challis and Alistair Burns of the Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust. For further information please contact Jane Hughes tel 0161 275 5229, email Jane.Hughes@man.ac.uk