

Alzheimer's Society responds to Age UK social care score card

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Social care system in rapid decline, warns Age UK

Despite rising demand the amount spent on social care for older people has fallen nationally by £1.1 billion (14.4 per cent) since 2010/11, according to research from Age UK. The charity's social care 'score card' reveals that between 2010/11 and 2013/14:

* Older people receiving home care has fallen by 31.7 per cent (542,965 to 370,630)

* Day care places have plummeted by 66.9 per cent (178,700 to 59,125)

* Numbers of older people who receive vital equipment and adaptations to help remain safely at home has dropped by 41.6 per cent

These cut backs have had dire consequences for vulnerable older people. Two thirds of those who struggle to eat unaided are not receiving any help and one in three who find it difficult to go to the toilet are not receiving any assistance.

Alzheimer's Society comment:

George McNamara, Head of Policy and Public Affairs at Alzheimer's Society said:

"It is absurd that social care services which help prevent people from reaching crisis point are given such low priority, with budgets and local authorities reaching breaking point. This winter the NHS' ability to cope with ever-increasing demand has been fundamentally called into question, yet politicians continue to shy away from confronting the root cause of this crisis. The evidence is incontrovertible: until we provide adequate support to older people with conditions such as dementia in the community our hospitals will continue to pick up the pieces.

"We urge all three parties to take action to address the historic underfunding of social care and respond to the challenges of an ageing population."

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