

BENCHMARKING EXTRA CARE HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE

PSSRU

Outline of a research project funded by the Department of Health

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BACKGROUND

Extra care housing (ECH) includes a range of housing models. It sets out to enable older people to live in their 'own homes', to live in appropriate housing environments and to access health and social care services that are responsive to their needs. The government has provided investment via the Extra Care Housing Funding Initiative to stimulate developments and partnerships between social services departments, housing authorities, care providers and private sector and social housing developers (£87 million was made available between 2004–2006 and a further £60 million for the years 2006–2008). The Housing Corporation has also invested an additional £93 million in extra care housing (2004–2006).

It is important to collect descriptive information about the development of extra care housing to understand the nature and scope of its impact. Provision is currently limited, relative to the size of the care home market, and dominated by public provision. This picture, however, is likely to change given the current policy emphases, and needs to be monitored.

RESEARCH AIMS

The project aims to:

- establish a baseline measurement of the amount of extra care housing for older people in a sample of authorities;
 - understand the local context and aims of extra care housing developments;
 - identify factors that support or limit development;
 - facilitate the tracking of extra care housing developments over time.
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METHOD

A sample of authorities will be invited to take part. They will include a nationally representative sample of 16 local authorities and the authorities that successfully bid for the Extra Care Housing Initiative funds.

There will be two strands to the data collection process:

1) A postal/email survey asking SSD extra care leads:

- to review a list of ECH schemes identified by the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) to see if they meet a specified definition
- to identify any missing/new schemes (these will be passed to the EAC to help update their database).

2) A short telephone interview. This will focus on local aims for developing ECH, general information about current provision, local policies, processes and procedures and the types of supports and barriers experienced. Interviews should last about 20–25 minutes. We hope to talk to extra care leads in Social Services Departments and Housing. Information provided in the telephone interviews will be treated as confidential.

Information about the local context of extra care housing developments will also be collected from existing national data sources wherever possible, such as the Census and central local authority returns. This is likely to include a review of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the local area, demand for

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social care in terms of the number of publicly-funded service users, and the supply of care homes and sheltered housing.

The study poses few ethical considerations as it is collecting information about services rather than individual service users.

TIMETABLE AND OUTPUTS

Data collection will start in the summer of 2005. Outputs will include a discussion paper to the Department of Health. A summary of findings will be circulated to councils in 2006. Reports and summaries will also be made available on our website and highlighted on the Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

RESEARCH TEAM

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