
CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Integrating housing and care for older people

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Introduction: Between 2012 and 2032 it is estimated that the populations of 65-84 years old and those over 85 in the United Kingdom will increase by 39 and 106% respectively (Kings Fund 2013). Recent figures suggest that people over the age of 65 account for almost 51% of gross local authority spending on adult social care (Oliver et al 2014). Current projections indicate that a growing proportion of older people will, in the future, be living on their own and will require formal care (King's Fund 2014). While these demographic changes have significant implications for adult social care policy they also draw attention to the pressing need for sufficient and appropriate housing that enables older people to live independently (Atkinson et al 2014).

Practice: Not surprisingly the provision of appropriate housing is a key element of UK government policy (Garwood 2015). Various models of housing with care have emerged in recent years with Extra Care Housing (ECH) offering the potential to combine housing and social care in the same setting. Indeed the integration of personal housing alongside individualised care means that Extra Care Housing is viewed by many to be 'a viable alternative to and possible replacement for residential care' (Beach 2015:7).

Extra Care Housing, compared to other models of housing, has several characteristics: it is primarily for older people; accommodation is almost always self-contained; social care can be delivered flexibly, usually by staff based on the premises; support staff are available on the premises 24 hours a day; domestic care is available; communal facilities and services are available; meals are usually available and charged for when taken; it aims to be a home for life and finally, it offers security of tenure (Laing and Buisson 2010).

Key findings: Drawing on results from the Adult Social Services in Environmental Settings (ASSET) project (<https://assetproject.wordpress.com/>) and initial findings from our longitudinal study of Extra Care Housing (both funded by the National Institute for Health Research, School for Social Care Research) this paper will consider what potential the integration of housing and care has for older people living in the UK. It will consider the different models of integrating social care within housing and the advantages, as well as some

of the challenges therein. The implications of integrating housing and care will be considered from the perspective of those managing schemes as well as from care workers and older people themselves.

Conclusion: Despite the potential of Extra Care Housing to provide integrated care for older people the current economic context of the UK threatens to undermine the model. Reduced public spending and increased targeting of social care on those people thought most in need could weaken the preventive aims of Extra Care Housing.

References:

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