

## Wanless Review

Julien Forder

The PSSRU at LSE is collaborating with Sir Derek Wanless on a King's Fund review of social care for older people over the next 20 years in England, with the following broad objectives:

- to examine the demographic, economic, social, health, and other relevant trends that are likely to affect the future demand for and nature of social care for older people in England
- in the light of this, to identify the financial and other resources required to ensure that older people who need social care are able to secure comprehensive, high quality care that reflects the preferences of individuals receiving care
- to consider how such social care might be funded, bearing in mind the implications for social justice

Aiming to report by Spring 2006, the main aims of the review are to estimate the likely financial burden of long-term care for older people in England until 2025 and to explore the impact of potential policy changes regarding how the system is funded. The intention is to undertake quantitative modelling around these aims as far as possible. Where data are insufficiently precise for this purpose, the project will present the main arguments and speculate on the implications.

The following include some of the main project tasks:

*Projections of dependency change:* A main driver on future service need is the future extent of dependency in the population. The project will need to establish the nature of this relationship and determine whether there is any 'compression of morbidity', as has been widely predicted.

*Changes in demand:* Assessing individual demand effects is vital to understanding the implications of a change in the balance of funding between individual and public sources. At present there is little good evidence of these demand effects.

*Changes in supply prices:* Understanding changes in prices following changes in demand levels is crucial to the funding requirements of alternative levels of care. Two important factors are the availability of social care workforce, and the price implications of improvements in service quality.

*Care 'technology' and the balance of care:* The review will explore the consequences of the expansion of assistive technologies and new treatments for disabling conditions in the care system of the future.

*Outcomes and quality:* The review will assess current quality levels and the cost implications of improvements in quality.

*Prevention:* The review will assess the evidence of any 'invest-to-save' effect. An important dimension of this analysis would explore the interactive effects of health and social care services.

*Eligibility and entitlement:* Any move to a more explicit arrangement (as is the trend internationally), or indeed if a system of social or private insurance were adopted, would have significant implications for the targeting of resources, and for levels of unmet need.

*Efficiency:* Current evidence suggests that efficiency improvements could be made in social care (for example, the Gershon review).